

Commissioner's Annual Report to the Education
Committees of the Senate and General Assembly
on Violence, Vandalism and Substance Abuse
in New Jersey Public Schools

July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

Based on District-Reported Data in the
Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS)
and the
Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
Investigations, Trainings and Programs System (HIB-ITP)

Christopher D. Cerf
Commissioner

New Jersey Department of Education
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INTRODUCTION

In 1982, in response to the problem of violence and vandalism in the New Jersey schools, the State Legislature passed the Public School Safety Law (*N.J.S.A. 18A:17-48*). In 2010, Governor Christie enacted changes to the law to address growing concerns about harassment, intimidation and bullying (see [Appendix A](#)). The Commissioner's annual report provides the Governor and the Legislature with information reported by school districts concerning incidents of serious student misconduct grouped into the following five major reporting categories: violence; vandalism; harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB); weapons and substance abuse. An analysis of trends yields indications of progress and ongoing concerns, and provides guidance to districts, other agencies, and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) as they endeavor to focus resources on areas of need. The Programmatic Response section of this report provides recommendations to address areas of concern and describes the support that the NJDOE will provide to districts.

KEY FINDINGS

The Key Findings section summarizes the data reported by districts over the Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS) and the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigations, Trainings and Programs (HIB-ITP) data collection system. Districts are required to report incidents, as defined in the EVVRS, if they occur on school grounds during school hours, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event. The one exception to reporting incidents that occur only on school grounds relates to incidents of HIB. The *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR)* (*P.L. 2010, c. 122*) requires districts to report all incidents of HIB, including those that occur off school grounds.

In addition to statewide EVVRS data, this report summarizes key findings from the statewide data submitted over the HIB-ITP data collection system. Beginning in September of 2011, the ABR requires all districts to report:

- The number of HIB investigations conducted and the number of HIB incidents confirmed;
- The trainings provided to prevent and reduce incidents of HIB; and
- The programs designed to create school-wide conditions to prevent and address HIB.

The EVVRS and HIB-ITP forms given to districts to help them collect the required data can be found in [Appendix B](#).

The report is available in both written and electronic formats. In the written version the figures may be found in [Appendix C](#) of this document. District and school summary data may be accessed at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/vandv/>.

Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System Key Findings

Overall Total and Totals for Major EVVRS Reporting Categories

While the unduplicated count of the total number of incidents reported by districts increased by 8,753 incidents from 17,386 in 2010-11 to 26,139 in 2011-12 (see “Total” column in [Appendix D](#)), this approximately 50.4 percent increase is directly related to the increase in the number of HIB incidents reported in 2011-12. The 2011-12 school year is the first year that the ABR was in effect. Additionally, in 2011-12, HIB is separated from threat and removed from the violence category because not all incidents of HIB are violent in nature.

[Table 1](#) illustrates changes in the number of offenses reported in the five major reporting categories over a three-year period. The numbers in [Table 1](#) are duplicated. Duplicate counts occur because more than one offense type may be selected within a single incident. For example, if a single incident includes a fight and damage to property, it is counted as a fight in the violence category and as damage to property in the vandalism category. Or, for example, if a single incident includes an assault and robbery, it is counted as one incident of assault and one of robbery, both in the violence category. Therefore, the duplicated totals in Table 1 are not the same as the unduplicated count in [Appendix D](#).

The bar graph in [Figure 1](#) presents the total incidents for the major reporting categories from 2008-2012. Vandalism declined approximately 5.4 percent from 2010-11 to 2011-12, continuing a three-year trend. Similarly, incidents involving weapons decreased approximately 8.3 percent, and substance abuse decreased approximately 2.2 percent. There is no comparable data for HIB, as previous years have included threat in that category.

Three-Year Trends in Types of Incidents Reported

Summarized below and detailed in [Table 1](#) and [Appendix E](#) are the changes in the number of reported incidents within each category over the three-year period from 2009-10 through 2011-12:

- In the **violence** category, [Table 1](#) indicates that there were 102 fewer assaults over a three-year period (a decline of approximately 3.2 percent). The number of reported fights decreased by 356, or approximately 9.2 percent, in 2011-12 after an increase in 2010-11. This pattern was also noted for criminal threat. There was an increase in incidents of criminal threat in 2010-11 from 2009-10, but an overall decrease over the three-year period--66 fewer offenses were reported (approximately 32 percent). Incidents of robbery/extortion have decreased consistently over the three-year period with an overall decrease of approximately 20.8 percent. As previously noted, starting in 2011-12, threat is reported as a separate incident type, independent of **HIB**. There were 1,263 incidents of threat reported in 2011-12. No comparison data are available, as HIB and threat were combined prior to the ABR being implemented in 2011-12. [Figure 2](#) shows the two-year trends for frequency of violence for each type of violence.
- In the **HIB** category, there were 12,024 incidents of HIB reported in 2011-12, a marked increase from the number of HIBT incidents reported in 2009-10 and 2011-12 (2,808 and

3,412, respectively). This noted increase may be attributed to heightened awareness of HIB behavior and the emphasis on training and programs related to HIB promoted by the ABR.

- In the **vandalism** category, the reported number of incidents mostly declined over the three-year period as follows: bomb threats (13 or approximately 23.2 percent); burglary (11 or approximately 30.6 percent); damage to property (234 or approximately 23.4 percent); fire alarm offenses (23 or approximately 31.1 percent); fireworks (14 or approximately 28.6 percent); theft (27 or approximately 2.9 percent); and trespassing (14 or approximately 15.8 percent). The number of arson incidents increased by four, or approximately 6.7 percent from 60 in 2009-10 to 64 in 2011-12.
- In the **weapons** category, reported firearms incidents (handguns and rifles) increased from five incidents reported in 2009-10 to nine in 2011-12. In addition, incidents in the “other weapons” category increased by 55 during the same three-year period or approximately five percent. The most notable increases were incidents involving air, pellet and BB guns (up 25), approximately 33.3 percent (see [Appendix E](#)).
- In the **substance** category, the number of incidents of possession of substances increased by 149, or approximately 15 percent from 995 in 2009-10 to 1,144 in 2011-12 (see [Table 1](#)). Also, [Appendix E](#) reports trends by type of substance. The number of incidents involving marijuana decreased from 2,543 in 2010-11 to 2472 in 2011-12, approximately 2.8 percent. Marijuana accounts for the majority (67.9 percent) of the total number of substance incidents reported in 2011-12. Incidents involving alcohol increased by approximately 11.8 percent between 2009-10 and 2011-12. However, between 2010-11 and 2011-12, incidents involving alcohol decreased by approximately three percent from 543 to 529. Alcohol accounts for approximately 14.5 percent of the total number of reported substance incidents this year, second only to marijuana. Incidents involving unauthorized prescription drugs decreased from 219 to 184, or approximately 16 percent in the three-year period. Reported incidents involving narcotics and cocaine/crack increased from 49 to 58 and 41 to 53, respectively. In addition, incidents involving unauthorized over-the-counter drugs saw a slight increase from 48 to 52 from 2009-10 to 2011-12. It is important to note that unauthorized prescription drugs incidents remained the same at 5.1 percent of the total number of substance incidents reported in 2010-11 and 2011-12.

