Ventnor City School District HIB Handbook

A Manual for Parents & Guardians

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Definition of HIB

To meet the Definition of HIB:

 defined as any gesture, electronic communication, whether any written, verbal or physical act, or any it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated any gesture or written, verbal or physical act; or any electronic communication that is 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 handicap, or by any other distinguishing characteristic

and

 Takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students;

and (must include at least one of the following)

 a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) 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; **or**

 has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students;

or

 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.

Implementation of HIB Policy

How has the district implemented the HIB legislation?

Anti-bullying assignments

Establishment of Anti-Bullying Coordinator

Establishment of Anti-Bullying Specialists in each school

Establishment of School Safety Team

Investigation procedures

- ✓ Detailed, Specific Timelines
- ✓ Verbal reports must be made to Principal on the same day incident occurs
- ✓ Follow-up written report must be completed within two (2) school days of verbal report; written by whoever reports the incident
- ✓ Principal must initiate investigation within one (1) school day of receiving (verbal) report
- ✓ Principal must contact parents/guardians and inform them about incident
- ✓ Investigation must be conducted by Anti-Bullying Specialist
- ✓ Principal may appoint others to assist
- ✓ Investigation must be completed as soon as possible; no later than ten (10) school days from date of the written report
- ✓ Principal must give report to the Superintendent within two (2) school days of completing the investigation
- ✓ Superintendent reports the results of the investigation to the Board at the first board meeting following completion of the investigation

Due Process Rights for Alleged Accused and Alleged Victim

- ✓ Parents of all parties involved have the right to receive information–includes parents of alleged victim and alleged bully. Report includes allegations and findings.
- ✓ District must provide information to both parties within five (5) school days after the results of the investigation were reported to the board.
- ✓ Parents may request a hearing of the board after receiving information.
- ✓ Board must issue a decision in writing at the first board meeting following the receipt of the Report.
- ✓ Parents of alleged victim may separately file a complaint with the NJ Division on Civil Rights within 180 calendar days of alleged incident.

Anti- Bullying District Coordinator Responsibilities

The chief school administrator shall appoint a district anti-bullying coordinator. The chief school administrator shall make every effort to appoint an employee of the school district to this position. The district anti-bullying coordinator shall:

- ✓ Be responsible for coordinating and strengthening the school district's policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying of students;
- ✓ Collaborate with school anti-bullying specialists in the district, the board of education, and the chief school administrator to prevent, identify, and respond to harassment, intimidation, and bullying of students in the district;
- ✓ Provide data, in collaboration with the chief school administrator, to the Department of Education regarding harassment, intimidation, and bullying of students; and
- ✓ Execute such other duties related to school harassment, intimidation, and bullying as requested by the chief school administrator.
- ✓ The district anti-bullying coordinator shall meet at least twice a school year with the school anti-bullying specialists in the district to discuss and strengthen procedures and policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the district.

Principal's Responsibilities

The principal shall:

- ✓ Initiate the investigation by the Anti-Bullying Specialist
- ✓ Contact parent(s)/guardian(s) and inform them of the incident
- ✓ Keep up to date of the situation
- ✓ Keep in close contact with the Anti-Bullying Specialist. Update them with current information
- ✓ May appoint others to assist the Anti-Bullying Specialist, as needed
- ✓ In conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Specialist shall determine the "range" of ways to address the incidents of harassing and/or bullying behavior. These may include training, discipline actions, counseling or intervention programs.

- ✓ Be an active participant of the School Safety team
- ✓ The Principal shall proceed in accordance with the VECC Code of Conduct
- ✓ Submit the report to the Superintendent
- ✓ Provide training on the school HIB Policy to employees, contracted service providers and volunteers who have significant contact with pupils
- ✓ Shall annually conducts a reevaluation, reassessment, and review of the HIB Policy with input from the School's Anti-Bullying Specialist and recommend revisions and additions to the Policy as well as to harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention programs and approaches based on findings from the evaluation, reassessment and review.
- ✓ Post the name, school phone number, address, and school email address of the School Anti-Bullying Specialist on the School Website.

Anti- Bullying Specialist's Responsibilities

The principal in each school shall appoint a school anti-bullying specialist. When a school guidance counselor, school psychologist, or another individual similarly trained is currently employed in the school, the principal shall appoint that individual to be the school anti-bullying specialist. If no individual meeting these criteria is currently employed in the school, the principal shall appoint a school anti-bullying specialist from currently employed school personnel. The school anti-bullying specialist shall:

- ✓ Chair the school safety team.
- ✓ Lead the investigation of incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the school
- ✓ Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the school.

School Safety Team Responsibilities

The district shall form a school safety team in each school 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 harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The school safety team shall meet at least two times per school year.

The school safety team shall be appointed by the principal and consist of the principal or his or her designee who, if possible, shall be a senior administrator; a teacher in the school; the school anti-bullying specialist; a parent of a student in the school; and other members to be determined by the principal. The school anti-bullying specialist shall serve as the chair of the school safety team.

The school safety team shall:

- ✓ Receive any complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students that have been reported to the principal
- ✓ Receive copies of any report prepared after an investigation of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying
- ✓ Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students in the school
- ✓ Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students
- ✓ Educate the community, including students, teachers, administrative staff, and parents, to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students
- ✓ Participate in the training required pursuant to the provisions of (N.J.S.A.18A:37-13 et seq.) and other training which the principal or the district anti-bullying coordinator may request
- ✓ Collaborate with the district anti-bullying coordinator in the collection of district-wide data and in the development of district policies to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students
- ✓ Execute such other duties related to harassment, intimidation, and bullying as requested by the principal or district anti-bullying coordinator.

No parent/guardian who is a member of the school safety team shall:

- ✓ Receive complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying of students that have been reported to the principal
- ✓ Receive copies of reports prepared after an investigation of a harassment, intimidation or bullying incident
- ✓ Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation or bullying of students; or
- ✓ Participate in any other activities of the team, which may compromise the confidentiality of a student.

Pupil Expectation

The board of education expects all students to treat each other with civility and respect and not to engage in behavior that is disruptive or violent. The board expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, for school personnel, for the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

HIB Off Grounds

The law defines harassment, intimidation or bullying when it occurs off school grounds … that it "must substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of 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 a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage his property."

HIB Incident Reporting Form

Please visit our school Anti-Bullying page at https://www.veccnj.org/anti-bullyinginfo for more information and resources. On the side you may also view/ complete a HIB Incident Reporting form. Once complete, please email the form to the appropriate school anti-bullying specialist.