NJ Anti-Bullying Law: Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

Rockaway Borough School District- Parent Academy
November 3, 2021

What is HIB ?

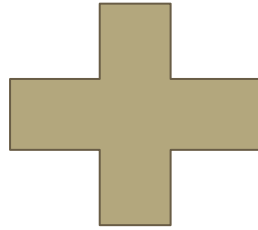<u>H</u>arassment <u>I</u>ntimidation or <u>B</u>ullying

Under New Jersey law, HIB means that any <u>gesture</u>, any <u>written</u>, <u>verbal</u> or <u>physical</u> act or any <u>electronic</u> communication that can be perceived as motivated by the following elements:

Targets a student's characteristic:

Examples include:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Ancestry
- National origin
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity or expression
- Any type of mental or physical disability
- Any other distinguishing characteristic

Takes place on school property...

- During school hours
- School-sponsored function
- School bus

or off school grounds

- That **substantially** disrupts or interferes with the student's well being at school

Causes harm to the student…

- Physically
- Emotionally
- Damaging student's property
- Creating reasonable fear of student's safety at school
- Insulting or demeaning any student or group of students

Creates a hostile educational environment for the student…

- **Substantially** interferes with a student's education

CAUTION   CAUTION   CAUTION

What bullying is NOT!

- Arguments/conflicts
- Not liking someone
- Refusing to be friends with someone
- Teasing
- Being bossy
- Mutual disagreements

Administrative Roles in HIB

Anti-Bullying Coordinator: ==Ms. Dachisen==

- Responsible for coordinating and strengthening the school district's anti-bullying policies.
- Works closely with the ABS, the Superintendent and the board of education to prevent, identify and address the bullying of students.

Anti-Bullying Specialist:

- Responsible for preventing, identifying and addressing bullying incidents within his or her school.
- Leads a **school's safety team**   ==Lincoln - Ms. Luongo==
- Investigating reported incidents of bullying   ==TJ - Mrs. Centanni==

HIB Law Update!!! - 2018

The Principals have the right to initiate or deny an investigation as per new Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights regulations.

In previous years, if you mentioned the word "Bullying" in regards to an incident it was mandatory to conduct an investigation.

- Remedial measures/discipline can be given immediately regardless if it is an HIB incident or not.

HIB Process...

1. **Initial report of incident** - can be *verbal* or *written*
2. **Parent Notification** - The Principal will contact the parents of the victim and alleged offenders parents.
3. **HIB Investigation** - (Begins no later than 1 School Day after the incident is reported) The Anti-Bullying Specialist will conduct an investigation completed within 10 school days.
4. **Written Report** - (Must be completed 2 school days after initial report) It summarizes the details and facts of the incident.
5. **Investigation Report** - The Anti-Bullying Specialist completes a summary of the investigation findings and submits it to the Principal.
6. **Action** - Administration decides upon a justifiable action depending on the results of the investigation.

HIB Process Continued...

7. The Principal submits official paperwork to the Superintendent.

8. The Superintendent presents the findings to the Board of Education - The BOE reviews summary & results (no names are included) and a decision is made.

9. Superintendent reports results to Parents:

- The type of investigation that was conducted
- Whether or not the district found evidence of HIB
- Whether or not discipline was imposed or services were provided to address the HIB

Due to student records and privacy laws and regulations, parents are only entitled to review THEIR child's educational records; a parent is not entitled to view the records of other students. This means that parents are not permitted to receive the entire HIB investigation report if it in any way would identify a student other than their own.

10. Parents Rights- Parents may appeal a BOE decision to the Commissioner of Education no later than 90 days of the BOE decision.

HIBster

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, & BULLYING

CREATED BY EDS

What type of school responses do HIB incidents require?

Responses are determined by administration and approved by the BOE.

