



Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying

Stafford Township School District

October 2011

- Overview of the new law
- Expanded legal definition
- What we are doing within the district
- Resources available to families

Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights

The new Anti-Bullying law is intended to strengthen standards for preventing, reporting, investigating and responding to incidents of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) in schools. It requires districts to appoint an Anti-Bullying Coordinator as well as other school-specific personnel to investigate and resolve incidents. In addition, there are new reporting procedures and training requirements for staff.

Stafford Township School District is continuing with everything that we already do regarding HIB, we are just adding to it in light of the new law. All staff members have been trained with regard to the new law and their role in reporting incidents. Similar trainings are being held for the support staff, bus drivers, cafeteria/playground aides, and volunteers, and our Anti-Bullying Coordinator and designated HIB staff have

attended more detailed training classes.

With regard to students, our guidance department will continue providing classroom lessons as they have in the past and our positive behavior plans and character building initiatives that are in place at each of our buildings will also continue. Child Assault Prevention of Ocean County is scheduled to present their "No More Bullies" program to our students again this year – this is an annual program sponsored by the Stafford Township PTA.

This newsletter was created to inform parents/guardians about the new law, but we also have additional events in place for families. Our first HSL workshop was "What Parents Need to Know about Bullying" and we will discuss our initiatives and resources at our upcoming District Parent Advisory Committee meetings.

Legal Definition of Bullying

The legal definition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) has been broadened in the new Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act. Specifically, the new law:

- Adds language to specify that the act of HIB can be a single incident or a series of incidents.
- Expands the definition to include HIB behavior that takes place off of school grounds under particular circumstances.
- States that an off school grounds incident or series of incidents must substantially disrupt or interfere with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students
- Specifies that harm can be physical or emotional.
- Adds that an incident or series of incidents can be considered HIB if it creates a hostile educational environment for the student.

The complete definition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying can be found in Stafford Township Board of Education Policy #5512. This policy is available on the district website or from the main office of each school.

Resources for Families

District Specific Information

The “Resources” tab on the district website, www.staffordschools.org, contains the district HIB policy, regulation, and reporting form, in addition to school-specific contacts and contact information for our District Anti-Bullying Coordinator .

NJ Department of Education

HIB resources and links provided by the New Jersey Department of Education can be found at www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/behavior/hib

Anti-Bullying Hotlines

In 2005, we established anti-bullying hotlines at each school to help students and parents report bullying and harassment incidents anonymously. Incidents can be reported by calling the district’s main number 609-978-5700, and then one of the following extensions:

Intermediate	x1804
McKinley	x1803
Ocean Acres	x1801
PLC	x1805
Oxycocus	x1802

Christine Schmidt, Anti-Bullying Coordinator 609-978-5700 x1279 cschmidt@staffordschools.org

How Parents/Guardians Can Help Their Children

Bullying is not a right of passage and can have serious consequences. Parents/guardian can help their children learn how to prevent bullying using these tips;

Children often do not tell their parents/guardians when they are being bullied. If you suspect your child is being bullied or if your child brings it up:

Each school is planning age appropriate activities for students during the Week of Respect October 3-7

Ask your child about it!

- Talk to your child about what bullying is and how it is more than physical and can be done in person, on the phone or computer.
- Give guidance about how to stand up to those who bully, if it is safe to do so.
- Talk about whom they should go to for help and assure them that they should not be afraid to tell an adult when someone they know is being bullied.
- Talk with your child and express your concern. Make it clear that you want to help.
- Work together to find solutions.
- Document ongoing bullying.
- Provide suggestions for ways to respond to bullying and help your child gain confidence by rehearsing their responses.
- Contact your child’s school if the suspected bullying is taking place at school or is interfering with your child's education.