

CHERRY HILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Cherry Hill, New Jersey

B-10

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

The Cherry Hill Board of Education is committed to maintaining an educational environment that is conducive to an effective instructional program. In order to sustain an atmosphere of academic excellence, it is essential that the administration establish standards of behavior that tends to reinforce the Board of Education's position to promote a climate of mutual respect and self esteem, in a safe and civil educational environment.

In an effort to reinforce these standards, students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and civil manner and demonstrate a level of maturity and dignity towards their fellow students and school staff.

Definition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB)

"Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying" is defined as any gesture or written, verbal or physical act that is reasonably perceived as being motivated whether 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 handicap, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function or on a school bus.

Examples of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying may include :

- ◆ Verbal abuse including name calling, racist remarks, teasing, etc.
- ◆ Physical attacks including pushing, hitting, punching, hair pulling, scratching, spitting, etc.
- ◆ Social exclusion including ostracism, ignoring, alienating, etc.
- ◆ Psychological abuse including acts that instill a sense of fear or anxiety
- ◆ Any act that has the effect of insulting or demeaning any individual or group of individuals in such a way as to cause distress, reluctance to attend school, a decline in work standards or problem behaviors.

Notification to School Staff, Students and Parents/Guardians :

The principal or designee shall initiate measures to ensure that school staff, students and parents/guardians are familiar with the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy and the Procedure for reporting incidents of HIB Behavior.

In-Service Training for Pre-K – 12 School Staff:

During the school year the principal or designee shall arrange for HIB Training to be included as part of their In-service Training Program for school staff. HIB Training can be initiated through any of the following resources.

- ◆ Soliciting out of district resources who are qualified to present training material on the subject of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
- ◆ HIB Training may be introduced during the In-service training segment for Character Education.
- ◆ The services of qualified Cherry Hill School District staff can be recruited to conduct Training for school staff.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Overview For Students:

The principal or designee shall develop, through whatever means he or she deems appropriate for their school setting, a system for disseminating information to ensure that the student body is familiar with the district's HIB Policy and the process for reporting incidents related to HIB behavior. The following is a list of some suggested methods through which the information can be disseminated to students.

- ◆ General Assembly
- ◆ New Student Orientation
- ◆ Classroom Discussion
- ◆ Integrated with the Character Education Curriculum
- ◆ Health Classes
- ◆ Back to School Night Meeting

Students shall also be made aware that a number of resources are available, on a daily basis to follow up on reported incidents of HIB.

Affirmative Action Officer	District School Advocate
Campus Police	Educational Assistant
Child Study Team	Nurse
Coach	Peer Mediation
Counselor	Psychologist
District Tip Line (429-5653)	Teacher
School Administrators	

Parent/Guardian Notification:

In an effort to reinforce the school district's Zero Tolerance position, regarding HIB behavior, it is essential that parents/guardians share the responsibility to promote a bully free school environment. In order to foster the spirit of cooperation between parents/guardians and the school community, the principal/designee shall initiate measures to ensure that parents/guardians are familiar with the district's Policy and Procedures regarding HIB. The principal or designee shall also provide parents/guardians with information pertaining to HIB, Intervention Strategies that are age appropriate for Elementary, Middle and High Schools. Refer to attachments for literature regarding HIB Intervention Strategies for different grade levels. Principal or designee shall also encourage parents/guardians to sign the school district's Anti Bullying Pledge acknowledging that they support the school's efforts to implement an Anti Bullying Program. Refer to the attached Anti Bullying Pledge.

Some suggested methods for disseminating information to parents/guardians are as follows:

School Handbooks	School's Web Site
District Web Site	PTA organizations
PTA Meetings	Student Carry Home Methods to Parents/Guardians

A school staff member may receive a report of HIB behavior directly from the victim or from another student who suspects that a fellow student is being subjected to some form of HIB behavior by another student or group of students. In circumstances whereby a student is reporting HIB behavior, acting in the best interest of a fellow student, the staff member shall exercise precautions to protect the identity of the source unless the student indicates that anonymity is not an issue of major concern.

The staff member shall also make a special effort to commend the student, whether he or she is a victim or witness, for bringing the matter to the attention of school staff. This approach tends to encourage students to report HIB behavior and serves to reinforce the schools' Zero Tolerance position regarding HIB behavior.

Protocol for Responding to Reported Incidents of Harassment, Intimidation And Bullying:

Although the overwhelming population of students, for the most part, are of good moral character and conduct themselves in a civil and respectful manner, we cannot ignore the fact that incidents of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying does exist.

Upon receiving a report of HIB behavior from a student witness or victim, the staff member shall initiate immediate steps to address the concerns of the student who reported the incident.

If a student reports that he or she was subjected to inappropriate behavior by a fellow student, the staff person shall assess the situation to determine if the behavior meets the criteria for Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying or if the behavior was an isolated incident that can be resolved without the matter being referred to another source.

