PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT (DASA)

BOCES adopted and will review annually a policy on Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) or commonly referred to as the anti-bullying policy. The complete policy may be found on the BOCES website, Policy #6462.

The policy explains that the Board is committed to providing an educational environment that promotes dignity, respect, and equality. The Board condemns and prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment, hazing, bullying, and cyberbullying occurring at a BOCES-owned or leased grounds or facilities, buses, BOCES-sponsored activities, programs, or work-based learning locations.

Bullying that occurs outside of BOCES that unreasonably and substantially interferes with the operation of the school or program or interferes with the student's education is prohibited and discipline could result.

The policy defines the terms discrimination, hazing, harassment, bullying, and cyberbullying in accordance with law. Discrimination is an act of denying benefits, rights, or equitable treatment because of a group or class in which that person belongs. Hazing is an induction or initiation process involving harassment which produces public humiliation and could involve discomfort or injury or ridicule. Harassment or bullying is the creation of a hostile environment by conduct, verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that has the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with educational performance, mental, emotional or physical well-being, or cause a fear of safety. Cyberbullying is harassment or bullying through any form of electronic communication. The harassing/bullying behavior may be based on or perception of:

- Race
- Color
- Weight
- National origin
- Ethnic group
- Religion or religious practice
- Disability
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender (including gender identity and expression)

<u>Prevention</u>

Prevention programs will be integrated into the curriculum; provide BOCES-wide training on warning signs of bullying and training staff to respond; gather and analyze data to assist in program decisions and resource allocation. BOCES uses the PBIS system to prevent discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Coordinators

A BOCES-wide Dignity Act Coordinator and a number of school-level Dignity Act Coordinators will be appointed to report, investigate, remedy and track bullying allegations. The BOCES-wide Coordinator will coordinate, review and implement trends. The following people are designated as Dignity Act Coordinators:

Name	Building	Phone	E-mail
Thomas Schulte David Thering	BOCES-Wide/ESC Westview	352-2415 455-0973	tschulte@monroe2boces.org dthering@monroe2boces.org
Suzanne Maxim & Kerry Macko	Department for Exceptional Children	749-0308 617-2447	smaxim@monroe2boces.org kmacko@monroe2boces.org
Robert Nells	Exceptional Children Learning Center	471-1581	rnells@monroe2boces.org
Renee Mulrooney & Christine Farrell	Terry Taylor Elementary	617-2633 469-1537	rmulroon@monroe2boces.org cfarrell@monroe2boces.org
David Liesegang & Jason Rotundo	Special Education Transition Programs at Slayton Plaza, Roberts Wesleyan, Paul Road, and Rochester Tech Park - WBL	617-2539 617-2461	dliesega@monroe2boces.org jrotundo@monroe2boces.org
David Thering	Ridgecrest Academy	455-0973	dthering@monroe2boces.org
Jennifer DeWitte	WEMOCO	352-2480	jdewitte@monroe2boces.org
Edward Mongold	Westside Academy	617-2551	emongold@monroe2boces.org

Intervention

Intervention is an important step in preventing escalation and resolving issues at the earliest stages. Successful intervention may involve remediation, which includes measures to correct the behavior, protect the target, and prevent another occurrence. Staff are expected to refer students to resources or intervene where bullying is suspected.

Provisions for not feeling safe at school

Students who do not feel safe at school lose the capacity to learn. Staff, principals/building administrators, and parents/legal guardians should work together to define and implement needed accommodations to help ensure student safety. This effort will be collaborative and handled individually.

Training

Training to support prevention and intervention will be reflected in the Annual Professional Learning Plan, new teacher orientation, and in the curriculum.

Reporting and Investigation

Students, staff, and parents/legal guardians should report bullying behavior they have observed or experienced. Complaints will be documented, treated and handled in accordance with the DASA regulations or Code of Conduct. Staff are expected to report an incident of bullying even if the student did not complain. The results of an investigation should be reported to the complainant and accused who can appeal based on the procedures outlined in the DASA regulation 6462.

Disciplinary Consequences/Remediation

Disciplinary action including involving law enforcement if criminal conduct is involved will be in accordance with the Code of Conduct. A clear message needs to be given that bullying actions are wrong and the behavior must discontinue. The consequences will be unique to the individual incident and vary depending on the severity of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, the student's history of problem behaviors, and consistent with Code of Conduct.

Non-Retaliation

All complainants and those who initiate, testify, assist, report, or participate in the investigation of a complaint in conformity with state law and BOCES policies, who have acted reasonably and in good faith, have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind.

Dissemination, monitoring, review, and reporting

This policy will be reviewed annually. The Board will review the SSEC report annually with attention to bullying and may consider further action based on the data. A complaint form can be found on the BOCES website. This plain language summary will be available to parents/legal guardians annually by inclusion in the Code of Conduct posted on the BOCES website.

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