Table 1: Incidents by Type

Note: The numbers in this table are duplicated; therefore, they are not the same as the unduplicated count in [Appendix D](#). See page 2 for examples.

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	3-Year Trend
<i>Incident Type:</i>				
Violence				
Assault	3211	3161	3109	-102
Fight	3874	4043	3518	-356
Robbery/Extortion	96	82	76	-20
Sex Offense	212	252	292	80
Criminal Threat	206	263	140	-66
HIBT ¹	2808	3412		N/A
Threat ²			1263	N/A
Total:	10407	11213	8398	N/A
Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying				
HIB ³			12024	N/A
Total:			12024	N/A
Vandalism				
Arson	60	81	64	4
Bomb Threat ⁴	56	67	43	-13
Burglary	36	44	25	-11
Damage to Property	1000	853	766	-234
Fire Alarm Offense	74	80	51	-23
Fireworks	49	36	35	-14
Theft	943	870	916	-27
Trespassing	89	71	75	-14
Total:	2307	2102	1975	-332
Weapons				
Firearm ⁵	5	5	9	4
Other Weapons	1077	1237	1132	55
Bomb Offense	0	4	0	0
Total:	1082	1246	1141	59
Substances				
Use	2295	2661	2419	124
Possession	995	1119	1144	149
Distribution	137	174	162	25
Total:	3427	3854	3725	298

¹ In 2009-2011 HIBT included incidents of harassment, intimidation, bullying and threat.

² In 2011-12, Threat is reported separately from HIB.

³ In 2011-12, HIB is reported as a separate category, independent of Violence, in accordance with the ABR.

⁴ Includes four fake bombs in both 2009-10 and 2010-11, and two in 2011-12.

⁵ Firearm incidents include handgun and rifle incidents only. Air guns and imitation guns are classified as "Other Weapons" in Table 1.

Characteristics of Incidents

Location

[Figure 3a](#) illustrates the distribution of incidents occurring in a variety of locations across three years. Thirty percent (30 percent) of all reported incidents occurred in the classroom in 2011-12. This is slightly more than last year where approximately 26 percent were taking place in the classroom, which is essentially the same as those occurring in the classroom in 2009-10 (29 percent). The types of incidents occurring in the classroom are illustrated in [Figure 4](#).

The percentage of incidents occurring on the bus has remained relatively stable over the three-year period. Four percent (4 percent) of incidents in both 2009-10 and 2010-11 took place on the bus, while a slight increase was noted in 2010-11 with six percent of incidents having occurred on the bus.

[Figure 3b](#) illustrates the distribution of HIB incidents by location for 2011-12. Nearly one in three (32 percent) of all incidents of HIB occurred in a *classroom*. Twelve percent (12 percent) took place on *other school grounds* and 11 percent occurred in the *cafeteria*, while ten percent were reported to have taken place *off school grounds* (HIB only), as well as in the *corridor*. Nine percent (9 percent) of all HIB incidents took place on the *bus*.

Bias

Any EVVRS-defined incident of violence, vandalism, weapons, or substance abuse may also be reported as motivated by bias. In addition to the 12,024 incidents of HIB reported in 2011-2012 that include bias by definition, there were 93 incidents of violence, vandalism, weapons, or substance abuse reported as bias-related, for a total of 12,117 bias-related incidents. This substantial increase from 2010-11, where a total of 253 biased-related incidents was reported, is likely related to an increased reporting of bullying in 2011-12.

Gang-Related Incidents

Gang-related incidents are those incidents of violence, vandalism, HIB, weapons, or substance abuse where there is confirmation from a law enforcement official, the victim, or the offender that the incident was gang-related. Any offense may be reported as gang-related. The total of 38 gang-related incidents in 2011-12 is a decrease from the 45 reported in 2010-11. Approximately 0.15 percent of all incidents reported were gang-related. Of these incidents, approximately 76.3 percent (29) were incidents of violence. Four of the gang-related incidents were HIB incidents (approximately 10.5 percent).

Police Notification

Police were notified for approximately 21.5 percent of the reported incidents in 2011-12 which represents a decrease from 2010-11 when police were notified for approximately 35.5 percent of incidents. In 2011-12, a complaint was filed with or by the police in 2,539 of all reported incidents, or approximately 9.7 percent which is a decrease from the 2,955, or 17.0 percent of reported incidents in 2010-11.

Disciplinary Action Taken and Program Provided

[Figure 8](#) depicts the number of suspensions and the duration of the suspensions reported for 2010-11 and 2011-12. The total number of suspensions decreased in 2011-12 by 3,480, or approximately 17.9 percent. Continuing attention to the negative impact of suspensions on student academic achievement may be encouraging educators to establish standards, policies and procedures that focus on other consequences and behavioral supports. The percentage of suspensions that were two to four days in duration remained stable, representing nearly half all suspensions for each year, 9,027 or approximately 46.5 percent in 2010-11 and 7,168 or approximately 45.0 percent in 2011-12. Decreases are noted in each of the other groupings as well -- the most notable being one-day and five-day suspensions with decreases of 555 and 516, respectively. Again, the percentages of the total are stable for both years; one-day suspensions accounting for approximately 14.2 percent of the total in 2010-11 and approximately 13.7 percent of the total in 2011-12, while five-day suspensions accounted for approximately 13.9 percent of the total in 2010-11 and approximately 13.7 percent of the total in 2011-12. [Figure 9](#) shows the distribution of the types of programs provided when disciplinary action is taken. The program/services most frequently provided were classwork assignments.

[Figure 10](#) further disaggregates program/services provided by suspension type (in-school, and out-of-school). Classwork assignments were the programs/services most frequently provided for both in-school and out-of school suspension.

Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB)

As noted above, HIB and threat are reported in separate categories in 2011-12. In addition, HIB is now reported separately from other incidents of violence. This is problematic when trying to draw conclusions from comparisons to prior years. An additional year of data collection will allow for direct comparisons to be made and will facilitate further analyses of these data.