It is important to note that not all taunting, teasing or fighting constitute Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying. Valid HIB Behavior generally entails repeated acts directed at one or more individual(s) or initiated by one or more individuals. Key components of HIB behavior are repeated harmful acts an imbalance of power, physical, verbal or psychological attacks directed against a victim.

Assessing whether or not the reported behavior falls within the realm of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying the staff person should take into consideration the following factors:

- ◆ Frequency of the HIB behavior directed at the victim or initiated by the offender.
- ◆ Has the accused student been reported for previous HIB behavior?
- ◆ Was the actions that precipitated the student to report the matter an isolated incident or has the student been subjected to HIB behavior on prior occasions.

Protocol for Responding to Reported Incidents of Harassment, Intimidation And Bullying -

Continued:

- ◆ Can, the behavior that was reported be resolved at the classroom level? If so, the teacher shall address the reporting students concerns immediately by initiating constructive dialogue with the offending student explaining why his or her actions are deemed to be inappropriate.

- ◆ The degree of the verbal, sexual, emotional or a physical abuse should be taken into consideration in determining whether or not the incident can be addressed at the classroom level, under the guidance of school staff, or if the matter should be referred to another source.

School Staff Intervention:

Any member of the school staff receiving a report of HIB behavior, shall address the matter immediately or as soon as feasibly possible prior to the end of the school day.

Depending on the circumstances the staff member may choose to address and attempt to resolve the matter through their own measures. However the staff member chooses to mediate the HIB Behavior the matter should be addressed immediately.

If the behavior is considered to be a form of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying, that has the potential to escalate, the staff person shall refer the matter to the appropriate resources.

At the High Schools, HIB behavior shall be referred to the offender's grade level principal.

At the Middle Schools HIB behavior shall be referred to the designated principal assigned to handle student discipline matters.

At the Elementary Schools HIB behavior shall be referred to the Principal or designee.

The Principal or designee shall assess the circumstances to determine if the matter should be referred to other sources for intervention and counseling. If an HIB accusation is determined to be credible, the offender should be made aware that his or her behavior towards a fellow student is unacceptable and a violation of the school district's HIB Policy. The Principal or designee has the option to refer Incidents of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying to other sources for resolution. The source to which the matter may be referred, will depend on the frequency of occurrences and the magnitude of the HIB behavior.

- ◆ School Counselors
- ◆ School Psychologist
- ◆ Child Study Team
- ◆ Peer Leadership Coordinator
- ◆ Affirmative Action Officer
- ◆ Campus Police
- ◆ District School Advocate
- ◆ Psychologist
- ◆ School Administrators
- ◆ Out of district Mental Health Professional

It is essential that all reports of HIB behavior, that are found to be credible, be documented on the district's HIB Reporting Form, including any remedial or intervention measures that were initiated by school staff. The HIB Report Form shall be placed in both the offenders and victim's student file and maintained at the school site for future reference. The report will serve as a reference for school staff in determining whether or not a pattern of HIB behavior or abuse exist in regards to the offender or the victim. Refer to the attachment for the HIB Reporting Form.

School Staff Intervention: continued

If the principal or designee determines that the reported HIB behavior is creditable he or she shall ensure that the parents/guardians of both the victim and the offender are notified prior to the end of the school day. The parents/guardians shall be informed that an HIB incident was reported and that the school administrator has initiated steps to address the issue. Notification to parents/guardians shall be documented in the notification section of the HIB Reporting Form. Refer to the attachment for the HIB Reporting Form.

Consequences for HIB Behavior:

The principal or designee may discipline a student for HIB behavior if the allegations against the offending student are determined to be creditable. The measures of discipline to be administered should be age appropriate and based on the severity of the HIB behavior. (Refer to the HIB behavior category, listed in the District's Discipline Guidelines)

Principals are encouraged to implement age appropriate Anti-Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Programs within their school community.

Actions Steps for School Administrators :

- ◆ Assess the awareness and the scope of the bullying problem at your school through student and staff surveys. (Refer to District Policy 5145.1 regarding student surveys)
- ◆ Closely supervise children on the playgrounds and in classrooms, hallway, rest rooms, cafeterias and other areas where HIB behavior is likely to occur.
- ◆ Conduct school wide assemblies and teacher/staff in-service training to raise awareness regarding the problem of HIB and to communicate a zero tolerance for such behavior.
- ◆ Post and publicize clear behavior standards, including rules against HIB behavior, for all students. Consistently and fairly enforce such standards.
- ◆ Encourage parent/s/guardians participation by asking parents/guardians to reinforce the districts Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Procedures at home.
- ◆ Encourage parents/guardians to sign the districts Anti Bullying Pledge to show their support for the school's Zero Tolerance Position regarding HIB.
- ◆ Establish a confidential reporting system that allows children to report victimization and Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying behavior. (Bullying Tip Box)
- ◆ Make sure Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Procedures and Policies are known to Parents/guardians, students and school staff.
- ◆ Receive and listen receptively to parents who report bullying. Establish procedures whereby such reports are investigated and resolved expeditiously at the school level in order to avoid perpetuating HIB behavior.
- ◆ Develop strategies to reward students for positive, inclusive behavior and for reporting Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying behavior.
- ◆ Provide school wide and classroom activities that are designed to build self-esteem by spotlighting special talents, hobbies, interests and abilities of all students and that foster mutual understanding of and appreciation for differences in others.

