

PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
Series 5000 - PUPILS
FILE CODE: 5131.1 HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

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The Plumsted Township Board of Education believes that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers are required to demonstrate appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or **bullying**. Harassment, intimidation or **bullying**, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment. Therefore, the school district will not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation or **bullying**.

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

The standards of character education are an essential component of the Plumsted Township School District's Code of Conduct. The board believes that with the appropriate infusion of character education into the school curriculum, modeling of appropriate behavior by adults; support and assistance of pupils in school, the community and home; our pupils will achieve the above standards of character education.

The board prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** against any pupil. School responses to harassment, intimidation and **bullying** shall be aligned with the board approved code of pupil conduct which establishes standards, policies and procedures for positive pupil development and pupil behavioral expectations on school grounds, including on a school bus or at school sponsored functions. The superintendent shall be responsible for ensuring the prompt investigation and response to all reports of harassment, intimidation and **bullying** committed on school grounds, at school activities and on school buses. In addition, the superintendent shall ensure that this policy is applied to incidents of harassment, intimidation and **bullying** that are committed off school grounds in cases where a school employee is made aware of such actions. The superintendent has the right and authority to impose a consequence on a pupil for conduct away from school grounds that is consistent with the board's approved code of pupil conduct, pursuant to [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1](#) and [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6](#).

This authority shall be exercised only when it is reasonably necessary for the pupil's physical or emotional safety, security and well-being or for reasons relating to the safety, security and well-being of other pupils, staff or school grounds, pursuant to [N.J.S.A. 18A:25-2](#) and [18A:37-2](#), and when the conduct which is the subject of the proposed consequence materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. The board directs the superintendent or his or her appropriately trained and qualified designee to develop detailed regulations suited to the age level of the pupils and the physical facilities of the individual schools.

"Harassment, intimidation or **bullying**" is defined as 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 grounds, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus, or off school grounds, in accordance with law, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils, and that:

- A. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil 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 pupil or group of pupils; or
- C. Creates a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with the pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.

“Electronic communication” means a communication that is transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.

Consequences and Remedial Measures for Acts of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying

Pupils

Consequences and remedial measures for a pupil who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be varied and graded according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the pupil and the pupil's history of problem behaviors and performance. Consequences shall be consistent with the board approved code of pupil conduct and [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7](#). Consequences and remedial measures shall be designed to:

- A. Correct the problem behavior;
- B. Prevent another occurrence of the problem;
- C. Protect and provide support for the victim of the act; and
- D. Take corrective action for documented systemic problems related to harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a pupil who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including short and long-term suspension or expulsion, as permitted by law. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Consequences
 - 1. Admonishment;
 - 2. Temporary removal from the classroom;
 - 3. Deprivation of privileges;
 - 4. Classroom or administrative detention;
 - 5. Referral to disciplinarian;
 - 6. In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend;
 - 7. After-school programs;
 - 8. Out-of-school suspension (short-term or long-term);
 - 9. Legal action; and
 - 10. Expulsion.
- B. Remedial Measures
 - 1. Personal
 - a. Restitution and restoration;
 - b. Mediation;
 - c. Peer support group;
 - d. Recommendations of a pupil behavior or ethics council;
 - e. Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience;

- f. Supportive pupil interventions, including participation of the intervention and referral services team;
- g. Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to the child study team, as appropriate;
- h. Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored;
- i. Assignment of leadership responsibilities (e.g., hallway or bus monitor);
- j. Involvement of school disciplinarian;
- k. Pupil counseling;
- l. Parent conferences;
- m. Pupil treatment; or
- n. Pupil therapy.

2. Environmental (Classroom, School Building or School District)

- a. School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to harassment, intimidation or **bullying**;
- b. School culture change;
- c. School climate improvement;
- d. Adoption of research-based, systemic **bullying** prevention programs;
- e. School policy and procedures revisions;
- f. Modifications of schedules;
- g. Adjustments in hallway traffic;
- h. Modifications in pupil routes or patterns traveling to and from school;
- i. Supervision of pupils before and after school, including school transportation;
- j. Targeted use of monitors (e.g., hallway, cafeteria, locker room, playground, school perimeter, bus);
- k. Teacher aides;
- l. Small or large group presentations for fully addressing the behaviors and the responses to the behaviors;
- m. General professional development programs for certificated and non-certificated staff;
- n. Professional development plans for involved staff;
- o. Disciplinary action for school staff who contributed to the problem;
- p. Supportive institutional interventions, including participation of the intervention and referral services team;
- q. Parent conferences;
- r. Family counseling;
- s. Involvement of parent-teacher organizations;

Classified pupils are subject to the same disciplinary procedures as nondisabled pupils and may be disciplined in accordance with their IEP. However, before disciplining a classified pupil, it must be determined that:

- A. The pupil's behavior is not primarily caused by his/her educational disability;
- B. The program that is being provided meets the pupil's needs.

