



SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

WHAT IS A PROCLAMATION, AND WHY SHOULD WE SEEK ONE FOR NO NAME-CALLING WEEK?

Proclamations are statements issued by elected officials that raise awareness of an issue or event. Proclamations can be issued by governors, mayors, or superintendents, or they can be passed by Congress, state legislatures, city councils, or school boards. Unlike laws or polices, they carry no official power, but instead proclaim a sentiment that an elected official(s) feels would benefit the whole community. Thousands of proclamations are issued each year, usually to recognize particular constituent groups (such as on St. Patrick’s Day or the Puerto Rican Pride Parade), or to support specific values close the elected official’s heart (like recognizing Breast Cancer Awareness Month).

A proclamation can be very useful in raising awareness of No Name-Calling Week in your state or school community. It allows elected officials to use their power to stand in support of the goals of the week and gives you an opportunity to educate the public about the need for the event. In seeking a proclamation, you can approach an elected official that you already have a relationship with or someone you’re interested in collaborating with in the future. Because they don’t hold any legal weight, this is a great first “ask” and generally an easy win if you ask for support far enough in advance. Make sure to follow up with proclamation sponsors after No Name Calling Week to share more opportunities to partner together in support of policies that will end name-calling and bullying in schools.

WHAT ARGUMENTS CAN I USE TO CONVINCING MY ELECTED OFFICIALS TO ISSUE A PROCLAMATION?

Words hurt. More than that, they have the power to make students feel unsafe to the point where they are no longer able to perform in school or conduct normal lives. Though often dismissed as “harmless teasing,” name-calling targets, those who do not “fit in”—due to body size, social or academic standing, race, ethnicity, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or some other attribute— forcing them to spend an inordinate amount of time trying to cope with the detrimental effects of name-calling when they should be devoting their energies to social and academic development instead.

Here’s a few talking points to help craft your argument before you meet with your elected official:

- Name-calling and bullying have harmful effects on students of all ages. In GLSEN’s *Playgrounds and Prejudice: A Survey of Teachers and Students* data shows that as early as third grade (age 8-9), bullying negatively impacts the experiences of students in elementary school.
- Elementary school students who are bullied are less likely than others to say that they have been happy at school this year (34% vs. 69%) and more likely than other students to say that they sometimes do not want to go to school because they feel afraid or unsafe there (33% vs. 8%).





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- Over 60 leading education organizations like the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Education Association are organizational partners for No Name-Calling Week because name-calling and bullying have serious negative consequences for school climate for students across the country.
- In 2017, the National School Climate Survey revealed that almost all LGBTQ students in secondary schools (98.5%) heard “gay” used in a negative way, more than 4 in 5 LGBTQ students heard sexist remarks often or frequently at school, nearly three-quarters of all LGBTQ students heard negative remarks about ability, and over half of all students heard their peers make racist remarks often or frequently.
- School-based resources and supports like supportive student clubs, inclusive curricular resources that reflect the experiences and backgrounds of all students, supportive school personnel, and supportive school policies like comprehensive enumerated anti-bullying protections are proven to reduce bullying and name-calling in schools.
- By supporting the goals and programs of No Name-Calling Week, your elected officials can be a part of a movement to launch a conversation about how bullying impacts all students in schools.

THE PROCESS: HOW DO I GET A PROCLAMATION?

Step 1

Most offices, whether they are legislative (Congress, state legislature, school board, etc.) or executive (Governor, mayor, etc.) have a procedure for asking for an official proclamation. The first step is learning that procedure. This is best done by either looking to see if that procedure is outlined on the official’s website or by contacting the specific office of the official that deals with constituents’ concerns. You might also leverage personal staff contacts, relationships with major supporters of the elected official, or institutional contacts to help nudge the process along.

Step 2

Follow the proper steps outlined by your elected official’s office, which will require a formal request. Your formal request to your ally should contain:

- Background information on GLSEN’s No Name-Calling Week
- A specific ask for a proclamation for January 20-24, 2020
- Information about what’s happening in schools and communities in your area for No Name-Calling Week, including research on bullying and harassment
- How to contact YOU with questions or to get additional information

Step 3

After they have had a couple days to review the request, call your contact person in the official’s office to





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follow-up on your “ask.” You might also ask one of your contacts with influence (like a major supporter of the elected official or a coalition partner) to emphasize the importance of issuing the proclamation.

What do we do with our proclamation once we get it?

Ideally, your elected official would agree to participate in a public ceremony announcing the proclamation, at which organizational partners, teachers, students, parents, and school officials might speak about the need for the program. Be sure the press is present if your elected official agrees to such an event! Also make sure to notify the GLSEN national office of your accomplishments. You can email press@glsen.org with all of the details. If you are unsure of how to reach out to the media, get in contact with GLSEN national and we can walk you through that process or introduce you to local media contacts.

