
UNDERSTANDING THE ANTI-BULLYING BILL OF RIGHTS

Voorhees Township Public Schools
District Anti-Bully Coordinator:
Susan Donnelly, Supervisor of Special Projects

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS SESSION:

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

PURPOSE OF THE ANTI-BULLYING BILL OF RIGHTS

- 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 2002NJ 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.

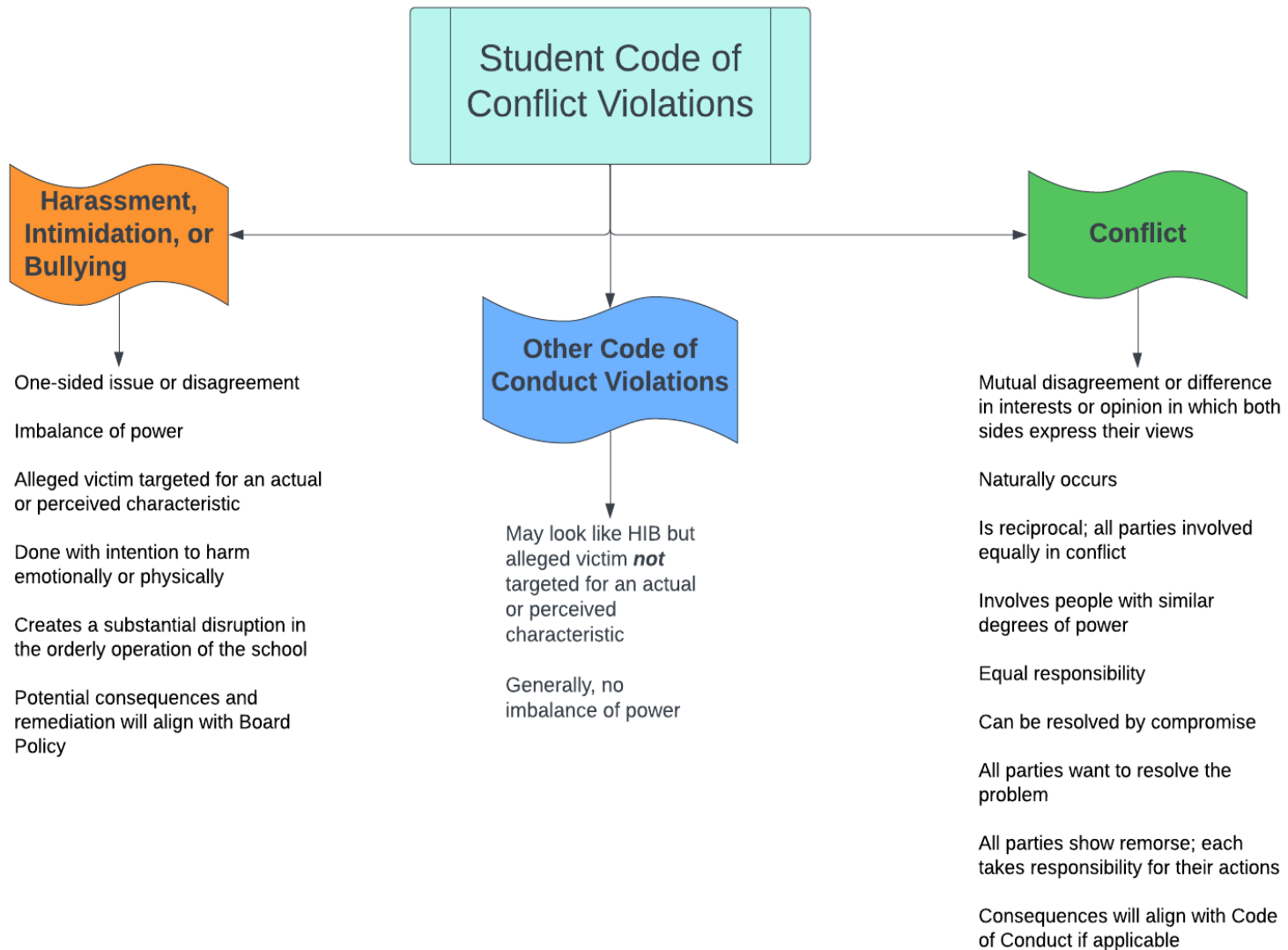
DEFINITION OF HIB

- 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 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

**DEFINITION
OF HIB
CONT.**

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.



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)