Staff

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for any staff member who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** may range from positive behavioral interventions up to disciplinary charges which could result in suspension or termination. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to:

A. Consequences

1. Admonishment;
2. Temporary removal from the classroom;
3. Deprivation of privileges;
4. Referral to disciplinarian;
5. Withholding of Increment
6. Suspension;
7. Legal action; and
8. Termination

B. Remedial Measures

1. Personal

- a. Restitution and restoration;
- b. Mediation;
- c. Support group;
- d. Recommendations of behavior or ethics council;
- e. Corrective action plan;
- f. Behavioral assessment or evaluation;
- g. Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored;
- h. Involvement of school disciplinarian;
- i. Counseling;
- j. Conferences;
- k. Treatment; or
- l. Therapy.

2. Environmental (Classroom, School Building or School District)

- a. School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to harassment, intimidation or **bullying**;
- b. School culture change;
- c. School climate improvement;
- d. Adoption of research-based, systemic **bullying** prevention programs;
- e. School policy and procedures revisions;
- f. Modifications of schedules;
- g. Supervision;
- h. Small or large group presentations for fully addressing the behaviors and the responses to the behaviors;

- i. General professional development programs for certificated and non-certificated staff;
- j. Professional development plans for involved staff;
- k. Disciplinary action;
- l. Supportive institutional interventions, including participation of the intervention and referral services team;
- m. Conferences;
- n. Counseling;

Reporting Harassment, Intimidation and **Bullying** Behavior

The superintendent, principal and/or their designee shall be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy.

The board shall allow reports to be anonymous, but no formal disciplinary action shall be based solely on an anonymous report. Any school employee, board member, contracted service provider, pupil, visitor or volunteer who has witnessed, or has reliable information that a pupil has been subject to harassment, intimidation or **bullying**, must report the incident to the building principal or his/her designee.

The following procedures shall apply to the reporting of incidents of harassment, intimidation and **bullying**:

- A. All acts of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** shall be reported verbally to the school principal on the same day when the school employee or contracted service provider witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident;
- B. The principal shall inform the parents or guardians of all pupils involved in the alleged incident, and may discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling and other intervention services; and
- C. All acts of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** shall be reported in writing to the school principal within two school days of when the school employee or contracted service provider witnessed or received reliable information that a pupil had been subject to harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**.

A board member, school employee, contracted service provider, pupil or volunteer who has witnessed, or has reliable information that a pupil has been subject to, harassment, intimidation or **bullying** shall report the incident to the building principal and any appropriate school official, or to any school administrator or safe schools resource officer, who shall immediately initiate the school district's procedures concerning school **bullying**.

A board member or a school employee who promptly reports an incident of harassment, intimidation or **bullying**, to the appropriate school official designated by the school district's policy, or to any school administrator or safe schools resource officer, and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures in this policy, shall be immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.

A school administrator who receives a report of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** from a district employee, and fails to initiate or conduct an investigation, or who should have known of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** and fails to take sufficient action to minimize or eliminate the harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**, may be subject to disciplinary action.

District Anti-**Bullying** Coordinator

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

- A. Be responsible for coordinating and strengthening the school district's policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, and **bullying** of pupils;
- B. Collaborate with school anti-**bullying** specialists in the district, the board of education, and the

superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to harassment, intimidation, and **bullying** of pupils in the district;

C. Provide data, in collaboration with the superintendent, to the Department of Education regarding harassment, intimidation, and **bullying** of pupils; and

D. Execute such other duties related to school harassment, intimidation, and **bullying** as requested by the superintendent.

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.