Of the 13,101 students who committed acts of HIB, over half of the students responsible were in grades 5-6 (22.9 percent) and grades 7-8 (29.6 percent) compared to responsible students in other grades combined (see [Figure 5](#)). Yet, fifth and sixth graders represent 15.4 percent of the total number of students enrolled statewide and seventh and eighth graders represent 15.6 percent of the enrolled students. The number of schools reporting HIBT and HIB incidents increased approximately 108.9 percent from 776 in 2009-10 to 1,621 in 2011-12 (see [Figure 6a](#)).

Other Disciplinary Action

In addition to the types of disciplinary actions captured in the EVVRS for all incidents, the ABR requires reporting of additional disciplinary actions, including consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who commits an act of HIB (see “Other disciplinary action(s) taken” on page 2 of the Violence, Vandalism and Substance Abuse (VV-SA) Incident Report Form in [Appendix B](#)). In 2011-12, a total of 32,062 additional disciplinary actions were recorded related to incidents of HIB. Student conferences accounted for approximately 28.6 percent of the total (9,185), followed by parent conferences which made up approximately 23.9 percent (7,677), while individual counseling accounted for approximately 22.2 percent (7,127) of the additional disciplinary actions taken related to incidents of HIB (see [Figure 6b](#)).

Additional Data

Starting in 2011-12, additional data related to each reported incident of HIB was required by the ABR. The NJDOE created page four of the VV-SA form (see [Appendix B](#)) to collect these additional HIB data that include:

- The lead investigator's name;
- The status of the investigation; and
- The nature of the incident including the protected category, the effect of the incident, and the mode of the incident.

Status of HIB Investigations

Districts select the "10-day investigation completed" option when an HIB-related incident is completed within 10 days or less from the date the written request of the incident is received by the school principal. In 2011-12, 11,294 incidents (approximately 93.9 percent) were reported as completed within the 10-day timeline according to the ABR.

Each Board of Education (BOE) is required to issue a decision in writing, to affirm, reject or modify the superintendent's decision following the completion of an HIB investigation. Since only incidents confirmed by the BOE are reported in the EVVRS, the "Board of Education decision rendered" should equal the number of HIB incidents.

In 2011-12, 12,024 HIB incidents were reported in EVVRS; however, districts reported that a BOE decision was rendered in only 6,901 cases. It is expected that these numbers would match, since only confirmed HIB incidents should be reported. As this is the first year this data is collected, there may be many reasons why there is a discrepancy, including reporting errors.

Nature of HIB Incidents

Data on the nature of the HIB incidents is collected under the following groupings: 1) Protected Category; 2) Effect of HIB Incident; and 3) Mode of HIB Incident.

With regard to "Effect of HIB Incident," districts reported that the offender *insulted or demeaned a student or group of students* for the majority (8,571) of the reported HIB incidents (12,024) or approximately 71.3 percent. For approximately 32 percent of the HIB incidents, agencies reported that *the offender knew the action would physically or emotionally cause harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property* (3,802). HIB *interfered with victim's education* in 2,961, or approximately 25 percent of the reported incidents, while 2,821 incidents *substantially disrupted or interfered with orderly operation of school or rights of other students*, and 2,629 incidents *created a hostile educational environment by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student*, approximately 24 percent and 22 percent, respectively. See [Figure 7](#) for a complete analysis of the effect of the total number of reported HIB incidents.

With respect to "Mode of HIB Incident," the vast majority, 9,365, or approximately 78 percent of the reported 12,024 HIB incidents were *verbal*; 1,774 (approximately 15 percent) were

communicated through *gesture*; 1,392 (approximately 12 percent) were through *electronic communication*; and 2,229 (approximately 19 percent) were *physical* (resulting in minor or major injury). Of these *physical* incidents, minor injury was incurred by 646 of the 655 victims; eight incurred major injury; and one victim incurred serious bodily injury. See [Figure 7](#) for a complete analysis of the mode of the total number of reported HIB incidents.

Of the 12,024 incidents of HIB reported, the majority, 7,493, or approximately 62 percent, were reported as being related to some *other distinguishing characteristic* of the victim; 1,291 incidents (approximately 11 percent) were related to *sexual orientation*; 1,186, (approximately 10 percent) were associated with *gender*; 1,553 were related to *race* and *color* combined; and 536 were associated with *gender identity and expression*, approximately 12.9 percent and 4.5 percent, respectively. See [Figure 7](#) for a complete analysis of each of the protected categories associated with the total number of HIB incidents.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigations, Trainings and Programs (HIB-ITP) Findings

The HIB-ITP data collection system was created for 2011-12; therefore, all information reported in this section is for 2011-12 only. It should be noted that 83 districts/charter schools did not report HIB-ITP data for one or both reporting periods. This reporting error may be attributed to the fact that the HIB-ITP system is new for the 2011-12 school year and indicates the need for additional training and technical assistance for users. The HIB-ITP Data Collection Form is in [Appendix B](#).

HIB Investigations and Incidents

Districts reported that 35,552 HIB-related investigations were conducted. As noted earlier, there were 12,024 confirmed incidents of HIB reported in 2011-12 over the EVVRS. This indicates that slightly more than one in three (approximately 33.8 percent) of all HIB-related investigations were found to be confirmed incidents of HIB. However, the number of confirmed HIB incidents reported in HIB-ITP was 13,684. This is a difference of 1,660 compared to the 12,024 confirmed incidents reported on EVVRS. This discrepancy may also be attributed to the fact that the HIB-ITP system is new for the 2011-12 school year and indicates another area of focus for additional training and technical assistance for users (see [Figure 11](#)).

Trainings Provided to Reduce Incidents of HIB

Trainings conducted to reduce incidents of HIB are reported in three categories: 1) District HIB Policy Training (Policy Only), 2) District Policy Training Including Instruction on Preventing Bullying on the Basis of Protected Categories and Other Distinguishing Characteristics (Policy and Prevention), and 3) Other Training Topics. A total of 11,445 trainings related to the reduction of HIB were conducted in 2011-12. The majority of the type of trainings conducted, 6,519, or approximately 57 percent were reported as Other Training Topics. There were 3,868 trainings conducted related to Policy and Prevention, accounting for approximately 33.8 percent of the total, while 1,058 (approximately 9.2 percent) were related to Policy Only. Since trainings may target one or more categories, these totals are duplicated (see [Figure 11](#)).

