

## What is HIB?

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that:

1. Is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either 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;
2. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3;
3. Substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; and that
  - a. 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/her person or damage to his/her property; or
  - b. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
  - c. 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.

## HIB Reporting and Investigation Timelines:

1. **All acts** of harassment, intimidation, or bullying (HIB) shall be **reported verbally** to the school principal **on the same day** when the school employees or contracted service provider witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident.
2. The **principal, anti-bullying coordinator, and/or the anti-bullying specialist shall inform the parents or guardians of ALL students** involved in the alleged incident, and may discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling, and other intervention services. The principal, anti-bullying coordinator, and/or the anti-bullying specialist may not disclose information regarding a student’s sexual orientation or gender identity / expression.
3. All acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be **reported in writing** to the building principal **within school two (2) days** of when the school employee or contracted service provider witnessed or received reliable information that a student had been subject to harassment, intimidation or bullying.

4. An investigation shall be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee within one (1) school day of the report of the incident and shall be conducted by a school anti-bullying specialist. The principal may appoint additional personnel who are not school anti-bullying specialists to assist in the investigation.
5. The investigation shall be completed as soon as possible, but not later than ten (10) school days from the date of the written report of the incident. In the event that there is information relative to the investigation that is anticipated but not yet received by the end of the ten (10) day period, the school anti-bullying specialist may amend the original report of the results of the investigation to reflect the information.
6. The results of the investigation shall be reported to the superintendent of schools within two (2) days of the completion of the investigation, and the superintendent may decide to provide intervention services, establish training programs to reduce harassment, intimidation or bullying and enhance school climate, impose discipline, or order counseling as a result of the findings of the investigation, or take or recommend other appropriate action.
7. The results of each investigation shall be reported to the board of education no later than the date of the board of education meeting next following the completion of the investigation, along with information on any services, provided, training established, discipline imposed, or other action taken or recommended by the superintendent.
8. Parents or guardians of the students who are parties of the investigation shall be entitled to receive information about the investigation, including the nature of the investigation, whether the district found evidence of HIB or whether discipline was imposed or services provided to address the incident of HIB. This information shall be provided in writing within five (5) school days after the results are reported to the board.
9. A parent or guardian may request a hearing before the board after receiving the information, and the hearing shall be held within ten (10) days of the request. However, this request should be made no later than 60 calendar days after parent/guardian receives written notice of outcome of investigation. The board shall meet in executive session for the hearing to protect confidentiality of the students. At the hearing the board may hear from the school-anti-bullying specialist about the incident, recommendation for discipline or services, and any programs instituted to reduce such incidents.
10. At the next board of education meeting following its receipt of the report, the board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the superintendent's decision. The board's decision may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education, in accordance with the procedures set forth in law and regulation, no later than 90 days after the issuance of the board's decision.
11. A parent, student, guardian, or organization may file a complaint with the Division on Civil Rights within 180 days of the occurrence of any incident of HIB based on the membership in a protected group as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination," P.L. 1945, c. 169 (C. 10:5-1 et seq.)