School Anti-**Bullying** Specialist

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:

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

School Safety Team

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 pupil 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:

- A. Receive any complaints of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** of pupils that have been reported to the principal;
- B. Receive copies of any report prepared after an investigation of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**;
- C. Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** of pupils in the school;
- D. Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** of pupils;
- E. Educate the community, including pupils, teachers, administrative staff, and parents, to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** of pupils;
- F. 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;
- G. 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 pupils; and
- H. 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:

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

Investigating Reported Harassment, Intimidation and **Bullying**

All reported incidents of harassment, intimidation and **bullying** shall be investigated promptly and in accordance with law and the following procedures:

A. All investigations shall be thorough and complete, and documented in writing, and shall include, but not be limited to:

- 1. Taking of statements from victims, witnesses and accused;
- 2. Careful examination of the facts;
- 3. Support for the victim; and
- 4. Determination if alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy.

B. The investigation shall be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee within one 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.

C. The investigation shall be completed as soon as possible, but not later than 10 school days from the date of the written report of the incident of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**. In the event that there is information relative to the investigation that is anticipated but not yet received by the end of the 10-day period, the school anti-**bullying** specialist may amend the original report of the results of the investigation to reflect the information.

D. The results of the investigation shall be reported to the superintendent within two school days of the completion of the investigation, and in accordance with law and board policy. The superintendent may initiate intervention services, establish training programs to reduce harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** and enhance school climate, impose discipline, order counseling as a result of the findings of the investigation, or take or recommend other appropriate action.

E. The results of each investigation shall be reported to the board of education no later than the date of the next board meeting following the completion of the investigation, and include:

- 1. Any services provided;
- 2. Training established;
- 3. Discipline imposed; or
- 4. Other action taken or recommended by the superintendent.

F. The superintendent or his or her designee shall ensure that parents or guardians of the pupils who are parties to the investigation shall receive information about the investigation. This information shall be provided in writing within 5 school days after the results of the investigation are reported to the board and include:

- 1. The nature of the investigation;
- 2. Whether the district found evidence of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**; or
- 3. Whether discipline was imposed or services provided to address the incident of harassment,

intimidation, or **bullying**.

Range of Ways to Respond to Harassment, Intimidation or **Bullying**

The board of education recognizes that some acts of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** may be isolated incidents requiring that the school officials respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts and provide support programs for victims. Other acts may be so serious or parts of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** that they require a response either at the classroom, school building or school district levels or by law enforcement officials.

In considering whether a response beyond the individual is appropriate, the administrator shall consider the nature and circumstances of the act, the degree of harm, the nature and severity of the behavior, past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred. Institutional (i.e., classroom; school building; school district) responses include:

- A. School and community surveys;
- B. Mailings;
- C. Focus groups;
- D. Adoption of research-based **bullying** prevention program models;
- E. Training for certificated and non-certificated staff;
- F. Participation of parents and other community members and organizations;
- G. Small or large group presentations for staff, pupils, and the community for fully addressing a positive school climate and culture as well as the issues surrounding harassment, intimidation and **bullying** in the school community; and
- H. The involvement of law enforcement officers, including school resource officers.

For every incident of harassment, intimidation or **bullying**, the district shall respond to the individual who committed the act. Responses may include:

- A. Individual responses can include positive behavioral interventions (e.g., peer mentoring, short-term counseling, life skills groups) and punitive actions (e.g., detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, expulsion);
- B. Classroom responses can include class discussions about an incident of harassment, intimidation or **bullying**, role plays, research projects, observing and discussing audio-visual materials on these subjects and skill-building lessons in courtesy, tolerance, assertiveness and conflict management;
- C. School responses can include theme days, learning station programs, parent programs and information disseminated to pupils and parents, such as fact sheets or newsletters explaining acceptable uses of electronic and wireless communication devices;
- D. District-wide responses can include community involvement in policy review and development, professional development programs, adoption of curricula and school-wide programs and coordination with community-based organizations (e.g., mental health; health services; health facilities; law enforcement; faith-based).

The range of ways in which the school shall respond once an incident of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** is identified shall be defined by the principal in conjunction with the school anti-**bullying** specialist, and shall include an appropriate combination of counseling, support services, intervention services, and other programs as defined by the commissioner.