Strategies for Classroom Teachers :

- ◆ Provide students with opportunities to talk about HIB behavior and enlist their support in defining HIB as unacceptable behavior.
- ◆ Involve students in establishing classroom rules against HIB. Such rules may include a commitment from the teacher to not "look the other way" when incidents involve HIB occur.
- ◆ Provide classroom activities and discussions related to HIB and violence, including the harm that they cause and strategies to reduce them.
- ◆ Develop a classroom action plan to ensue that students know what to do when they observe a HIB/victim confrontation.

Strategies for Classroom Teachers – continued

- ◆ Teach cooperation by assigning projects that require collaboration. Such cooperation teaches students how to compromise and how to assert without demanding. Take care of vary grouping of participants and monitor the treatment of participants in each group.
- ◆ Take immediate action when HIB is observed. All teachers and school staff must let children know that they care and will not allow anyone to be mistreated. By taking immediate action and dealing directly with the bully.
- ◆ Confront bullies in private. Challenging a bully in front of his/her peers may actually enhance his/her status and lead to further aggression.
- ◆ Notify the parents of both victims and bullies when a confrontation occurs, and seek to resolve the problem expeditiously at school. Document notification to parents/guardians on the HIB Reporting Form.
- ◆ Refer both victims and aggressors to counseling whenever appropriate.
- ◆ Provide protection for bullying victims, whenever necessary. Such protection may include creating a buddy system whereby students have a particular friend or older buddy on whom they can depend and with whom they share class schedule information and plans for the school day.
- ◆ Listen receptively to parents who report bullying and investigate reported circumstances so that immediate and appropriate school action may be taken.

Strategies for Students:

Students may not know what to do when they observe a classmate being bullied or experience such victimization themselves. Classroom discussions and activities may help students develop a variety of appropriate actions that they can take when they witness or experience such victimization. For instance, depending on the situation and their own level of comfort, students can:

- ◆ Seek immediate help from an adult;
- ◆ Report HIB incidents to school personnel;
- ◆ Speak up and/or offer support to the victim when they see him/her being bullied-for example, picking up the victim's books and handing them to him or her;
- ◆ Privately support those being hurt with words of kindness;
- ◆ Express disapproval of HIB behavior by not joining in the laughter, teasing or spreading of rumors or gossip.
- ◆ Attempt to defuse problem situations either single handedly or in a group – for example, by taking the bully aside and asking him/her to “cool it.”

Source:

Preventing Bullying

A Manual for School and Communities

U.S.D.O.E. 11/31/98

Approved: August 24, 2004

C H E R R Y H I L L S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE

We the parents of _____ School
agree to join together to prevent bullying at our school

We believe that everybody should enjoy our school equally, and feel safe, secure and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion and nationality.

Bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting and spitting, as well as name calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, and excluding someone. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as “kids being kids,” “just teasing” or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying.

By signing this pledge, we the parents agree to:

1. Keep ourselves and our children informed and aware of HIB Policies and Procedures.
2. Work in partnership with the school to encourage positive behavior, valuing differences and promoting sensitivity to others.
3. Discuss regularly with our children their feelings about school work, friendships and relationships.
4. Inform faculty of changes in our children’s behavior or circumstances at home that may change a child’s behavior at school.
5. Alert faculty if any incidents of HIB have occurred.

Signed By: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

***Student File**

C H E R R Y H I L L S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Reporting Form

This form shall be completed for all reported incidents related to Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying.

The completed form shall be placed in the victim's and the offender's student file for future reference.

Person who received the initial report:

Date the incident was reported:

Intervention measures that were initiated by the person receiving the initial report:

No referral, incident was resolved by school staff receiving the initial report.

Incident was referred to another source: _____
Name of Source

Comments by the person receiving the initial report: _____

Intervention measures initiated by the person to whom the matter was referred:

School Community Service No. of Days _____

Detention No. of Days _____

In School Support Program No. of Days _____

Saturday School No. of Days _____

Out of School Suspension No. of Days _____

Other No. of Days _____

Refer to Alternate Source: _____
Name of Source

Comments: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

C H E R R Y H I L L S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Reporting Form

Intervention Measures initiated by the alternative source:

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Alternate Source

Victim's Parents/Guardians notified by: _____

Date: _____

Offender's Parents/Guardians notified by: _____

Date: _____

Additional Comments:
