

NAACP Resolution Initiated by the NAACP Salt Lake Branch, passed by 2009 Convention Delegates and ratified by the NAACP National Board of Directors

Anti-Bullying and Harassment in Schools

WHEREAS, bullying and harassment are widespread problems with significant adverse consequences affecting youth across the country; and

WHEREAS, school bullying includes a wide variety of behaviors, but all involve a person or a group repeatedly trying to harm someone who is perceived to be weaker or more vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, bullying and harassing can involve direct attacks with hitting, threatening, intimidating, maliciously teasing, taunting, name-calling, making sexual remarks, stealing or damaging belongings. Bullying and harassment can be subtle, indirect attacks, spreading rumors and encouraging others to reject or exclude; and

WHEREAS, bullying and harassment have led young school children to commit suicide. Bullying and harassment can lead teens that are the target of bullying and harassing to feel tense, anxious, and afraid. It can affect their concentration in school, and lead them to avoid school in some cases; and

WHEREAS, bullying and harassing affects a teens self-esteem. Bullying and harassment can increase social isolation, leading them to become withdrawn, depressed, anxious and insecure. In extreme cases bullying and harassment can be devastating for teens. Some teens feel compelled to take drastic measures, such as carrying weapons for protection or seeking violent revenge. Others, in desperation, consider suicide or commit suicide when they have no place to report bullying and harassment; and

WHEREAS, almost 30% of youth in the United States (or over 5.7 million) are estimated to be involved in bullying, either as a bully, a target of bullying or both. In a recent national survey of students in grades 6-10, 13% reported bullying others, 11% reported being targets of bullies, and another 6% said that they bullied others and were bullied themselves; and

WHEREAS, the American public is concerned about safety for all children. The problems of bullying and harassment are among the most prevalent and profound that schools face; they continue to seriously disrupt our school environment and affect the lives of millions of students every year, with major adverse academic and safety consequences.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the NAACP units will work to ensure that no student is denied access to a quality education because of fear of degradation associated with bullying and harassment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all NAACP units shall meet with state and local school districts and request information regarding anti-bullying policies and procedures in tandem with programs that promote community building, teach students how to negotiate differences and how to advocate for themselves and be allies to fellow students who are being bullied; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP calls for all schools to have effective anti-bullying and anti-harassment programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that bullying and harassment based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion must be recorded and acted upon by school officials; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP calls upon all schools to implement anti-bullying training for all personnel. School officials shall have students pledge not to bully or harass other students, to help students who are bullied or harassed, and to report all cases to school officials; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP calls upon all schools to offer effective counseling for perpetrators and victims of bullying and harassment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP calls upon all schools to ensure the inclusion of diversity training and anti-discriminatory practices in the implementation of disciplinary measures so that school anti-bullying procedures do not have a disparate impact upon African-Americans and other minority groups; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP calls upon all school districts to maintain and report data regarding all incidents of bullying and harassment in order to develop effective federal, state, and local anti-bullying policies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP calls upon states and school districts to submit statistical data regarding bullying incidents to the United States Department of Justice; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the NAACP shall call upon schools to raise awareness regarding bullying and harassing, increase teacher and parent involvement and supervision, form clear rules and strong social norms against bullying and harassing, and provide support and protection for all students. This approach shall involve teachers, principals, students and everyone associated with the school, including maintenance staff, food services staff, security guards, and crossing guards.

**This document is for distribution by the NAACP across the country to
State Office of Education for schools and the Public**