Retaliation and Reprisal Prohibited

The board prohibits reprisal or retaliation or false accusation against any person who witnesses and/or reports an act of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** by any pupil, school employee, board member, contracted service provider, visitor or volunteer. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in

reprisal or retaliation or false accusation shall be determined by the superintendent and/or principal or their designee after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law and board policies and procedures.

Any act of retaliation or reprisal or false accusation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** shall not be tolerated. Any pupil, school employee, board member, contracted service provider, volunteer or visitor who engages in the act of retaliation or reprisal or who falsely accuses another shall be subjected to consequence and appropriate remedial action. In cases where any state or federal law has allegedly been violated, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

A. Pupils

The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a pupil found to have engaged in retaliation, reprisal and/or falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** shall be varied and graded according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the pupil and the pupil's history of problem behaviors and performance, and shall be consistent with this policy. Consequences may include positive behavioral interventions, notification of the parents/guardians, up to and including short or long-term suspension or expulsion, as permitted by law;

B. School Employees

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have engaged in retaliation, reprisal and/or falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** shall be determined in accordance with district policies, procedures and agreements, up to and including suspension or dismissal from service;

C. Board Members

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a board member found to have committed an act of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**; or found to have engaged in retaliation, reprisal and/or falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** shall be determined in accordance with district policies, procedures and agreements, up to and including a public sanction or filed ethics charges;

D. Visitors, Volunteers, Contracted Service Providers, and All Other Persons

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor, volunteer, contracted service providers and all other persons found to have engaged in harassment, intimidation or **bullying**; or engaged in retaliation, reprisal and/or falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or **bullying** shall be determined by the superintendent after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Consequences and remediation for pupils, employees, board members, visitors, volunteers, and contracted service providers, engaging in harassment, intimidation or **bullying** or engaged in retaliation, reprisal and/or false accusations may include the following:

A. Consequences

1. Admonishment;
2. Temporary removal from the classroom or school;
3. Deprivation of privileges
4. Prohibited from access to the school facilities (visitors, vendors, board members, all other people);
5. Classroom or administrative detention;
6. Referral to disciplinarian;
7. In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend;
8. After-school programs;

9. Out-of-school suspension (short-term or long-term);
10. Legal action;
11. Withholding of Increment;
12. Suspension;
13. Expulsion;
14. Termination;
15. Termination of service agreements or contracts (vendors, volunteers);
16. Public sanction (board members);
17. Ethics charges (some administrators, board members).

B. Remedial Measures

1. Personal

- a. Restitution and restoration;
- b. Mediation;
- c. Peer support group;
- d. Recommendations of a pupil behavior or ethics council;
- e. Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience;
- f. Supportive pupil interventions, including participation of the intervention and referral services team;
- g. Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to the child study team, as appropriate;
- h. Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored;
- i. Assignment of leadership responsibilities (e.g., hallway or bus monitor);
- j. Involvement of school disciplinarian;
- k. Counseling;
- l. Conferences;
- m. Treatment; or
- n. Therapy.

2. Environmental (Classroom, School Building or School District)

- a. School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to harassment, intimidation or **bullying**;
- b. School culture change;
- c. School climate improvement;
- d. Adoption of research-based, systemic **bullying** prevention programs;
- e. School policy and procedures revisions;
- f. Modifications of schedules;
- g. Supervision;
- h. Small or large group presentations for fully addressing the behaviors and the responses to the behaviors;

- i. General professional development programs for certificated and non-certificated staff;
- j. Professional development plans for involved staff;
- k. Disciplinary action;
- l. Supportive institutional interventions, including participation of the intervention and referral services team;
- m. Conferences;
- n. Counseling;

Appeal Process

The parent or guardian may request a hearing before the board after receiving the information from the superintendent regarding the investigation. The hearing shall be held within 10 days of the request. The board shall meet in executive session for the hearing to protect the confidentiality of the pupils. At the hearing the board may hear from the school anti-**bullying** specialist about the incident, recommendations for discipline or services, and any programs instituted to reduce such incidents.

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 law, no later than the 90 days after the issuance of the board's decision.

A parent, pupil, guardian, or organization may file a complaint with the Division on Civil Rights within 180 days of the occurrence of any incident of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** based on membership in a protected group as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination."

Week of Respect

The week beginning with the first Monday in October of each year is designated as a "Week of Respect" in the State of New Jersey. The district, in order to recognize the importance of character education, shall observe the week by providing age-appropriate instruction focusing on preventing harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** as defined by law ([N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14](#)). Throughout the school year the district shall provide ongoing age-appropriate instruction focusing on preventing harassment, intimidation, and **bullying** in accordance with the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Training

A. School Leaders

Any school leader who holds a position that requires the possession of a superintendent, principal, or supervisor endorsement shall complete training on issues of school ethics, school law, and school governance as part of the professional development for school leaders required in accordance with State Board of Education regulations. This training shall also include information on the prevention of harassment, intimidation, and **bullying** ([N.J.S.A. 18A:26-8.2](#)).

B. Teaching Staff Development

Each public school teaching staff member shall complete at least two hours of instruction in suicide prevention, to be provided by a licensed health care professional with training and experience in mental health issues, in each professional development period. The instruction in suicide prevention shall include information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, and **bullying** and information on reducing the risk of suicide in pupils who are members of communities identified as having members at high risk of suicide ([N.J.S.A. 18A:6-112](#)).

C. Board Members

Within one year after being newly elected or appointed or being re-elected or re-appointed to the board of education, a board member shall complete a training program on harassment, intimidation, and **bullying** in schools, including a school district's responsibilities as required by law ([N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq.](#)). A

board member shall be required to complete the program only once ([N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33](#)).

D. Staff, Pupil and Volunteer Training

The school district shall:

1. Provide training on the school district's harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** policy to school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with pupils;
2. Provide ongoing staff training, in cooperation with the Department of Education, in fulfilling the reporting requirements;
3. Ensure that the training includes instruction on preventing **bullying** on the basis of the protected categories as required by law ([N.J.S.A.18A:37-14](#)) and other distinguishing characteristics that may incite incidents of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**; and
4. Develop a process for discussing the district's harassment, intimidation or **bullying** policy with pupils.

Information regarding the school district policy against harassment, intimidation or **bullying** shall be incorporated into a school's employee training program and shall be provided to full-time and part-time staff, volunteers who have significant contact with pupils, and those persons contracted by the district to provide services to pupils.

Throughout the school year, the district shall provide ongoing age-appropriate instruction on preventing harassment, intimidation and **bullying**, consistent with the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Reporting to the Board

Two times each year between September 1 and January 1 and between January 1 and June 30, the school board shall hold a public hearing at which the superintendent will report to the board of education all acts of violence, vandalism, and harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** (HIB) which occurred during the previous reporting period. The report shall include the number of HIB reports in the schools, the status of all investigations, the nature of the HIB, and other data required by law.

- A. The number of reports of harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**;
- B. The status of all investigations;
- C. The nature of the **bullying** based on one of the protected categories identified in [N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14](#) 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;
- D. The names of the investigators;
- E. The type and nature of any discipline imposed on any pupil engaged in harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**; and
- F. Any other measures imposed, training conducted, or programs implemented, to reduce harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**.

Reporting to the Department of Education

The information, including but not limited to, oral reports, written reports or electronic reports shall also be reported once during each reporting period between September 1 and January 1 and between January 1 and June 30, to the Department of Education. The report shall include:

- A. Data broken down by the enumerated categories including the protected categories as listed above and the type of harassment, intimidation and **bullying** (any gesture; any written, verbal or physical act; or any electronic communication, whether it be a single or series of incidents); and
- B. Data broken down by each school in the district, in addition to district-wide data.

The report shall be used to grade each school for the purpose of assessing its effort to implement policies and

programs consistent with law ([N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq.](#)). The district shall receive a grade determined by averaging the grades of all the schools in the district.

Each school shall post the grade received by the school and the overall district grade on the homepage of the school's website. The district shall post all the grades for each school of the district and the overall district grade on the homepage of the district's website. A link to the report shall be available on the district's website. The information shall be posted on the websites within 10 days of the receipt of a grade by the school and district.

It shall be a violation to improperly release any confidential information not authorized by federal or State law for public release.

The superintendent will annually submit the report to the Department of Education utilizing the Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting system (EVVRS). The superintendent shall accurately report on each incident of violence, vandalism, alcohol and other drug abuse, and incident of harassment intimidation and **bullying** within the school district. Any allegations of falsification of data will be reviewed by the board of education using the requirements and procedures set forth in [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.3\(g\)](#).