Some examples of responses may be:

- Corrective actions/discipline
- Consequences that are graded according to the severity of the offenses and consider the developmental ages of the offenders and their histories of problem behaviors
- Appropriate combination of counseling, support services, or interventions

Bullying Prevention programs in place…

- School Safety Team
- All staff mandated training on reporting HIB behavior
- Student awareness:
  - Week of Respect Activities
  - Kindness Week Activities
  - Peace in our School Week/ Violence Awareness Week
  - Mix it up at Lunch Day
  - Planned assemblies/guest speakers throughout the year
- Character education lessons/groups throughout the year
  - Social Groups during lunch (upon parent/teacher referral or student request)
  - RAMS Expectations - "RAMS Slip" & "RAM Bucks"

What you can do to support your child:

- Be aware of your child's behavior, take notice of changes
- Be supportive & open to talk with your child.
- Be helpful. If/when contacting the school, only report the facts. Don't label.
- Be a good role model
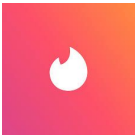- Establish rules about social media and internet/phone usage
- Ask questions!

Communication is key!

Cyberbullying/Social Media

<u>Be Aware</u> of What Your Kids are Doing Online

- Talk with your kids about cyberbullying and other online issues regularly: Encourage your kids to tell you immediately if they, or someone they know, is being cyberbullied. Explain that you will not take away their computers or cell phones if they confide in you about a problem they are having.
- Know the sites your kids visit and their online activities. Ask where they're going, what they're doing, and who they're doing it with.
- Tell your kids that as a responsible parent you may review their online communications if you think there is reason for concern. Installing parental control filtering software or monitoring programs are one option for monitoring your child's online behavior, but do not rely solely on these tools.
- Have a sense of what they do online and in texts. Learn about the sites they like. Try out the devices they use.
- Ask for their passwords, but tell them you'll only use them in case of emergency.
- Ask to "friend" or "follow" your kids on social media sites or ask another trusted adult to do so.
- Stay current on the apps/websites your child is using….

Be aware of these apps/websites

	Kik	A messaging app that allows communication with strangers who share their Kik usernames to find people to chat with. Your child has the opportunity to chat with anyone who is logged on.
	Tumblr	Website/App that student blog on. Big tendency to self disclose their feelings and inner thoughts on here.
	Twitter	Public blogging feed where students can follow anyone they want. Students (even adults) have a tendency to rapidly respond or post on this app/website which can be dangerous as things don't always disappear even after you delete the post.
	Tinder	A location-based dating app where the user looks at pictures and decides if they want to "match" with the person by swiping right or left. Once you match with someone you have the ability to chat with the unknown "match".
	GroupMe	Messaging app; made for older teens or adults due to the embedded GIFs and emojis have some adult themes, such as drinking and sex

Be aware of these apps/websites

	Whatsapp	Messaging app (age limit set to 16 and over)
	The Vault	An app created to hide pictures or messages. Disguised usually as a calculator.
	SnapChat	Messaging through pictures that "disappear" but can be screenshotted and sent to other people. Also private messaging component.
	HouseParty	Communication through LIVE video with multiple people at one time.
	Instagram	Picture blog account that shares Live videos, has a "snapchat" feature, private messaging.

Online Gaming Safety Concerns

Many children and teens play online games where they talk to other people online.

WARNING:

- Some may be friends, but many people are complete strangers, who may also be hackers, scammers, or predators, looking to exploit them.
- Harsh language or other inappropriate material is often used
- Bullying may occur

Cyber Bullying/Social Media/Online Gaming Continued..

Establish Rules

- Establish rules about appropriate use of computers, cell phones, TV, and other technology. For example, be clear about what sites they can visit and what they are permitted to do when they're online. **Give time limits** and be strict about this. Show them how to be safe online.
- Help them be smart about what they post or say. Tell them not to share anything that could hurt or embarrass themselves or others. Once something is posted, it is out of their control whether someone else will forward it.
- Encourage kids to think about who they want to see the information and pictures they post online. Should complete strangers see it? Real friends only? Friends of friends? Think about how people who aren't friends could use it.
- Tell kids to keep their passwords safe and not share them with friends. Sharing passwords can compromise their control over their online identities and activities.
- In regards to gaming, have a conversation about the dangers of talking to strangers. They likely do not understand the safety risks in playing these games. Look at the rating system (T=Teen, MA=Mature, E=Everyone) and follow it.

Additional Resources

The NJ Department of Education resources on Anti Bullying Rights can be found at:

https://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/new-jersey/index.html

Teen apps/websites & what you need to know about them:

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/16-apps-and-websites-kids-are-heading-to-after-facebook

Questions, comments, concerns??

Thank you for joining us for our first Parent Academy of the 2021/22 school year!