The majority (approximately 51.5 percent) of the trainings reported indicated teachers as the target audience, followed by school anti-bullying specialists (approximately 46.5 percent), and school-level administrators (approximately 41.7 percent). District-level HIB coordinators and district-level administrators were the target audience of approximately 27.7 percent and approximately 17.4 percent of the trainings conducted, respectively. Approximately 33.8 percent of the trainings conducted were for other school staff. Students were the target audience of approximately 23.5 percent of the total number of trainings, while approximately 16.9 percent were for parents. Additional target audiences identified included contracted service providers (approximately 5 percent), volunteers (approximately 4.2 percent), and a generic group labeled other (approximately 9.6 percent), which included any other target audience for whom the trainings were deemed appropriate. Since trainings may target one or more audience type, these totals are duplicated (see [Figure 11](#)).

Programs Provided to Reduce Incidents of HIB

There were 8,760 HIB programs, approaches or initiatives, other than trainings, reported over the 2011-12 school year. The vast majority (approximately 89.8 percent), of these programs, approaches or initiatives targeted students. Teachers were the target population approximately 48.6 percent of the time, while the anti-bullying specialists and school-level administrators were targeted approximately 29.4 percent and 27.8 percent of the time, respectively. District anti-bullying coordinators were the target population of approximately 10.8 percent of the programs, approaches, or initiatives, while approximately 6.4 percent targeted district-level administrators. Parents were the target audience of approximately 21.2 percent of these programs, approaches, or initiatives. Additional target audiences identified included contracted service providers (approximately 2.8 percent), volunteers (approximately 5 percent), and a group labeled “Other” (approximately 3.4 percent), which included any other target audience for whom these programs were deemed appropriate. Since programs, approaches or initiatives may target one or more audience type, these totals are duplicated (see [Figure 11](#)).

As part of reporting, districts selected the type of safe and supportive school-wide conditions on which the programs, approaches or initiatives were focused. The ten choices are fully described in the *Essential Dimensions for Consideration for Safe and Supportive School Conditions* ([Appendix B](#)). Of the 8,760 programs provided, the three top school-wide conditions addressed were *Relationships* (approximately 78 percent), *Sense of School Community* (approximately 72.7 percent), and *Peer-Social Norms* (70.7 percent). *Safety* was addressed in approximately 64.3 percent of the programs provided, while the *Teaching and Learning* category and the *Morale* category were the focus of approximately 62.0 percent and approximately 56.1 percent of the programs, respectively. *Environmental* conditions were addressed in approximately 36.5 percent of the programs, the *Learning Community* was the focus of approximately 36.3 percent, *School-Home-Community Partnerships* was the focus of approximately 31.7 percent, and *Structural* conditions were addressed in approximately 17.8 percent of the total number of programs provided. Since each program, approach and initiative may support one or more of the condition types, these totals are duplicated (see [Figure 11](#)).

PROGRAMMATIC RESPONSE

Comprehensive Approach to Prevention

Violence, as is the case with many community problems, can become manifest in schools. The NJDOE and local school staff persistently strive to make school environments safe, secure, and optimal settings for promoting student learning and growth. The most effective strategies for the prevention of school violence and related at-risk student behavior involve continuous vigilance and proactive, coordinated efforts among all facets of the community for the maintenance of supportive and disciplined school environments.

State and local interagency collaborations have enhanced educators' capacities to cultivate positive learning conditions and to address complex student problems. A growing recognition among representatives from state and local partner agencies regarding the importance of data-driven decision-making and the use of research-based practices has contributed to more focused and functional program efforts and more efficient use of resources.

In the interest of advancing the overarching goals of preventing, reducing, and effectively managing incidents of violence; vandalism; harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB); substance abuse; and other at-risk student behaviors, the NJDOE and its partner state agencies support a diverse array of initiatives designed to help schools achieve the following objectives:

- To protect the health, safety, security, and welfare of school populations;
- To establish and maintain civil educational climates;
- To prevent at-risk student behaviors;
- To intervene with and remediate at-risk student behaviors at all stages of identification;
- To provide supportive services for staff, students, and their families; and
- To prevent, intervene in, respond to, and recover from emergency and crisis situations.

Programs, services, and activities designed to support these aims are at the heart of safe and supportive schools. There continues to be important gains in our knowledge from the research literature on the types of school-based strategies that have proven to be effective in creating safe, supportive, disciplined and drug-free schools. At their core, all of the evidence-based school strategies for preventing problem student behaviors and for fostering positive student development are designed to advance the following protective factors:

- Student engagement in learning;
- Student attachment to school; and
- Student acquisition of the social skills, which have been reported in the research literature to result in measurable positive effects on academic performance, student retention and reductions in violence, harassment, intimidation, bullying, substance abuse, and other at-risk student behaviors.

Schools are most likely to prevent problem student behaviors and promote student well-being and success through comprehensive, coordinated and systematically planned programs, services, and activities designed to develop student's abilities to identify and manage emotions, make healthy decisions, establish constructive relationships, develop caring and concern for others, and

effectively manage challenging situations. The NJDOE's initiatives are designed to help schools embrace and cultivate the strategies and increase the factors that protect students from engaging in at-risk behavior (e.g., unexcused absences, conduct problems, poor school performance, violence, substance abuse, harassment, intimidation and bullying, gang involvement) and achieve the purposes described above.

Department Recommendations

School districts, county agencies, and state agencies must continue to coordinate and collaborate on efforts that promote schools that both foster safe and supportive conditions for learning and prevent at-risk and disruptive behavior. In response to at-risk student behaviors and unsafe educational environments, the NJDOE will continue to focus its efforts on areas of statewide concern and districts should focus on locally-determined concerns. In support of these ends, the NJDOE recommends that districts and schools do the following:

1. Coordinate, improve and expand existing and required policies, procedures and plans to address areas of concern, such as:
 - Assess the immediate school surroundings, as well as the social and emotional learning climates of the school communities;
 - Develop and consistently apply clearly defined codes of student conduct and policies and procedures, including strategies for addressing harassment, intimidation, bullying, student attendance and truancy;
 - Maintain current comprehensive school safety and security plans that incorporate clearly defined procedures and mechanisms for responding to and recovering from emergencies and crises;
 - Use the *Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials* to strengthen communication and optimize the prevention and intervention of and response to unlawful behavior;
 - Use building-based multidisciplinary problem-solving teams to assist students who are experiencing learning, behavior or health difficulties; to assist staff who have difficulties in addressing students' learning, behavior, or health needs; and to inform principals of school-wide issues; and
 - Use School Safety Teams created under the ABR to identify systemic concerns and recommend programs and strategies for addressing them.

