

Understanding the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights

Scotch Plains-Fanwood Parent/Guardian Session

Based on State of New Jersey Department of Education approved
PowerPoint and suggested related resources.

Learning Outcomes for this Session:

- Understand purpose and reasons for the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights (ABR).
- Understand the definition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) as stated in the ABR.
- Understand the overarching provisions of the ABR through identifying responsibilities and roles of district staff/groups.
- Understand investigation process and parent rights.
- Understand how parents can support their children in reducing Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB).

Purpose of the ABR

- Improve Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) laws adopted in 2002 and amended in 2007 & 2008.
 - Establishes clearer standards for definition of HIB.
 - Clarifies/strengthens standards on preventing, reporting, investigating and responding to incidents of HIB.
 - Increase school safety.
 - Reduce risk of suicide and other negative outcomes of HIB.

Overarching Goal of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights (ABR)

To develop and sustain safe, supportive,
and civil schools in which HIB does not
occur.



Reasons for ABR

- Significant research since the original 2002 NJ anti-bullying law.
 - U.S. Department of Justice and Education Study (2009) found that 32% of students age 12-18 were bullied in the previous year.
 - US Center for Disease Control “Youth Risk and Behavior Surveillance” (2009) found that the percentage of students bullied in NJ is 1% higher than the national median.

Definition of HIB

HIB means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act or any electronic communication, whether it is a single incident or a series of incidents, that is:

- Reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic,
- Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or off school grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L. 2010, c 122,
- Substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of the other students, and that



Definition of HIB cont.

- A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property;
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
- Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

Difference Between HIB and Conflict

Conflict:

- Mutually competitive or opposing action or engagement.
- Includes disagreements, arguments, and fights.
- A normal part of growing up and of life.

HIB:

- HIB is one-sided.
- One or more students are victims of one or more person's aggression, as it applies to the HIB definition under ABR.
- The intent is to physically or emotionally hurt someone.

Questions?



Provisions of ABR Through Identification of Roles/Responsibilities :

- District Anti-Bullying Coordinator (ABC)
- School Anti-Bullying Specialists (ABS)
- School Safety Teams
- Board of Education
- District Superintendent



Anti-Bullying Coordinator (ABC)

- Appointed by the Superintendent to work with all schools and staff on HIB related activities.
- Assists with the development and use of policies and procedures including investigation process.
- Coordinates and facilitates training related to HIB for all staff.
- Coordinates data collection and monitoring data trends, progress.
- Supports building specialists.

Anti-Bullying Coordinator Scotch Plains-Fanwood

Cailin K. Frantz

Located in Scotch Plains Fanwood High School

Phone: 908-889-8600

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Anti-Bullying Specialists

- Appointed by the school Principal.
- Leads, in coordination with the principal, investigation of alleged HIB incidents.
- Assists the Principal in determining remedial actions and consequences to take place for HIB incidents.
- Chairs the School Safety Team.

Anti-Bullying Specialists

Scotch Plains-Fanwood

- Scotch Plains Fanwood High School
 - District Anti-Bullying Coordinator Mrs. Frantz
- Terrill Middle
 - School Counselors Mr. Cross and Ms. Krasovsky
- Park Middle
 - School Counselors Mrs. Iarussi and Mrs. Wolf
- Brunner, Evergreen, and School One Elementaries:
 - Social Worker Mrs. Chestang
- Coles and McGinn Elementaries:
 - Social Worker Mrs. Medley

Contact Flow-Chart

Classroom Teacher/Other School Staff Member



School Principal



Anti-Bullying Specialists



Anti-Bullying Coordinator

School Safety Team (SST)



- Comprised of school Principal, ABS, a school teacher, a parent of a student, and any other members as appointed by the principal.
- Develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate by focusing on the ongoing, and systemic practices in the school addressing climate issues such as HIB.
- Receive copies of investigations.*
- Identify and address patterns of HIB in the school.*
- Review and strengthen the school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent HIB of students.

*Parent serving on SST will not participate so as not to compromise student confidentiality.

Board of Education

- Board of Education (BOE) will develop, adopt, and publicize a HIB policy for their district that includes: prohibition of HIB, definition, student expectations, consequences and remediation, reporting procedures, and investigation process.
- Annually review district HIB policy.
- Complete training program on HIB.
- Provide time for staff training.
- Receive information on all HIB investigations from Superintendent.

