

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying

**HIB**



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Kristen Taylor, Anti-Bullying Coordinator



## Definition

“HIB” means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or series of incidents that:

[NJ DOE HIB Website](#)



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; **AND**

2. Takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds;  
**AND**

### 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 a 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.



## Required Roles

### **Anti-Bullying Coordinator**

ABC  
District-Wide  
Required Training

### **Anti-Bullying Specialists**

ABS  
Building Specific  
Required Training

### **School Safety Team**

SST  
Building Specific



## **ABC**

### **Anti-Bullying Coordinator (district)**

- **Appointed by Superintendent**
- **Must make every effort to appoint an employee of school district as anti-bullying coordinator**
- **Coordinates and strengthens district HIB policy to prevent, identify, and address HIB Collaborates with anti-bullying specialists, board of education and supt.**
- **Meets at least twice a school year with the antibullying specialists**
- **Provides data, in collaboration with the supt. to the NJDOE**
- **Performs other related duties**



### **Anti-bullying Specialist (school**

- **Appointed by the principal from currently employed staff  
Guidance counselor, school psychologist, or another  
individual similarly trained preferred**
- **Chairs the school safety team**
- **Leads the investigation of reported HIB incidents**
- **Acts as the primary school official responsible for preventing,  
identifying, and addressing incidents of HIB in the school**
- **Assists principal in defining range of ways to respond to HIB**
- **Provides input to local board on annual re- evaluation,  
reassessment, and review of policy**





### **School Safety Team (School**

- **Formed to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate, including HIB issues**
- **Meets at least 2x per school year**
- **Consists of the principal (or designee, preferably a senior administrator) and principal appointees: – a teacher in the school, – the school anti-bullying specialist (serves as chair), – a parent (as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.3) of a student in the school, and – other members determined by the principal**



- **Receive any HIB complaints reported to principal \***
- **Receive copies of any HIB investigation reports \***
- **Identify and address patterns of HIB in the school \***
- **Review and strengthen school climate and policies in order to prevent and address HIB**

**\* Parents shall not participate in these activities or any others that compromise student confidentiality**



- **Educate the community (i.e., students, teachers, administrators, parents) to prevent and address HIB**
- **Participate in training (both required and requested)**
- **Collaborate with anti-bullying coordinator in data collection and development of policies to prevent and address HIB**
- **Other duties related to HIB requested by principal or anti-bullying coordinator**

## Reporting Procedures

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- All acts of HIB must be reported verbally to the principal on the same day when the school employee or contracted service provider witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident
- Principal must inform parents of all students involved in the alleged incident  
May discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services
- All acts of HIB also must be reported in writing to the principal within 2 school days of when the school employee or contracted service provider witnessed or received reliable information

## Reporting Expectations

## Investigation Procedures

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- Initiated by the principal or designee within 1 school day of the verbal report
- Conducted by the anti-bullying specialist
- Principal may appoint additional personnel to assist with investigation
  - Investigation shall be completed ASAP, but not later than 10 days from date of written report
  - If additional, anticipated information relevant to investigation is not received within 10 days, antibullying specialist may amend original report to reflect information



# Investigation Expectations

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

## Results of Investigation

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Results shall be reported to superintendent within 2 days of completing the investigation

- Superintendent may decide to:
  - Provide intervention services
  - Establish training programs to reduce HIB and enhance school climate
  - Impose discipline
  - Order counseling
  - Take or recommend other appropriate action
- Results reported to the board of education no later than the date of the next board meeting following the completion of the investigation, along with information on action taken or recommended by superintendent

## Results of Investigation continued

- Parents of the students who are parties to the investigation entitled to receive information about the investigation
  - In accordance with Federal and State law and regulation
  - Including the nature of the investigation and whether evidence of HIB was found
    - Whether discipline was imposed or services provided
    - Provided in writing within 5 school days after results are reported to board

A parent may request a hearing before the board

- Must be held within 10 days of request
- Board shall meet in executive session for the hearing
  - Board may hear from school anti-bullying specialist about the incident, recommendations for discipline or services, or programs instituted



## Results of Investigation continued

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At the next board 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, no later than 90 days after the issuance of the board's decision
- A parent, student, guardian, or organization may file a complaint with the Division on Civil Rights (DCR) within 180 days of the occurrence of any incident of HIB

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# Montgomery Township School District

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Internal Policies, Procedures &  
Protocols

# MTSD HIB

## HIB Overview

MTSD HIB website

## MTSD HIB Roles

ABC & ABS Contact  
Information

## MTSD HIB BOE Policy

MTSD BOE HIB policy details

## HIB Reporting Form

Online reporting form

## HIB Grade Report

In order to foster safe and positive learning conditions for students, the school and district grades are part of an integrated process for reinforcing and strengthening a school's climate and culture through prevention and intervention efforts targeted toward harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB). District and school staff will use the data to educate staff and the community about current school practices and engage them in identifying and addressing areas for improvement.