2. Use local data (e.g., attendance, conduct referrals and dispositions, grades) and collect additional data to more effectively target resources to areas of concern and track progress and outcomes of implemented programs and strategies, including through the use of the following data sources:
 - Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS);
 - Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying-Investigations, Trainings and Programs (HIB-ITP) data collection system;
 - New Jersey Student Health Survey;
 - School Health Profiles Survey;

- School Report Card;
 - NJSMART (the NJDOE’s student-level data system); and
 - School climate surveys.
3. Implement evidence-based prevention and intervention programs and strategies that focus on areas of local concern.
 4. Use district improvement initiatives to support general prevention efforts by establishing school climates and cultures that are supportive, respectful and caring; create meaningful adult-student relationships; provide learning experiences that are relevant and rigorous; and give students sufficient support to help them stay engaged and succeed in school. Some examples include:
 - School improvement efforts that focus on high expectations for academic achievement and conduct and that establish a school culture and climate that supports teaching and learning;
 - Personalized Student Learning Plans that are designed to use adult mentors (including parents, teachers and counselors) to help students recognize and achieve their goals and that include at least the following three areas of development: personal, academic, and career;
 - Professional Learning Communities in which schools are characterized as learning organizations united by a shared vision of student and staff learning and mutually accepted values of respect and caring, and in which staff and students function interdependently to achieve shared goals for which they are collectively accountable;
 - After-school programs that engage students in productive, educational and healthy activities during the hours after school when youth are most likely to engage in delinquent or dangerous activities;
 - School Wellness Teams (councils) that promote healthier nutrition choices, breakfast in the classroom and increased physical activity throughout the day; and
 - Educational stability guidelines that are designed to improve the educational outcomes of children in out-of-home placement by promoting, developing, and enhancing collaboration between schools and child protective and behavioral health and prevention systems.

Department Support

The NJDOE will continue to provide school staff, parents, community members, students and other constituents with information, technical assistance, training and Web-based resources to support the recommendations above. Supportive information, including resources to prevent problem student behaviors, foster positive student development, and promote safe, disciplined and drug-free schools are posted on the NJDOE Keeping Our Kids Safe Web page at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/>.

1. In order to support consistent, effective, precise implementation of the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR)*, the NJDOE provided training and technical assistance, engaged stakeholders, developed guidance materials, modified and created reporting systems, and

distributed funding. During this reporting period from September 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012, the NJDOE completed the following:

Training and Technical Assistance

- Provided training in September 2011 to 1,250 people at 10 sessions about the ABR requirements, the roles and responsibilities of district anti-bullying coordinators and school anti-bullying specialists, and HIB prevention practices. Three of the sessions were designed to build the capacity of independent trainers in the state to help school districts with the implementation of the ABR. The training PowerPoint is posted at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/HIBTrainingPP.pdf>;
- Conducted six technical support conference calls with county office of education staff to address local implementation issues October-December 2011;
- Provided 16 additional HIB trainings and presentations to 900 people, upon request, February-March 2012;
- Provided ongoing technical support to the county offices of education and constituents regarding requirements in the ABR; and
- Revised EVVRS and HIB-ITP directions and provided additional guidance and training on the use of the systems and what to report.

Consultation

- Consulted with stakeholders on the development of training programs and guidance; Organized the first meeting of the Anti-Bullying Task Force, which was held in July 2012, assisted the Task Force with subsequent activities and continues to provide support at ongoing meetings;
- Provided ongoing coordination of the efforts among the offices in the NJDOE responsible for other components of the ABR, such as teacher preparation programs and professional development, leadership training, and criminal history checks.

Guidance Materials

- Disseminated guidance on the “Week of Respect” in September 2011, to assist districts with the observance of the week and posted it at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/violence.shtml> ;
- Revised the Memorandum of Agreement between Education and Law Enforcement Officials (MOA) in September 2011 to comply with the ABR, disseminated it to school districts and posted it at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/security/regs/agree.pdf>;
- Revised the Frequently Asked Questions document supporting the MOA in July 2012, to address issues pertaining to the ABR, and posted it at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/security/regs/agreefaq.pdf>;
- Revised the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Compliance Checklist in October 2011 to include the requirements in the ABR and posted it at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/checklist.pdf>;
- Disseminated following documents: ABR Educator Preparation Program Requirements to the Deans and Alternate Route Directors of Educator Preparation Programs posted at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/HIBGuidanceEdPrep.pdf> and Guidance for Teacher and Educational Leader Professional Development on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying in October 2011 and posted it at:
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/HIBGuidancePD.pdf> in October 2011;

- Revised the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Compliance Checklist in October 2011 to include the requirements in the ABR and posted it at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/checklist.pdf>;
- Disseminated a comprehensive guidance document titled Guidance for Schools on Implementing the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act*, in December 2011, designed to support implementation of the ABR and assist in resolving bullying complaints, and posted it at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/guidance.pdf>;
- Coordinated with the Division on Civil Rights (DCR), the Appellate Division of the Superior Court and the NJDOE's Office of Controversies and Disputes in the preparation of guidance documents;
- Revised and redistributed HIB investigation protocol for executive county superintendents in June 2012;
- Developed four online tutorials on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying for School Personnel and one online tutorial on the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination and the ABR for School Personnel, Parents and Students in May 2012 and posted them at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/tutorials/>;

Reporting

- Notified districts of new information that would be collected on the Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS) for 2011-2012 to comply with the ABR in September 2011;
- In January 2012, the redesigned Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System which can be accessed at <http://homeroom.state.nj.us/EVVRS.htm> was opened for 2011-12. Districts were notified and provided guidance on entering incidents and the new information required on HIB incidents.
- Sent the report on violence and vandalism, including HIB, for 2009-2011, to the Education Committees of the Legislature in December 2011;
- Advised districts in January 2012 that the County District School System (CDSS) was modified to collect information on the school anti-bullying specialist and district anti-bullying coordinator to post on the NJDOE Web site, as required by the ABR. This information can be found by searching school districts and schools in the New Jersey School Directory at: <http://education.state.nj.us/directory/>;
- In April and May 2012, reminders were forwarded to districts that had not entered the data on NJDOE's CDSS;
- Opened the newly-created Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying-Investigations, Trainings and Programs (HIB-ITP) data collection system which can be accessed at: http://homeroom.state.nj.us/evvrs/HIB_11-15.pdf for schools to report information that required by the ABR;

- Notified districts of the process for verifying their EVVRS data for 2011-12; reminded them to certify their data reported on the HIB-ITP for Report Periods 1 and 2; and advised them of the time periods for reporting HIB data to NJDOE in June 2012;