The State Board of Education shall impose penalties on any school employee who knowingly falsifies the report. Therefore, the superintendent shall make a reasonable effort to verify reports of violence, vandalism, and harassment, intimidation, or **bullying**. The board shall provide ongoing staff training, in cooperation with the Department of Education, in fulfilling the reporting requirements. 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**.

Program Assessment and Review

Each school and the school district shall annually establish, implement, document, and assess **bullying** prevention programs or approaches, and other initiatives involving school staff, pupils, administrators, volunteers, parents, law enforcement and community members. The programs or approaches shall be designed to create school-wide conditions to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, and **bullying**.

Policy Development and Review

The district harassment, intimidation and **bullying** policy shall be adopted through a process that includes representation of parents or guardians, school employees, volunteers, pupils, administrators, and community representatives.

The district shall annually conduct a re-evaluation, reassessment, and review of this policy, making any necessary revisions and additions. The board shall include input from the school anti-**bullying** specialists in conducting its re-evaluation, reassessment, and review. The district shall transmit a copy of the revised policy to the appropriate executive county superintendent within 30 school days of the revision (beginning September 1, 2011).

Publication, Dissemination and Implementation

In publicizing this policy, the community including pupils, staff, board members, contracted service providers, visitors and volunteers, shall be duly notified that the rules detailed within apply to any incident of harassment intimidation and **bullying** that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored function or 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 pupils in accordance with law.

The superintendent shall take the following steps to publicize this policy:

- A. Provide a link to this policy on a prominent place on the district website;
- B. Provide a link to this policy on a prominent place on each school's website;
- C. Distribute this policy annually to all staff, pupils and parents/guardians; and
- D. Print this policy in any district publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of pupil conduct and in pupil handbooks;

The district shall notify pupils and parents/guardians that the policy is available on the district's website. The district shall publish the name, school phone number, school address and school email address of the district anti-[bullying](#) coordinator on the home page of the district website. Each school within the district shall publish the name, school phone number, school address and school email address of the district anti-[bullying](#) coordinator and their school anti-[bullying](#) specialist on the home page of the school's website. The information concerning the district anti-[bullying](#) coordinator and the school anti-[bullying](#) specialists shall also be maintained on the Department of Education's website.

Additionally, the district shall make available, in an easily accessible location of its website, the Department of Education's guidance document for the use by parent/guardians, pupils and district staff to assist in resolving complaints concerning pupil harassment, intimidation or [bullying](#).

The superintendent shall ensure that the rules for this policy are applied consistently with the district's code of pupil conduct ([N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7](#)) and all applicable laws and regulations. All disciplinary sanctions shall be carried out with necessary due process.

This and all related policies shall be reviewed on a regular basis.

Adopted: December 19, 2007

NJSBA Review/Update: August 2011

Readopted: February 8, 2012

Key Words

Harassment, Intimidation, [Bullying](#), False Accusation, Retaliation, Reprisal, Conduct, Discipline, Pupil Conduct

Legal References:

Possible

Cross References:

- *[1220](#) Ad hoc advisory committees
- *[1410](#) Local units
- 3517 Security
- *[3541.33](#) Transportation safety
- *[4131/4131.1](#) Staff development; inservice education/visitation conferences
- 4148/4248 Employee protection
- *[4231/4231.1](#) Staff development; inservice education/visitation conferences
- 5000 Concepts and roles for pupils
- 5010 Goals and objectives for pupils
- *[5020](#) Role of parents/guardians
- *[5113](#) Attendance, absences and excuses
- *[5114](#) Suspension and expulsion
- *[5124](#) Reporting to parents/guardians
- *[5131](#) Conduct and discipline
- *[5131.5](#) Vandalism/violence
- *[5131.6](#) Drugs, alcohol, tobacco (substance abuse)
- *[5131.7](#) Weapons and dangerous instruments

5132 Dress and grooming

*[5142](#) Pupil safety

5145 Rights

5145.2 Freedom of speech/expression

*[5145.4](#) Equal educational opportunity

*[5145.6](#) Pupil grievance procedure

*5145.1 Questioning and apprehension

*5145.1 Search and seizure

*[6145](#) Extracurricular activities

*[6164.4](#) Child study team

*[6171.4](#) Special education

*[6172](#) Alternative educational programs

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.

PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
