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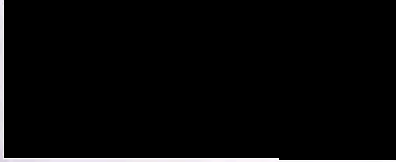
Chappaqua taking step state lawmakers won't



administrators and school board of the Chappaqua school district intend to insert two simple words into the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities of Students. A clause that guarantees students "the right to pursue educational opportunities free from illegal or improper discrimination" will soon include discrimination based on sexual orientation



The change was proposed by an enlightened group of students called the Alliance for Equality.



As Alliance co-president Michael Kavey explained, "it'll be another step to tell people it's not OK to discriminate."

The state Senate can use a few Michael Kaveys.

the Senate has repeatedly balked at approving a very similar change in state civil rights law.



[This 1994 editorial describes the efforts—including those of a student gay-straight alliance called Alliance for Equality—to secure an amendment to a Chappaqua school district non-discrimination policy to add the words "sexual orientation." The school board approved the policy amendment. At the time, as the editorial notes, New York did not have a state law prohibiting sexual-orientation discrimination. (Chappaqua later amended its policy to include gender identity as well.)

I've partially redacted this editorial to respect the paper's copyright. (The newspaper does not, unfortunately, make this editorial available for free on-line.)

In 2002, New York State approved a sexual-orientation non-discrimination law. And about ten years after that, the state finally approved a school anti-bullying law covering, among other things, sexual orientation and gender identity. The state's non-discrimination law for employment and public accommodations, however, still doesn't expressly include gender identity. A bill called GENDA would change that.