Those who are trying to persuade their school systems to take part in the week may find the proclamation particularly useful in convincing administrators about the legitimacy of the event. You might also want to disseminate copies of the proclamation to teachers and schools that are planning to participate. They can then post the proclamation in appropriate places, like bulletin boards, and distribute it to parents, families, and students. Engage your social media accounts and tag the elected official or governing body to highlight the proclamation.

In the end, a proclamation is an important symbol of the community’s commitment to fighting name-calling, so use it far and wide to carry that message.

What can we do after No Name-Calling Week to continue to impact anti-bullying policy?

A No Name-Calling Week proclamation is a great place to start building a relationship with an elected official to advance policy change in your community. Be sure to send the elected official(s) any photos, highlights, press, social media or other outcomes to further engage them in the work. Then follow up with your contact in their offices to schedule a meeting to discuss policies that would improve school climate for all students. By continuing to build this relationship, you’ll have a foundation to perhaps ask for a district-level enumerated anti-bullying policy, or a statewide non-discrimination law. Check out [Respect for All: Policy Recommendations to Support LGBTQ Students](#) for potential policy projects to continue the conversation.

WHAT SHOULD THE PROCLAMATION SAY?

Officials will often ask for suggested language for a proclamation. You can use and/or modify the sample proclamation. If you modify any part of the proclamation significantly, check in with GLSEN’s policy department to make sure they know what language works best in your community by emailing policy@glsen.org.





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Whereas No Name-Calling Week is an annual week of educational activities aimed at ending name-calling of all kinds and providing schools with the tools and inspiration to launch an on-going dialogue about ways to eliminate name-calling and bullying in their communities;

Whereas over 60 organizations, including the National School Boards Association, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Education Association, National Association of School Psychologists, GLSEN, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, have come together as No Name-Calling Week partner organizations;

Whereas thousands of elementary and middle school students have participated in No Name-Calling Week since its inception in 2004;

Whereas bullying and name-calling disproportionately impact students who hold more than one real or perceived identity-based attribute that makes them vulnerable to such inappropriate behavior in communities across the country;

Whereas GLSEN has conducted and released national studies analyzing the pervasive harassment and victimization faced by elementary students and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) secondary students;

Whereas 26 percent of elementary students reported hearing others say hurtful things based on another student's race or ethnic background;

Whereas 36 percent of elementary students reported being bullied or called names at some point while in school and elementary students who are bullied are four times as likely as other students to say they do not want to go to school because they feel afraid or unsafe;

Whereas 87 percent of LGBTQ middle and high school students frequently or often hear negative remarks about transgender people in school and over 70 percent of LGBTQ middle and high school students were verbally harassed in the past year because of their sexual orientation; and

Whereas nearly 50 percent of LGBTQ middle and high school students experienced harassment via electronic means in the past year;

Whereas nearly 70 percent of American Indian or Alaska Native LGBTQ (or Two Spirit) middle and high school students felt unsafe based on their sexual orientation in the past year;





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Whereas 60 percent of Latinx LGBTQ middle and high school students experienced bullying based on their gender identity in the past year;

Whereas nearly 60 percent of Black LGBTQ middle and high school students experienced bullying based on their sexual orientation in the past year;

Whereas nearly 50 percent of multiracial LGBTQ middle and high school students felt unsafe in school based on the way they express their gender;

Whereas over 25 percent of LGBTQ students reported being victimized at school based on their actual or perceived disability

Now, therefore, be it resolved that [X municipality/state/city/district] will call upon (district's) teachers, students, parents, and school officials to appropriately observe the week through activities, lessons, and programs designed to reduce name-calling and bullying on the basis of real or perceived body size, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, physical or mental ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, social or academic standing, any combinations of these attributes, or any other attribute for which students are singled out for such unacceptable behavior, and

Be it further resolved that in order for policy to reach its full potential, all adults in the school building should receive training on how to respond to harassment in a supportive way while encouraging educators to be visible allies, and

Be it further resolved that identifying areas in need of support through data collection is institutionalized, analyzed with special attention to outcomes experienced by vulnerable students, and used by schools to improve their programs, and

Be it further resolved that districts will increase student access to appropriate and accurate information regarding LGBTQ, Black, Latinx, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Pacific Islander, Chicanx, and Middle Eastern people; women; immigrants; refugees; and people with disabilities' histories, contributions, and perspectives, and support identity-centered events through inclusive curricula and equitable access to library and Internet resources, and

Be it further resolved that districts should adopt and implement comprehensive bullying and harassment policies that specifically enumerate sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in individual schools and districts, with clear and effective systems for reporting and addressing incidents that students experience that seek to keep vulnerable students in the classroom and that taken together, such measures can move us toward a future in which all students have the opportunity to learn and succeed in school, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

