



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

ERIC T. SCHNEIDERMAN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

JOHN B. KING, JR.
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

September 22, 2014

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Re: **Implementation of the Dignity for All Students Act**

Dear Superintendent:

The Office of the Attorney General ("OAG") and the New York State Education Department ("SED") are conducting a survey to help determine whether public elementary and secondary schools are meeting their obligations under the Dignity for All Students Act ("DASA" or "Act"), a law which seeks to ensure that no student faces harassment, bullying, or discrimination on school property or at a school function. As you know, DASA went into effect in the summer of 2012, with supplemental provisions on cyber-bullying going into effect in the summer of 2013. This survey will be used to help the OAG and SED (1) identify best practices currently used by Districts across the state, (2) assess whether Districts have taken sufficient steps to comply with the requirements of the Act, and (3) provide the appropriate technical assistance and support that may be necessary to ensure that schools are fully meeting their obligations. The OAG and SED recognize the efforts taken by educators across the state to provide a quality learning environment to students free from discrimination and harassment. This survey will be used to help amplify and strengthen these existing efforts.

To that end, please find attached an OAG-SED Dignity for All Students Act Implementation Survey, which has been issued to all school districts in New York State. The survey's areas of inquiry track the provisions of the Act, which require that Districts, among other things, (1) modify their Codes of Conduct to include prohibitions on harassment, bullying, and discrimination, and distribute such Codes to students and their parents, (2) train school employees on topics of bullying, harassment, and discrimination, (3) designate Dignity Act Coordinators for each school, and (4) provide students with instruction intended to discourage harassment, bullying, and discrimination. We request that the District complete the enclosed survey in order to provide the OAG and SED with information necessary to understand the steps taken by the District to fulfill its requirements under DASA and the Commissioner's associated regulations.

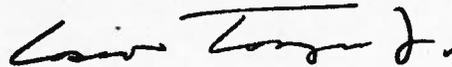
Please note that the enclosed survey and responses received from districts are intended for informational purposes only and will be used by the OAG and SED to develop plans to provide technical assistance, guidance, and training aimed at meeting school districts' needs and enhancing statewide compliance with DASA. We ask that the District complete the attached survey by **Friday, October 31, 2014** and return the completed survey electronically to the following email address: DASA.Survey@ag.ny.gov.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Assistant Attorney General Justin Deabler of the OAG's Civil Rights Bureau at (212) 416-8097.

Sincerely,



Kristen Clarke
Civil Rights Bureau Chief



Cosimo Tangorra, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Education