

# **Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying: What You Need To Know**

**Paterson Public Schools  
Staff Training**

**Presented By:  
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# Historical Context

- Events from Columbine High School put the ball in motion for school districts to begin to adopt anti-bullying policies
- 2002 - New Jersey enacts an anti-bullying law with a comprehensive policy requiring each school to adopt an HIB policy
  - New Jersey's policy provided guidance for handling situations as well as mandated provisions for reporting
- 2007 - L.W. vs Toms River Regional SBOE went to NJ Supreme Court
  - This led to the NJ Commission on Bullying in Schools in 2008
  - Developed a stronger Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights
  - Included provisions about cyber-bullying

# Historical Context

- Dec. 2009 NJ Commission on Bullying in Schools submitted its recommendations to the Governor
- Sept. 2010, Tyler Clementi a Rutgers student who died by suicide as a result of HIB further spurred stronger legislation
- Oct. 2010 a new law was introduced
- Nov. 2010, the “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights” was passed in the wake of Clementi’s death
  - Federal legislation enacted “Tyler Clementi Higher Education Anti-Harassment Act
- January 2011 signed by the Governor Chris Christie

# The Law-Anti-Bullying

- The 2011 “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act” (ABR) was intended to strengthen the standards and procedures for preventing, reporting, investigating, and responding to incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) of students and to reduce the risk of suicide among students that occur in school and off-school premises.
- The goal of the ABR law is to: “Develop, foster and maintain a positive school climate by focusing on the on-going, systemic process and practices in the school and to address school climate issues such as HIB”

# What is HIB?

- **HIB** stands for – Harassment Intimidation and Bullying
- Any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication
- A single incident or a series of incidents
- Reasonably perceived as being motivated either 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

# What is HIB?

- Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds\*
- Substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students

# What Is HIB?

- 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
- **A reasonable person** should know, under the circumstances, what 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



# Determination of HIB

- Substantial disruption or interference with the orderly operation of school or student's rights
- An actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic as the motivating factor; AND
- ONE of the following:
  - Physical or emotional harm to a student or his or her property or fear of harm to student or property;
  - Effect of insulting or demeaning a student or group of students; or
  - Creation of "hostile educational environment," interfering with student's education.



# Types of Harassment/Bullying

- Direct and indirect verbal aggression
- Written or physical aggression
- Property Damage
- Threats
- Rumors/denigration
- Impersonation
- Betrayal of Confidential information
- Offensive or insulting messages
- Biased Based Bullying
- Sexual Harassment
- Cyberbullying
- Impersonation
- Photos and videos
- Rating and “liking”
- Sexting
- Social aggression and exclusion
- Psychological/emotional aggression

# Roles

The following positions facilitate the HIB process for reporting, compliance, investigations and overall school climate and culture:

**District Anti-Bullying Coordinator**  
**Principal**  
**Anti-Bullying Specialists**  
**School Safety Teams**

# District Anti-Bullying Coordinator

- Appointed by Superintendent
- Coordinates and strengthens district HIB policy to prevent, identify, and address HIB
- Collaborates with anti-bullying specialists, board of education and Superintendent.
- Meets at least twice a school year with the school anti-bullying specialists
- Provides data, in collaboration with the Superintendent to the NJDOE and performs other related duties

# Principal

- Appoints Anti-Bullying Specialist (ABS) for the school and establish School Safety Teams
- Receive all verbal and written reports of HIB
- Inform parents of alleged victim(s) and offender(s)
- Initiate investigations by assigning incidents via HIBster to ABS
- As appropriate, appoint additional staff for investigations
- Ensure investigations are completed within 10 school days of the written report
- Ensure the results of investigations are reported to your Assistant Superintendent within 2 school days of their completion via HIBster
- Ensure safety of students in all incidents and invoke code of student conduct for non-HIB behaviors.

# Anti-Bullying Specialists (ABS)

- Appointed by the Principal
- Either guidance counselor, school psychologist, or other school staff trained as an anti-bullying specialist
- Chairs the School Safety Team
- Leads the investigation of reported HIB incidents
- Acts as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of HIB in the school
- Assists the Principal in appropriately applying the range of ways for responding to HIB established by the school board
- Provides input to local school board on annual re-evaluation, reassessment, and review of policy

# School Safety Teams

- Formed to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate, including HIB issues
- Meets at least 2 times per school year
- Consists of
  - Principal/Or designee (preferably a senior administrator)
  - Teacher
  - Anti-bullying specialist (Chair)
  - Parent of a student in the school
  - Other members as determined by the Principal
- Identifies and addresses patterns of HIB in the school
- Reviews and strengthens school climate and policies in order to prevent and address HIB

# Rule of Thumb

**If you see or hear something,  
SAY SOMETHING**

**Reporting incidents of alleged HIB  
is EVERYONE's RESPONSIBILITY**

**Report to the Building Principal or  
Designated Administrator**





# STARTING HIB INVESTIGATION

# HIB Investigation Step 1

- Any school employee or contracted service provider who witnesses or receives reliable information regarding an act of HIB, **must report it verbally on the same day to the Principal and digitally enter incident via HIBster within 2 days**
  - School Employees/Contracted service provider have the legal obligation to file an Incident Report regarding an act of HIB
  - Also, if a student or parent reports an incident to a staff member, the staff member must report it to the principal