Funding

- Distributed \$1 million to 370 school districts to provide supplemental funds to support implementation of the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act*.
2. Current and future NJDOE activities to provide support to students, parents and schools with resources, information and training, include:
 - Collaborating with stakeholder groups to develop a system to grade schools and districts on their efforts to implement policies and programs consistent with the provisions of the ABR;
 - Collaborating with the Bloustein Center for Survey Research, Rutgers University, since April 2012 on the development of a New Jersey School Climate Survey intended to be available, at no charge, for use by school districts and schools throughout the state in the 2012-13 school year;
 - Detailing instructional materials and guidance to address procedures that appear to be the source of data reporting inaccuracies by districts;
 - Providing six, half-day regional trainings to detail EVVRS and HIB-ITP data input and reporting procedures;
 - Conducting site visits for districts showing evidence of EVVRS and HIB-ITP reporting anomalies to verify district reporting of incidents and provide technical assistance.
 3. In order to address the needs of students, parents and schools, the NJDOE will continue Interagency collaboration to provide more efficient access to services and supports, such as:
 - Actively participating on the Governor’s Council for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Governor’s Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council, Governor’s Advisory Council on Domestic Violence, Governor’s Advisory Council on Sexual Violence, Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Committee, School-based Probation Committee, Children in the Court Improvement Committee, and New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect and its Prevention Subcommittee;
 - Chairing or co-chairing the Department of Education and Department of Children and Families Workgroup and the Education and Law Enforcement Workgroup; and
 - Convening advisory and focus group on topics of concern including, as appropriate, representatives from the departments of State, Health and Senior Services, Children and Families, Environmental Protection, Human Services, Law and Public Safety and Corrections; the Juvenile Justice Commission; Administrative Office of the Courts; state advisory boards and commissions; institutions of higher learning; and other organizations, associations and agencies.

Appendix A

Public School Safety Law

18A:17-46. Reporting of certain acts by school employee; report; public hearing.

Any school employee observing or having direct knowledge from a participant or victim of an act of violence shall, in accordance with standards established by the commissioner, file a report describing the incident to the school principal in a manner prescribed by the commissioner, and copy of same shall be forwarded to the district superintendent.

The principal shall notify the district superintendent of schools of the action taken regarding the incident. Two times each school year, between September 1 and January 1 and between January 1 and June 30, at a public hearing, the superintendent of schools shall report to the board of education all acts of violence, vandalism, and harassment, intimidation, or bullying which occurred during the previous reporting period. The report shall include the number of reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the status of all investigations, the nature of the bullying based on one of the protected categories identified in section 2 of P.L.2002, c.83 (C.18A:37-14), the names of the investigators, the type and nature of any discipline imposed on any student engaged in harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and any other measures imposed, training conducted, or programs implemented, to reduce harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The information shall also be reported once during each reporting period to the Department of Education. The report must include data broken down by the enumerated categories as listed in section 2 of P.L.2002, c.83 (C.18A:37-14), and data broken down by each school in the district, in addition to district-wide data. It shall be a violation to improperly release any confidential information not authorized by federal or State law for public release.

The report shall be used to grade each school for the purpose of assessing its effort to implement policies and programs consistent with the provisions of P.L.2002, c.83 (C.18A:37-13 et seq.). The district shall receive a grade determined by averaging the grades of all the schools in the district. The commissioner shall promulgate guidelines for a program to grade schools for the purposes of this section.

The grade received by a school and the district shall be posted on the homepage of the school's Web site. The grade for the district and each school of the district shall be posted on the homepage of the district's Web site. A link to the report shall be available on the district's Web site. The information shall be posted on the Web sites within 10 days of the receipt of a grade by the school and district.

Verification of the reports on violence, vandalism, and harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be part of the State's monitoring of the school district, and the State Board of Education shall adopt regulations that impose a penalty on a school employee who knowingly falsifies the report. A board of education shall provide ongoing staff training, in cooperation with the Department of Education, in fulfilling the reporting requirements pursuant to this section. The majority representative of the school employees shall have access monthly to the number and disposition of

all reported acts of school violence, vandalism, and harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

L.1982, c.163, s.1; amended 2001, c.299; 2007, c.42, s.1; 2010, c.122, s.7.

18A:17-47. Discharge of, or discrimination against, school employee who files report

It shall be unlawful for any board of education to discharge or in any manner discriminate against a school employee as to his employment because the employee had filed a report pursuant to section 1 of this act. Any employee discriminated against shall be restored to his employment and shall be compensated by the board of education for any loss of wages arising out of the discrimination; provided, however, if the employee shall cease to be qualified to perform the duties of his employment he shall not be entitled to restoration and compensation.

L.1982, c. 163, s. 2, eff. Oct. 28, 1982.

18A:17-48 Annual report to Legislature.

3. The Commissioner of Education shall each year submit a report to the Education Committees of the Senate and General Assembly detailing the extent of violence, vandalism, and harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the public schools and making recommendations to alleviate the problem. The report shall be made available annually to the public no later than October 1, and shall be posted on the department's Web site.

L.1982, c.163, s.3; amended 2010, c.122, s.8.

Data Collection Forms

[\(Click Here to Display VV-SA Form\)](#)

[\(Click Here to Display HIB-ITP Form\)](#)

[\(Click Here to Display Essential Dimensions and Considerations for
Safe and Supportive School Conditions\)](#)

Figures 1-11

- [Figure 1.](#)** Total Incidents for Major Reporting Categories, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12
- [Figure 2.](#)** Frequency of Types of Violence, 2010-11, 2011-12
- [Figure 3a.](#)** Incidents by Location, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12
- [Figure 3b.](#)** HIB Incidents by Location, 2011-12
- [Figure 4.](#)** Types of Incidents Occurring in the Classroom, 2011-12
- [Figure 5.](#)** Distribution of HIB Student Offenders by Grade Level, 2011-12
- [Figure 6a.](#)** Count of Schools by Number of HIBT and HIB Incidents, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12
- [Figure 6b.](#)** Disciplinary Action Taken for HIB Incidents
- [Figure 7.](#)** Count of HIB Incidents by Nature 2011-12
- [Figure 8.](#)** Number of Suspensions by Duration, 2010-11, 2011-12
- [Figure 9.](#)** Program/Services Provided for All Disciplinary Action Taken, 2011-12
- [Figure 10.](#)** Program/Services Provided Upon Suspension, 2011-12
- [Figure 11.](#)** Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying – Investigations, Trainings and Programs (HIB-ITP)

District Totals by County

These are self-reported totals verified by the district and there may be some limitations in how the data can be viewed and interpreted. Every effort is made by the NJDOE to ensure accuracy and consistency in reporting. See “[Department Support](#)” in the Programmatic Response section of this report.