## MTSD HIB Procedure

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- **Mandatory** verbal report within one day to principal
- The Principal or the Principal's designee shall exercise his/her discretion in determining whether the allegations meet the threshold definition of harassment, intimidation, and bullying.
- If the allegations meet the threshold definition, an investigation shall be conducted. If the allegations do not meet the threshold definition, an investigation need not be conducted.
- If, however, the Principal or the Principal's designee later acquires information suggesting that the allegations meet the threshold definition of harassment, intimidation, and bullying, the complaint should then be referred to the Anti-Bullying Specialist for investigation.
- If the Principal cannot determine, based on the available evidence and information, whether allegations meet the threshold definition of harassment, intimidation, and bullying, the initiation of an investigation is appropriate.

## MTSD HIB Procedure

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- Once the Principal or the Principal's designee has, under his/her discretion, determined that the allegations of the complaint meet the threshold definition to harassment, intimidation, and bullying, the investigation shall be initiated by the Principal or the Principal's designee **within one school day** of the verbal report of the incident.
- The investigation shall be conducted by the school Anti-Bullying Specialist in coordination with the Principal. The Principal may appoint additional personnel who are not school Anti-Bullying Specialists to assist with the investigation.
- The investigation shall be completed and the written findings submitted to the Principal as soon as possible, **but not later than ten school days** from the date of the written report of the incident. Should information regarding the reported incident and the investigation be received after the end of the ten-day period, the school Anti-Bullying Specialist shall amend the original report of the results of the investigation to ensure there is an accurate and current record of the facts and activities concerning the reported incident.

## MTSD HIB Procedure

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- The Principal shall proceed in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct, as appropriate, based on the investigation findings. The Principal shall submit the report to the Superintendent **within two school days of the completion of the investigation** and in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act (N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq.).
- The Superintendent shall report the results of each investigation to the Board of Education **no later than the date of the regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting following the completion of the investigation**. The Superintendent's report shall include information on any consequences imposed under the Code of Student Conduct, any services provided, training established, or other action taken or recommended by the Superintendent.

## Defining Terms in MTSD BOE HIB Policy

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Schools are required to address harassment, intimidation, and bullying occurring **off school grounds**, when there is a nexus between the harassment, intimidation, and bullying and the school (e.g., the harassment, intimidation, or bullying substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students).

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

The Principal will **inform** the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents, and, as appropriate, may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services. The Principal, upon receiving a verbal or written report, may take interim measures to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of all parties pending the findings of the investigation.

# Week of Respect

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Each school district is required to annually observe a Week of Respect, during which time districts must provide age-appropriate instruction focusing on preventing HIB. The Week of Respect must be observed during the week beginning with the first Monday in October of each year.

See individual building websites for Week of Respect dates/activities







## HIB FAQ's

**Q: Is the school district required to provide parents of offenders and victims with information on the results of an HIB investigation?** A: Yes. Regardless of the findings from an investigation, parents of alleged offenders and alleged victims are entitled to receive information about the investigation, in accordance with federal and state law and regulation. The ABR stipulates that parents of alleged offenders and alleged victims must receive the following information: 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 must be provided in writing within five school days after the results of the investigation are reported to the board of education. (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15b(6)). The ABR does not establish requirements for the way in which districts choose to meet this requirement, and does not supersede existing requirements or procedures for informing or contacting parents. If a district has established a procedure for notifying parents that has been approved by the BOE or legal counsel and is consistent with applicable laws and regulations, there is nothing in the ABR that prohibits the use of this pre-existing parent notification procedure.



## HIB FAQ's

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**Q: Is the school district required to provide parents of offenders and victims with the investigation report?** A: The ABR does not require the provision of the investigation report to parents. Parents are only entitled to the information specified in the ABR provision included above. If a district chooses to provide parents with the report, the investigation report cannot divulge privileged/confidential information or information precluded by law. This information includes, but is not limited to, information about students other than their own child, and information that would (or could) identify students other than their own. Pursuant to the Family Rights and Educational Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g and 34 CFR Part 99), and absent consent or permission from the other parent and/or a student who is at least eighteen (18) years of age, parents are only entitled to information about their own children.



## HIB FAQ's

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**Q: Does the ABR only apply to an act of HIB committed by or against a student? Or does it also apply to an act committed by or against an adult?** A: The ABR applies only to HIB committed against a student. Under the ABR, the offenders could be any persons, students or adults, but the victims are students. The applicable provision can be found at N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15b.

**Q: Do parents have the right to deny school staff the permission to interview their child as a part of an HIB investigation?** A: No. The ABR does not address the issue of parent presence during interviews. Therefore, the school district determines the procedures for conducting investigations, including interviews. Since the ABR does not establish new or amended requirements regarding parent involvement in student interviews, pre-existing requirements apply, meaning that schools have the right to interview students without parents being present.



# Thank You

Does anyone have any questions?

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