

Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying

A Handbook for Parents and Students



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*Clinton Townships School District's Harassment Policy 5512
May be found on the district website
<http://www.ctsdnj.org>*

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CTSD Policy 5512: Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

Policy Statement

The Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a student. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

For the purposes of this Policy, the term "parent," pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.3, means the natural parent(s) or adoptive parent(s), legal guardian(s), foster parent(s), or parent surrogate(s) of a student. Where parents are separated or divorced, "parent" means the person or agency which has legal custody of the student, as well as the natural or adoptive parent(s) of the student, provided such parental rights have not been terminated by a court of appropriate jurisdiction.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Definition

Types of Behaviors include:

- Any gestures, or
- Any written, verbal, or physical act, or
- Any electronic communication
- Can be a single incident or series of incidents

Motivation for HIB Behavior:

- Any actual or perceived characteristic;
- Examples: race, color, religion, ancestry, nation origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or mental/physical/sensory disability, or any other distinguishing characteristic(s).

Reasonableness:

- Under the circumstances, the act will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear or physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property.

Location of Incident:

- On school property
- At school sponsored function
- On a school bus
- Off school grounds (including cyberspace)

Must meet one of the following conditions in addition to causing substantial disruption or interference:

- Has effect of insulting or demeaning student or groups of students, or
- Creates hostile educational environment for student by interfering with student's education, or
- Severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to students.

Implementation of the HIB Legislation

How will the district implement the HIB legislation?

Anti-Bullying Assignments:

- Establishment of Anti-Bullying Coordinator
- Establishment of Anti-Bullying Specialists in each school
- Establishment of School Safety Team

New Investigation Procedures:

- Detailed, specific timelines;
- Verbal reports must be made to **Principal** on the **same day incident occurs**;
- Follow-up written report must be completed within **two (2) school days** of verbal report, written by whoever reports the incident;
- **Principal** must initiate investigation within **one (1) school day** of receiving (verbal) report;
- **Principal** must contact parents/guardians and inform them about incident within **one (1) school day** of receiving (verbal) report;
- Investigation must be conducted by **Anti-Bullying Specialist**;
- **Principal** may appoint others to assist;
- Investigation must be completed as soon as possible; no later than **ten (10) school days** from date of the written report;
- **Principal** must give report to the Superintendent within **two (2) school days** of completing the investigation;
- **Superintendent** in collaboration with Principal must decide actions to be taken:
 - Intervention services
 - Training programs
 - Impose discipline
 - Order counseling
- **Superintendent** reports the results of the investigation to the Board at the first Board meeting following completion of the investigation.

Due Process Rights for Alleged Accused and Alleged Victim(s)

- Parents of all parties involved have the right to receive information – including parents of the alleged victim and alleged bully. Report includes allegations and findings.
- District must provide information to both parties within **five (5) school days** after the results of the investigation were reported to the Board
- Parents may request a hearing of the Board after receiving information; hearing of the Board must be provided within **ten (10) school days** of the request
- Board must issue a decision in writing at the **first Board meeting** following the receipt of the report
- Parents of alleged victim may separately file a complaint with the NJ Division on Civil Rights within **180 calendar days** of alleged incident
- Parents may also file in Superior Court

Anti-Bullying Coordinator Responsibilities

The District Anti-Bullying Coordinator shall:

- Be responsible for coordinating and strengthening the school district's policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
- Collaborate with school Anti-Bullying Specialists in the district, the Board of Education, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students in the district;
- Provide data, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education regarding harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
- Execute such other duties related to school harassment, intimidation, or bullying as requested by the Superintendent; and
- Meet at least twice a school year with the school Anti-Bullying Specialist(s) to discuss and strengthen procedures and policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the district.

Principal's Responsibilities

The Principal or designee shall:

- Initiate the investigation by the Anti-Bullying Specialist
- Contact parent(s)/guardian(s) and inform them of the incident
- Keep abreast of the situation
- Keep in close contact with the Anti-Bullying Specialist. Update them with current information
- May appoint others to assist the Anti-Bullying Specialist as needed
- In conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Specialist shall determine the “range” of ways to address the incidents of harassing and/or bullying behavior. These may include: training, discipline actions, counseling or intervention programs.
- Be an active participant of the School Safety team
- The Principal shall proceed in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct
- Submit the report to the Superintendent
- Provide training on the School HIB Policy to employees, contracted service providers and volunteers who have significant contact with students.
- Shall annually conducts a reevaluation, reassessment, and review of the HIB Policy with input from the School's Anti-Bullying Specialist, and recommend revisions and additions to the Policy as well as to harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention programs and approaches based on findings from the evaluation, reassessment and review.
- Post the name, school phone number, address and school email address of the School Anti-Bullying Specialist

Anti-Bullying Specialist Responsibilities

The Anti-Bullying Specialist shall:

- Chair the School Safety Team as provided in N.J.S.A. 18A: 37-21;
- Lead the investigation of incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the school;
- Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the school;
- Execute other duties related to school harassment, intimidation or bullying as requested by the Principal and/or the Anti-Bully Coordinator; and
- Meet at least twice a school year with the school Anti-Bullying Coordinator to discuss and strengthen procedures and policies and to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the district.

School Safety Team Responsibilities

School Safety Team shall:

- Receive any complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students that have been reported to the Principal;
- Receive copies of any report prepared after an investigation of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying;
- Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students in the school;
- Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
- Educate the community, including students, teachers, administrative staff, and parents, to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
- 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;
- 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 students; and
- Execute such other duties related to harassment, intimidation, or bullying as requested by the Principal or district Anti-Bullying Coordinator.
- The School Safety Team shall be chaired by the Anti-Bullying Specialist and include a minimum of the Principal, a parent, a member of the Child Study Team and a teacher. Others may be included at the determination of the building Principal.

**CTSD Policies 5600 and 5600R:
Student Expectations**

The Board expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities and the care of school facilities and equipment consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.

The Board believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents, school employees, school administrators, school volunteers, and community representatives, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members.

Students are expected to behave in a way that creates a supportive learning environment. The Board believes the best discipline is self-imposed, and it is the responsibility of staff to use instances of violations of the Code of Student Conduct as opportunities to help students learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent student conduct problems and foster students' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

The Board expects that students will act in accordance with the student behavioral expectations and standards regarding harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including:

1. Student responsibilities (e.g., requirements for students to conform to reasonable standards of socially accepted behavior; respect the person, property and rights of others; obey constituted authority; and respond to those who hold that authority);
2. Appropriate recognition for positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, and good citizenship;
3. Student rights; and
4. Sanctions and due process for violations of the Code of Student Conduct.

The district prohibits active or passive support for acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Students are encouraged to support other students who:

1. Walk away from acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying when they see them;
2. Constructively attempt to stop acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying;
3. Provide support to students who have been subjected to harassment, intimidation, or bullying; and
4. Report acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying to the designated school staff member.

**CTSD Policies 5512:
Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Off School Grounds**

This Policy and the Code of Student Conduct Policy 5512 shall apply to instances when a school employee is made aware of alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying occurring off school grounds when:

1. The alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying has substantially disrupted or interfered with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; and either
2. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the alleged behavior 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
3. The alleged behavior has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
4. The alleged behavior 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.

WEBSITE RESOURCES

- <http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/>
- www.tolerance.org