[\(Click Here to Display\)](#)

Violence, Vandalism, Weapons, Substance, HIB columns:

- The types of offenses included in each column are as follows:
 - Violence:** Assaults, Fight, Robbery, Extortion, Sex Offense, Criminal Threat, Threat
 - Harassment Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB)** - Based on the nature of HIB incidents including the protected category, effect and mode
 - Vandalism:** Arson, Bomb Threat or Fake Bomb, Burglary, Damage to Property, Fire Alarm Offense, Fireworks Offense, Theft, Trespassing
 - Weapons:** Firearm -Possession of, assault with, or sale/distribution of a handgun or rifle; Bomb Offense - Exploded/did not explode; Other Weapon -Possession of, assault with, or sale/distribution of weapon other than a firearm (e.g. knife, club, spray, air gun, etc.)
 - Substance Abuse** – Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution
- More than one type of offense may be reported for a single incident; therefore, the numbers in the major reporting category columns are duplicated counts. If the types of offenses are in different major reporting categories, the incident is counted in each major reporting category. For example, if an assault and a firearm offense were reported in the same incident, they are counted in both the violence and weapons major categories. If the types of offenses are in the same major reporting category, the incident is only counted once. For example, if a fight and a robbery occurred during the same incident, they are counted as one incident of violence.

Total Column:

- The numbers in the Total column are an unduplicated count of the number of incidents reported by the district regardless of the number of offense types selected within each incident; therefore, the sum may not equal the total of the five categories.

Appendix E

Substance and Weapons Detail, 2009-12							
	2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		3 - Year Change
	# of Incidents	% of Total	# of Incidents	% of Total	# of Incidents	% of Total	Difference
<i>Weapons</i>							
Handgun	4	0.3	5	0.4	8	0.7	4
Rifle	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.1	0
Air Gun, Pellet Gun, BB Gun	75	6.5	87	7.0	100	8.8	25
Imitation Firearm	25	2.2	29	2.3	27	2.4	2
Bomb - Exploded	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Bomb - Unexploded	0	0.0	4	0.3	0	0.0	0
Knife, Blade, Razor, Scissors, Box Cutter	817	70.9	834	66.9	710	62.2	-107
Pin, Sharp Pen/Pencil	54	4.7	53	4.3	63	5.5	9
Chain, Club, Brass Knuckles	17	1.5	20	1.6	19	1.7	2
Spray	7	0.6	20	1.6	22	1.9	15
Other	153	13.3	194	15.6	191	16.7	38
Total Weapons (duplicated*)	1153	100.0	1246	100.0	1141	100.0	-12
<i>Substances</i>							
Alcohol	473	13.8	543	14.8	529	14.5	56
Marijuana	2361	68.7	2543	69.1	2472	67.9	111
Amphetamines	37	1.1	49	1.3	35	1.0	-2
Cocaine/Crack	41	1.2	41	1.1	53	1.5	12
Hallucinogens	14	0.4	10	0.3	14	0.4	0
Narcotics	49	1.4	60	1.6	58	1.6	9
Depressants	48	1.4	36	1.0	31	0.9	-17
Anabolic Steroids	3	0.1	3	0.1	2	0.1	-1
Unauthorized Prescription Drugs	219	6.4	188	5.1	184	5.1	-35
Inhalants	6	0.2	3	0.1	10	0.3	4
Drug Paraphernalia	136	4.0	164	4.5	201	5.5	65
Unauthorized Over-the- Counter Drug	48	1.4	41	1.1	52	1.4	4
Total Substances (duplicated*)	3435	100.0	3681	100.0	3641	100.0	206
* More than one type of weapon or substance may be associated with an incident.							

Glossary of Terms

Charter School - A Charter School is a public school that operates independently of a local school district's board of education under a charter granted by the Commissioner. Once a charter is approved and established, the school is managed by a board of trustees with status as a public agent authorized by the State Board of Education to supervise and control the school. A Charter School is a corporate entity with all the powers needed to carry out its charter program.

Contracted Service Providers - Individuals employed by the school district on a contract basis who are not permanent district employees.

Electronic Violence and Vandalism and Reporting System (EVVRS) Incident Definitions

The EVVRS reporting year is September 1 through June 30. The EVVRS remains open until July 15 for data modification and verification of data entered for the prior reporting year. Only incidents matching the definitions below should be reported on EVVRS unless otherwise specified. Only incidents that occur on school grounds while school is in session (including arrival and dismissal) and at school-sponsored functions (e.g., events, clubs) are reported unless otherwise specified in the definitions.

Incident Header Information

1) Bias-Related: Bias-Related means that an incident is reasonably perceived as motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, a mental, physical, or sensory disability, or any other distinguishing characteristic. To determine whether bias played a role, consider:

- an admission by the perpetrator of bias motivation;
- obvious signs of bias – such as the utterance of racial epithets or use of hate graffiti;
- the victim expressing that bias motives were involved; and
- a history of bias incidents among the involved students or groups of students.

A bias incident is not a separate EVVRS-defined incident. Rather, bias is an element that can play a role in any EVVRS-defined incident. In addition, the EVVRS considers bias in terms of the incident as a whole, not simply with regard to the offender's actions.

2) Gang-Related: Confirmation from a law enforcement official, the victim, or the offender that the incident was gang related.

Violence

1) Assault: A person attempts to cause – or purposely, knowingly, or recklessly causes – bodily injury to another.

2) Criminal Threat: Expressing – either physically or verbally – the intent to commit one of the following violent criminal offenses: homicide, aggravated assault, sexual assault, kidnapping, or arson. The threat must be made for the purpose of placing another in imminent fear of one of these violent acts, under circumstances that would reasonably cause the victim(s) to believe the immediacy of the threat and the likelihood that it will be carried out.

3) Extortion: Attempting to obtain or obtaining money or any material thing (regardless of value) from another by means of a stated or implied threat of future violence, or threats to make false charges against someone or to blackmail someone.

4) Fight: Mutual engagement in a physical confrontation that may result in bodily injury to either party. Does not include a verbal confrontation or a minor confrontation, such as a shoving match. Each participant must be classified as an offender.

5) Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB): HIB means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably 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 disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L. 2010, c.122 (C. 18A:37-15.3), that 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 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
- 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.