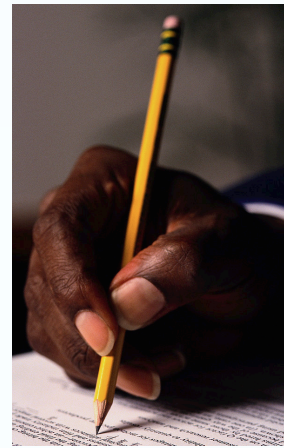
District Superintendent

- Post HIB policy on district website.
- Receive investigation report from school Principals.
- Provide Board of Education with information regarding all HIB investigations.
- Provide written notification to parents of alleged victims about the investigation findings.
- Appoint District ABC.
- Report 2 times a year to BOE on district HIB data and trends.
- Provide information and data to the NJDOE.
- Post district and school grades once received from NJDOE.

Questions?



Investigation Process



- All school staff must report verbally to principal any reliable information regarding incidents of HIB that they learn of or witness. The staff member must then file, within 2 days, a written report.
- Principal asks the building ABS to start investigation within 1 school day of initial verbal report.
- Investigation and written report completed by ABS, in coordination with Principal, within 10 school days.
- Principal proceeds in contacting parents to discuss investigation, findings, and any remedial actions and consequences.



Investigation Process cont.

- School Principal submits investigation report to District Superintendent.
- District Superintendent makes sure code of conduct has been implemented appropriately and intervention services are provided as necessary.
- Superintendent reports investigations and findings to Board of Education at the next executive meeting (non-public, names removed).
- Superintendent provides parents of alleged recipients and alleged aggressors with written notification of investigation findings.

Questions?



Parent Rights and Responsibilities

- Notification by school Principal that their child was reported as an alleged offender or victim in a HIB investigation and any consequences and remedial actions deemed appropriate.
- Parents of the alleged recipient and alleged aggressor: written notification by Superintendent after the Board of Education meeting.
- Right to a Board of Education hearing, if requested.



Parent Rights and Responsibilities cont.

Right to a BOE Hearing

- Parents may request a hearing before the BOE after receiving written notification of findings from the Superintendent.
- Hearing must be held within 10 days of the request.
- The hearing must be held in executive session to protect the confidentiality of the students.
- Board of Education will make a decision to affirm, reject, or modify Superintendents decision and notify the parents in writing.
- Boards decision may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education within 90 days after issuance.
- Parent/Pupil may file a complaint with the division of Civil Rights within 180 days.

Questions?

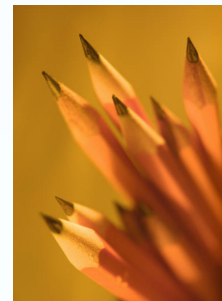


How Can I Help as a Parent?

- Parental involvement is key to reducing HIB behaviors both in and out of school.
- The following are ways in which parents can help to reduce both HIB perpetration and victimization:
 - School involvement.
 - Teach and practice appropriate safety skills.
 - Supervise and monitor the use of the internet, cell phones, and other electronic devices.



School Involvement



- Regularly keep in contact with school staff and your student's teachers to monitor how your child is doing and to report any concerns you have.
- Consider volunteering to be a member of the School Safety Team or other school/parent committees that work on school climate.
- Ask the school for their code of conduct, and/or school rules, and talk about these with your child at home. Make sure your child understands you have clear expectations of their behavior both at home and at school.
- Participate in school events and functions that promote positive school climate.

Teach Appropriate Safety Skills

- Let your child know they do not have to face bullying alone and it is not their fault.
- Do not advise your child to fight the bully—they can get hurt and in more trouble.
- Explain and practice the following skills with your child:
 - Walk away.
 - Take a deep breath.
 - Use a strong voice and say “leave me alone” or “stop it.”
 - Buddy up with a caring friend.
 - Find a trusted adult and get help.

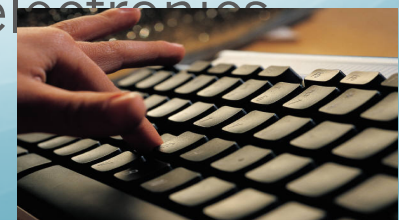
Teach Appropriate Safety Skills cont.

- Help your child identify several adults that they can safely seek guidance from in the following places:
 - Home
 - School
 - Community



Supervising and Monitoring the Use of Electronics

- Harassment, intimidation, and bullying is increasingly being done through the use of electronics. This form of bullying is particularly worrisome in that it provides for anonymity and a large number of people may see or be involved in the bullying.
- Create clear expectations/guidelines for the use of electronics by your children (e.g. internet, email, social networking sites, cellphones, etc.), as well as clear consequences for not following expectations.
- Make sure your child understands your expectations for use of electronics apply to in the home, at school, and in the community.
- Supervise and monitor your children's use of electronics.



Questions?

