

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

What is a proclamation, and why should we seek one for No Name-Calling Week?

Proclamations are usually issued by executives, such as governors or mayors, although at times they can be voted through by legislative bodies, like state legislatures, city councils, and school boards. Unlike laws or polices, they carry no official power, but instead proclaim a sentiment that the elected official 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 a Breast Cancer Awareness Month).

A proclamation can be very useful in raising awareness of No Name-Calling Week in your state or community. It allows the elected official to use their power and standing to support the goals of the week, and gives you an opportunity to educate the public about the need for the event. Furthermore, it increases the sense of legitimacy for the project among the educators and community members you may approach for support, because the proclamation shows that elected leaders are behind them in doing this work.

What arguments can I use to convince 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.

What should the proclamation say?

Officials will often ask for suggested language for a proclamation. The next page includes a sample you may wish to use or adapt.

Whereas, name-calling, bullying, and harassment continue to be prevalent in our schools, and

Whereas, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) study of public, private, and parochial school students in grades 6-10 found that almost a third of 6th to 10th graders—5.7 million children nationwide—have experienced some form of bullying, and

Whereas, targets of bullying and name-calling often experience a negative impact on their academic achievement, educational aspirations, and psychological well-being, and

Whereas, students in school with hostile environments suffer from high rates of absenteeism because of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable, and

Whereas, No Name Calling Week aligns with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) indicators, which prioritize inclusive school climate recognizing that students learn best when they are in safe, inclusive, and affirming environments, and

Whereas, name-calling has no place in our schools, as it impedes the learning process for all, and

Whereas, *GLSEN's No Name-Calling Week*, scheduled for January 16-20, 2017, is an invaluable project that is supported by a broad-based coalition of education and youth services organizations concerned about the detrimental effects name-calling has on students,

I, Governor [Name], proclaim January 16th-20th, 2017 to be
No Name-Calling Week
In the State of [State
Name]

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, 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, 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 LGBT people, history, and events through inclusive curricula and 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 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.