

# **Guidance for Educator Preparation Programs on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying**

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New Jersey Department of Education

The New Jersey Legislature recognized that bullying in school settings is a growing concern and, therefore, passed the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights in January, 2011. The intent of the Act is to strengthen standards and procedures for preventing, reporting investigating and responding to incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) in New Jersey's public schools. N.J.S.A. 18A:37-22 requires that educators entering the work force in the 2012 school year must have completed through their pre-service preparation a program on harassment, intimidation and bullying prevention. This guidance document outlines the HIB program requirements for the following pre-service preparation programs: (a) teachers and education services personnel certifications; and (b) administrative certifications, including chief school administrators, principals, and supervisors. In addition, any person seeking certification through the alternate route must, within one year of being employed, satisfactorily complete a program on harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention consistent with the guidelines in this document.

## **Teacher and Education Services Personnel Education Programs**

This guidance outlines the minimal teacher education program components to ensure that teachers and education services personnel are prepared to support HIB efforts in schools. It is important that programs emphasize the critical role of prevention strategies in mitigating both the incidence and harmful effects of HIB. Teachers and education services personnel need to be equipped to collaborate with colleagues, administrators, families and the community in developing and implementing preventive measures that contribute to a positive school climate and culture in which all students can experience a safe environment for learning.

### **Teacher candidates must have knowledge of the following:**

- Research on HIB contributing factors and prevention strategies, including social-emotional learning, peer interaction, ecological issues, differentiated interventions, and individual characteristics related to HIB;
- Legal definition of HIB;
- Behavior patterns and other variables in school environments that can trigger or contribute to increased incidence of HIB, including knowledge of the appropriate vocabulary and the roles of bully, victim, and bystander;
- Components of HIB reporting protocols and support systems for both victims and offenders in the school environment;
- Strategies to address the needs of groups at higher risk of bullying or being bullied;

- Identification of and response to cyber-bullying, including:
  - a. Knowledge of changing technology tools with potential HIB abuse,
  - b. Differences and similarities between cyber-bullying and in-school bullying in terms of the roles of bully, victim, and bystander,
  - c. Impact on student learning and school climate,
  - d. Legal definitions of cyber-bullying offenses,
  - e. Reporting protocols,
  - f. Nuances surrounding peer interactions that may lead to an offense, and
  - g. Preventive methodologies (e.g., school culture and climate improvement, service-learning, social-emotional character education programs, personalization); and
- Access to resources, such as evidenced-based programs, online tutorials, state guidance materials, and curriculum materials related to HIB prevention.

## **Educational Leader Education Programs**

This guidance outlines the minimal topics related to anti-bullying that must be incorporated into education programs for administrators whose positions require chief school administrator, principal or supervisor certification and who enter the work force in the 2012 school year. It is important that programs emphasize the critical role of prevention strategies in mitigating both the incidence and harmful effects of HIB. Administrators need to be equipped to work with staff, families and the community in addressing HIB incidents and developing and implementing preventive measures that contribute to a positive school climate and culture in which all students can experience a safe environment for learning.

### **Educational leader candidates must have knowledge of the following:**

- Foundational research on HIB contributing factors and prevention strategies, including social-emotional learning, peer interaction, ecological issues, differentiated interventions, and individual characteristics related to bullying;
- Legal requirements for defining, identifying, reporting, investigating, and responding to HIB incidents;
- Legal requirements related to the roles and responsibilities of the district anti-bullying coordinator, school anti-bullying specialist, and the school safety team;
- The pivotal role of the principal in setting the vision for a positive school climate and supporting staff and stakeholders in ensuring students' safety and well being;
- Best practices for developing a collaborative school climate that engages all staff members in effective problem solving and the infusion of social-emotional learning in the curriculum;
- Collecting and using existing and new data to conduct a needs assessment of factors contributing to bullying on school grounds (e.g., school climate inventory, attendance, suspensions);

- Developing effective interventions for addressing and preventing HIB in schools in collaboration with students, staff, families, law enforcement and community services agencies and coordinating efforts with existing school programs;
- Identification of and response to cyber-bullying, including:
  - a. Knowledge of changing technology tools with potential HIB abuse,
  - b. Differences and similarities between cyber-bullying and in-school bullying in terms of the roles of bully, victim, and bystander,
  - c. Impact on student learning and school climate,
  - d. Legal definitions of cyber-bullying offenses,
  - e. Reporting protocols,
  - f. Nuances surrounding peer interactions that may lead to an offense, and
  - g. Preventive methodologies (e.g., school climate and culture improvement, service-learning, social-emotional learning, personalization);
- Addressing the needs of groups at higher risk of bullying, being bullied and bullying-related suicide;
- Implementation of best practices in HIB interventions with emphasis on differentiated intervention, advisory programs, and support for both victims and offenders;
- Managing communication and potential problems with parents, alleged offenders, victims, and bystanders; and
- Accessing resources, such as evidenced-based programs, online tutorials, state guidance materials, and curriculum materials related to HIB prevention.

Resources on HIB are available on the department's website at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/#si>. By fall 2011, this website also will include a Power Point presentation focused on explaining the school and district responsibilities under the law and best practices for HIB prevention and intervention (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/overview.shtml>) and a comprehensive guidance document in support of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights.