

SUMMARY
Key Points of the 2010/2011
STUDENTS' ANTI-BULLYING
BILL OF RIGHTS¹

General Changes

- Principal in each school shall appoint an **anti-bullying specialist**. Principal and specialist define range of school responses to HIB, which shall include “an appropriate combination of counseling, support services, intervention services, and other programs”
- Superintendent shall appoint a **district anti-bullying coordinator**.
- Each school must have a **school safety team**, which must include at minimum the principal or designee, teacher, anti-bullying specialist, and parent, and must meet at minimum twice/year.
- Requires schools to **adopt or develop programs to prevent bullying**, specifying that these programs “shall be designed to create school-wide conditions to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying.” (law previously recommended that schools develop programs. PD workshops and student assemblies are components of an anti-bullying program, but are insufficient in and of themselves.)
- Establishes “Week of Respect” each October
- Requires curricular attention to bullying throughout the school year
- Requires that the school district annually conduct a re-evaluation, reassessment, and review of its policy, making any necessary revisions and additions
- Each school, and each district, receives a grade from NJ DOE reflecting its efforts to implement anti-bullying programming. This grade must be posted on the district and school web pages.
- School personnel, including board members, administrators and SROs, in addition to teaching and non-teaching staff, who report in accordance with district procedures, are immune from any subsequent cause of action for damages for failure to properly respond to an incident of HIB.

Reporting and Investigation Requirements

- Known or suspected acts of HIB must be reported by any school employee, volunteer, board member, or contracted service provider to the school principal **verbally by the end of the school day on which reliable information was received, and in writing within two days**.
 - Principal must inform parents of all involved students.
 - Investigation must be initiated within one school day, led by school anti-bullying specialist, and completed within 10 days.
 - Results of investigation must be reported to superintendent within two school days of completion of investigation, who may take or recommend actions, and to the board of education no later than its next meeting.
 - Within five days of the report to the board, parents must be notified of the report and have a right to request a hearing, among other rights.
- Requires certain individuals (administrators, SROs) to initiate bullying response procedures upon receiving reports of suspected HIB.
- Superintendent’s annual Violence & Vandalism report to the board increased to twice annually and must include, in addition to all acts of V&V, all acts of HIB which occurred during the previous reporting period. This is then reported to the Department of Education. The DOE grades each school/district on its efforts to implement anti-bullying programming.

¹ Note: This document is a summary only. Various details and specifications are omitted.

Broadens definition of HIB for purpose of school responsibility

- An act of HIB is broadened to explicitly include:
 - an act that causes either **physical** or **emotional harm**, or has
 - the effect of **insulting or demeaning any student or group of students** (new law eliminates the requirement that the act also cause substantial disruption in the orderly operation of the school)
 - or **creates a hostile educational environment** for a student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.
- An act of HIB might be "a single incident or a series of incidents."
- Explicitly includes incidents occurring off school grounds under certain conditions.

Personnel Training

- Two hours of instruction in suicide prevention required in each professional development period for teaching staff members must include information about HIB and suicide, and reduction of suicide risk for students belonging to populations at higher risk of suicide.
- Training for employees and volunteers on district HIB policy, including the prevention of bullying on the basis of protected classifications (i.e., bias-based bullying)
- Minimum **two hours training on prevention of HIB** for teaching staff during each PD period.
- Adds requirements of varying specificity for training on the prevention of HIB for anti-bullying specialists, anti-bullying coordinators, school leaders, candidates for administrative and supervisory certification, and board members. Each Board shall provide time for specialist and coordinator training during the usual school schedule.

Miscellaneous

- Adds HIB to the list of good causes for **suspension or expulsion** of a student
- Permits **disciplinary consequences for administrators** who fail to investigate, fail to know about, or fail to take sufficient action in a case of reported HIB.
- Adds conviction for "bias intimidation" to the list of items **permanently disqualifying a person from employment/service** by a school.
- The Commissioner of Education/DOE has a number of duties, including the preparation of a guidance document for parents/guardians, development of a protocol for investigating alleged violations and training programs for anti-bullying specialists and coordinators, an online tutorial on HIB, and grading schools/districts on their efforts to implement anti-bullying programs.

Public Relations

- Contact information for school anti-bullying specialists and district anti-bullying coordinator must be listed on the home page of the school & district web sites.
- Pre-existing law requires all districts to post their HIB policy on their website. New law requires the district HIB policy to require the link to the policy to be "prominently" posted on the "home page" of the school district's website.
- Grade given each school/district for its efforts to implement anti-bullying programming must be posted on school/district web pages.
- A link to the V&V/HIB report must be provided on the district's website.
- Student report cards must include "data identifying the number and nature of all reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying" in the school