# HIB Investigation Step 2

- The Principal initiates each investigation through the Anti-Bullying Specialist (ABS)
  - **Coordinates with ABS, but does not lead**
- As appropriate, appoints additional staff to assist with investigation
- Informs parents of alleged offenders and alleged victims that there is an alleged incident, and may discuss, as appropriate counseling and other intervention services
- Although not explicitly required in statute, best practice is to notify the parents the same day of investigation
- ABS - Leads and conducts each investigation. It should be **completed within 10 school days of written incident report.**

# HIB Investigation Step 3-5

- Report completed and submitted to Asst. Super. within 2 days of investigation completion
  - **May amend the original report if information is not received within the 10-day period**
- Asst. Super. may decide to provide intervention services, establish training programs, impose discipline, order counseling, or take or recommend other action in addition to the principal
- District Anti-Bullying Coordinator reports the results of each investigation along with information on services provided, training established, discipline imposed, or other action taken or recommended by the Chief School Administrator (CSA)
  - **Reports are made no later than the BOE meeting following the completion of each investigation**

# HIB Investigation Step 6-7

- **BOE Decision** In every case, BOE votes to affirm, reject or modify the CSA's decision
  - Must occur at the BOE meeting following the CSA's report
  - Must happen whether or not there was a BOE hearing with the parent
- **Parent Notification** -Parent is provided with the following written information within 5 days of the Chief School Admin's report to the BOE:
  - The nature of the investigation;
  - Whether the district found evidence of HIB; and
  - Whether discipline was imposed or services provided

# HIB Investigation Step 8

- **BOE Hearing-** Within 60 days, a parent may request a hearing before the BOE to appeal the decision of a hearing. If requested, the hearing must be held:
  - Within 10 days of the request; and
  - In executive session
  - If parent is still not satisfied with the local Board's decision they can appeal to the Commissioner of Education, Office of Administrative Law.

# Bullying Facts

- Bullying directly affects students' ability to learn.
- Bystanders can be powerful allies.
- Bullying is not a “rite of passage” but a serious threat to student safety and well-being.
- Anyone can bully, and anyone can be bullied.
- Effective bullying prevention efforts involve students, parents, teachers, and community members



# Conflict vs. Bullying

## CONFLICT

- Conflict is a disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views.
- This can include disagreements, arguments and fights between two people or two or more groups of people.
- Things may escalate in conflicts to include physicality or name calling.

## Conflict vs. HIB

### Conflict

- Involves people with similar degrees of power
- Involves a mutual disagreements or difference in interests or goals. Includes arguments and fights.
- Is reciprocal; both parties participate in the conflict
- Both parties are responsible for wrongdoing
- A normal part of growing up and of life. The intent is not to hurt.
- Can be fairly resolved by compromise or negotiation

### HIB

- Involves an imbalance of power
- One or more students are victims of one or more person's aggression, needs, or interest.
- Is one-sided; one party instigates
- Bully is responsible for wrongdoing
- The intent is to physically or emotionally hurt someone.
- A fair resolution involves a change in behavior of the bully; the target has no concession to make

# Conflict vs. Bullying Scenarios

- **Scenario 1**- A parent calls you to say that her son, Ryan, has been getting bullied all year. She reports that the boys take his book bag from him when he gets on the bus and they make jokes about him when they see him in the hall or in the lunchroom. He is now afraid to go to school and won't take the bus
- **Scenario 2** - Lisa and Kyle were dating, but recently broke up. Kyle's new girlfriend has been posting negative and hurtful comments about Lisa on SnapChat and asking others to join in.
- **Scenario 3** - Ron often draws attention to himself, calls people names and tries to start conflicts. He has no friends and is usually by himself. A group of popular students call him names and tease him. They have started rumors that another quiet girl in their class likes Ron and began posting these rumors on Facebook

# Conflict vs. Bullying Scenarios

- **Scenario 4** - Tommy and Vero are good friends. They get into a fight over a PlayStation game.
- **Scenario 5** - Three 7th grade girls approach the teacher and indicate that two other 7th grade girls started rumors about them. The two accused girls reply that the others started rumors first
- **Scenario 6** - Molly and Amara have been best friends. They got into an argument and Amara now claims that Julie is her best friend. Molly is hurt.

# District Resources

**HIB Resource Guide** – In 2020, Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer, in conjunction with stakeholders created and published the Paterson Public Schools Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Resource Guide. It was created for the primary purpose to provide administrators, teachers, parents and students immediate access to information as it relates to HIB.

Sections include:

- Addressing the Aggressors
- Assembly Programs
- Best Practices
- Conflict vs. Bullying
- Cyberbullying
- HIB Prevention
- Mental Health Trauma & Character Education
- Policy Discussions
- Training for Parents
- Health Lessons

## Paterson Public Schools Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Resource Guide

*A Complete Guide to Understanding  
Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying*

**SPEAK UP**

*when you see bullying*

**REACH OUT**

*to those who are bullied*

**BE A FRIEND**

*to those in need*

*A link to the guide is provided on the Paterson  
Public School's website on the Home Page.*

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