6) Threat: Attempting by physical menace (e.g., verbal threats) to put another in fear of future serious bodily injury. (Do not include bomb threats in this category). One needs to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

7) Kidnapping: Pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A: 2C:13-1*, unlawful removal of a student from school grounds or a substantial distance from where he or she is found in or on school grounds; or confinement of the victim for the purpose of holding the victim for ransom or reward as a shield

or hostage; or confinement for a substantial period of time to facilitate commission of a crime or flight thereafter; or to inflict bodily injury on or terrorize the victim.

8) Robbery: Obtaining money or any material thing (regardless of value) from another by means of force, violence or the threat of immediate violence.

9) Sex Offense: Subjecting another to sexual contact or exposure. For the incident to be considered a sex offense, at least one of the following criteria must apply to the offender. The offender must:

- intentionally touch, either directly or through clothing, the victim's intimate body parts, for the purpose of degrading or humiliating the victim. (Intimate body parts are defined by statute (*N.J.S.A. 18A: 2C:14-1e*) to include "sexual organs, genital area, anal area, inner thigh, groin, buttock or breast of a person");
- sexually arouse or sexually gratify himself or herself in view of the victim whom the offender knows to be present;
- force or coerce the victim to participate in any contact or exposure; or
- commit any act of sexual assault defined under *N.J.S.A. 18A: 2C:14-2*, which includes provisions related to the age of the victim and the offender.

NOTE: Incidents of sexual harassment are reported as Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying.

Injury

Minor Injury – Injury such as a cut, abrasion, burn or bruise where the individual was seen by the school nurse and received treatment, (e.g., and ice pack, topical preparation, or bandaging); or the individual was referred to a medical practice or facility for observation and/or treatment, and the injury was not considered major as defined below.

Major Injury – Injury which requires medical treatment and includes concussions, injured organs, fractured or broken bones, severe burns, or cuts requiring stitches.

Serious Bodily Injury – An injury which involves:

- a) a substantial risk of death;
- b) extreme physical pain;
- c) protracted and obvious disfigurements; or
- d) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

Vandalism – (Incidents of vandalism that occur anytime should be reported.)

1) Arson: Starting a fire or causing an explosion in or on the grounds of a school, thereby purposely or knowingly placing the victim or group of specified victims in danger of death or bodily injury; or with the purpose of destroying or damaging the victim's or group of specified victims' property that – as defined under Incident Location – is in the school, on school grounds, or in another school building or structure. Arson does NOT include the act of lighting

a match.

2) Bomb Threat: A communication received via telephone, e-mail or other means stating that a bomb (an explosive device greater in size than a firecracker) will detonate on school grounds (building, property or school bus).

3) Burglary: An individual entering, or surreptitiously remaining in, a school district facility or on school property, or someone else's property (e.g., an automobile) that is on school property for the purpose of committing an offense therein. For an incident to constitute Burglary, the individual must not be entitled to enter or remain in the facility. If the person does have this right, and property is stolen, the incident is reported as Theft.

4) Damage to Property: Purposely, knowingly, or recklessly destroying or defacing school, contracted, or personal property, thereby causing an economic loss due to repair or replacement. Serious incidental damage to property that occurs during an act of violence should be reported.

5) Fake Bomb: An object that has the appearance of an explosive device that upon inspection is determined to be harmless.

6) Fire Alarm: Knowingly setting off a fire alarm when no fire exists.

7) Fireworks Offense: The possession, sale or distribution, or detonation of a self-fusing explosive device that is no greater in size than two inches and is commercially sold as "fireworks." Cherry bombs, M80s, and M90s are reported in this category.

8) Theft: The taking of the school district's or a person's belongings or property without consent. Report only incidents where the value of the article taken is \$10 or more.

9) Trespassing: Entry onto school property or into a school building without permission when the individual knows that he/she is not privileged to be on the property.

Substance Offense

1) Use Confirmed: Per *N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.3(a)*, any educational staff member or other professional to whom it appears that a student may be currently under the influence of alcohol or other drugs on school property or at a school function shall report the matter as soon as possible to the principal and the certified or non-certified school nurse, school physician, or substance awareness coordinator, according to the requirements of *N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-12*. Per *N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.3(b)*, any educational staff member or other professional who has reason to believe that a student has used or may be using anabolic steroids shall report the matter as soon as possible to the principal and to the certified or non-certified school nurse, school physician, or substance awareness coordinator, according to the requirements of *N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-12*.

- Report the use as Suspected Use –Confirmed when confirmed by medical examination or when medical examination was refused. (Enter "refused" in the Incident Description field.)

2) Possession: A student is found with alcohol, marijuana, and/or any other controlled dangerous substance (not including cigarettes) or anabolic steroids in his or her locker or vehicle, or on his or her person. This category also includes possession of unauthorized prescription drugs, over-the-counter (nonprescription) drugs, and drug paraphernalia.

3) Sale/Distribution: A student sells, buys, or gives alcohol, other controlled dangerous substances (not including cigarettes), or anabolic steroids to others, or employs others to do the same.

- A student need not be caught in the act of selling or giving to be accused of distributing. The term “distribution” includes the possession of alcohol or other drugs, including anabolic steroids, in such quantities or under such circumstances that it may be inferred that the student intended to distribute to others. Therefore, possession of a large amount of drugs must be reported as “distribution” rather than “possession.”

Weapons

1) Weapons include any instrument readily capable of lethal use or of inflicting bodily injury, but is not limited to: handguns, rifles, knives; clubs or other bludgeons; chains; sling shots; leather bands studded with metal filings; razor blades; stun guns; and any device that projects, releases, or emits tear gas or any other substance (e.g., pepper spray) that is intended to produce temporary discomfort or permanent injury through being vaporized or otherwise dispensed in the air.

- Components that can be readily assembled into a weapon are reported in this category.
- Bombs (exploded or unexploded) are considered a type of weapon. A bomb is an explosive device that most commonly is (1) greater in size than typical fireworks; (2) encased in a wax substance, fabric, or metal canister or container; and (3) electrically fused or self-fusing. Examples include Molotov cocktails and similar devices.
- A toy gun is no longer considered a weapon and its possession would not be reported. An imitation firearm (e.g., an object that looks like a real handgun but cannot be fired or converted to a handgun) would be reported.

2) Possession: Having on one’s person, in one’s locker or vehicle one or more of the types of weapons listed on the VV-SA form.

3) Used in Offense: Using the weapon in the commission of an offense reported in another incident category, such as assault, criminal threat, extortion, damage to property.

4) Sale/Distribution: Selling, giving, or having in one’s possession, with the intent to distribute or sell, a weapon.