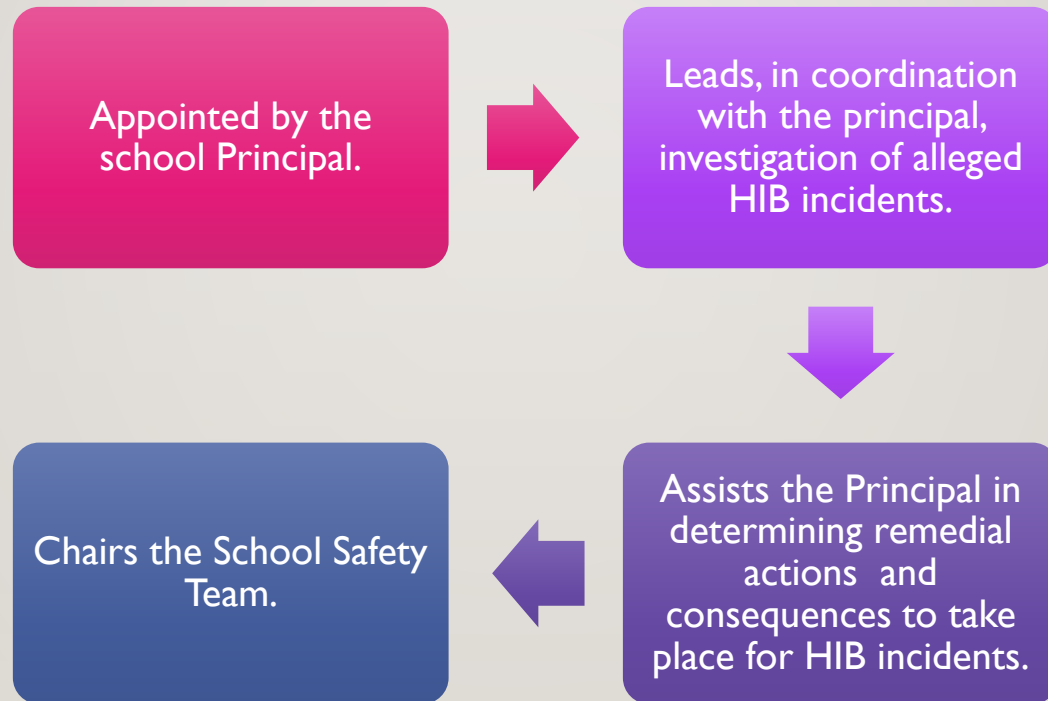


ANTI-BULLYING COORDINATOR

Voorhees Township Public Schools

- Susan Donnelly
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ANTI-BULLYING SPECIALISTS



ANTI-BULLYING SPECIALISTS

- E.T. Hamilton Elementary School
School Counselor, Derek Myers
- Kresson Elementary School
School Counselor, Maureen Boyle
- Osage Elementary School
School Counselor, Auda Aquino
- Signal Hill Elementary School
School Counselor, Amanda Dariano
- Voorhees Middle School
School Counselor, Steve Boianelli

CONTACT FLOW-CHART

- Classroom Teacher/School Staff Member/Hibster



- School Principal



- Anti-Bullying Specialists



- Anti-Bullying Coordinator

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.

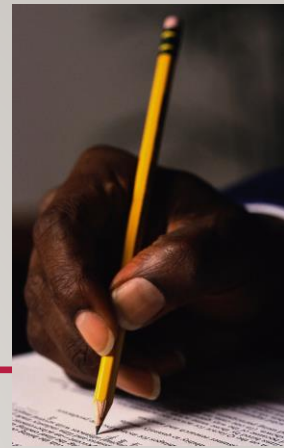
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

- 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?

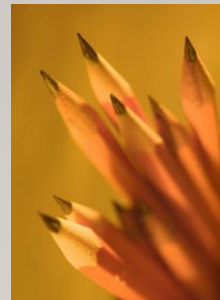


HOW CAN I HELP AS A PARENT?

- 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?



EXAMPLES: SCENARIO 1

- A student reports to his teacher that a friend of his, Liam, was being made fun of on the bus ride to school.
- When the teacher speaks with Liam, they find out that the other student, Mark, was making loud noises and singing on the bus. Liam asked him to stop, and Mark continued.
- Liam then shoved Mark as they were walking off the bus.
- This was a back and forth exchange (no imbalance of power)
- There was no actual or perceived characteristic that was the motivation for the actions (such as race, appearance, religion, gender, etc.)
- This did not cause a substantial disruption to either student or their school day

Conflict



SCENARIO 2

- Jana's teacher notices one day that Jana seems upset after lunch. Jana tells her that she is really hungry but she didn't eat her lunch. The teacher then finds out that Jana has not eaten her lunch for a week because of some texts her classmates have sent her, calling her fat and using inappropriate language.
- During the HIB investigation, the ABS finds out that some of the students have been making comments about Jana's weight for months in a group chat, even after she asked them to stop.
- Jana's mom shares that Jana has started to refuse to want to come to school and is making comments about her appearance.

This meets all the necessary criteria for an HIB

Includes a protected category (her weight)

This interfered with Jana's school day and severely caused emotional harm

It's reasonable to think that making a comment about someone's weight can affect them

- This is not a conflict since this is one sided, and since there are multiple students making comments to Jana, this would be an imbalance of power

HIB

SCENARIO 3

- The counselor sees Carly crying in the hallway, so she stops to see what is going on. Carly tells her that her classmate Mariah called her “weird” for having short hair. An HIB investigation is initiated.
- During the investigation, the ABS interviews a witness who heard this happen and commented that the girls are usually friendly, so this was unusual.
- The ABS follows up with Carly two days after the incident as part of the investigation and Carly says that she was sad when it happened, but since then she has “gotten over it.” She just doesn’t want it to happen again.

This would be an unfounded HIB claim as it does not meet all of the criteria.

Yes, what Mariah said was unkind, and there was a protected characteristic (appearance), however it did not substantially disrupt or interfere with the orderly operation of the school.

Important to note: At any time the ABS receives new information, the investigation can be reopened.

NOT HIB

