



BERGEN CENTER
FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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A non-profit parent sponsored organization
www.bergencenter.com

BERGEN CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL POLICY PROHIBITING HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

Bergen Center for Child Development prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve 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 environment; and 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.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Definition

Harassment, intimidation or bullying (HIB) means 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 (handicap) disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function (or), on a school bus or off school grounds, as provided for in section 16 of P.L. 2010, CHAPTER 122, that 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, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damage to his property; (or)
- b) has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students (in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or interference with, the orderly operation of the school; (or)
- c) creates a hostile educational environment for the student by the interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

Bergen Center for Child Development expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a 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.

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Bergen Center for Child Development believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members, 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 district and community property on the part of students, staff and community members.

Bergen Center for Child Development believes that the best discipline is self-imposed, and that it is the responsibility of staff to use disciplinary situations 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 bullying and other discipline problems and encourage students' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

Reporting Procedures

- All acts of HIB must be reported verbally to the Director on the same day when the school employee or contracted service provider witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident.
- Director 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 Director within one (1) school day of when the school employee or contracted service provider witnessed or received reliable information.
- Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Investigation Procedures

- Investigation procedures will be initiated by the Anti Bullying Coordinator/Director or designee within one (1) school day of report.
- An investigation will be conducted by the anti-bullying specialist/social worker.
- Director may appoint additional personnel to assist with investigation.
- Investigation shall be completed ASAP, but not later than ten (10) days from date of written report.
- If additional, anticipated information relevant to investigation is not received within ten (10) days; anti-bullying specialist may amend original report to reflect information.

Some acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be isolated incidents requiring that the school respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or parts of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation or bullying that they require a response by law enforcement officials.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for students who commit an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including detentions, suspensions, or expulsion, as permitted under *N.J.S.A.18A:37-1*.

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In considering whether a response beyond the individual level is appropriate, the Director will consider the nature and circumstances of the act, the level of harm, the nature of the behavior, past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred. Institutional responses can range from school and community surveys, to mailings, to focus groups, to adoption of research-based bullying prevention program models, to training for certified or non-certified staff, to participation of parents and other community members and organizations, small or large group presentations for fully addressing the actions and the school's response to the actions, in the context of the acceptable student behavior and the consequences of such actions and to involvement of law enforcement officers, including school resource officers.

Bergen Center for Child Development prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Director after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law, federal and state statutes and regulation and Bergen Center for Child Development policies and procedures.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including detentions, suspension, or expulsion, as permitted under *N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1*.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with district policies, procedures, and agreements. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

The policy shall be disseminated annually to all school staff, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applied to all acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in section 16 of P.L. 2010, CHAPTER 122, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students.

The director shall develop an annual process for discussing the school's policy on harassment, intimidation and bullying with students.

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.:37-17(5)(c)*, information regarding the school's policy against harassment, intimidation and bullying shall be incorporated into the school's Employee Handbook distributed each Fall and is sent yearly to each parent/guardian before the start of the school year or upon student evaluation.

Policy will also be posted on school web site along with contact information for the school anti-bullying coordinator and school anti bullying specialist.

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Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.:37-17(5)(a)*, the school shall move to establish bullying prevention programs, and other initiative involving school staff, students, administrators, volunteers, parents, law enforcement and community members.

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.:37-17(5)(b)*, the school district shall move to:

1. Provide training on the school's harassment, intimidation and bullying policies to school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students: and
2. Develop a process for discussing the school's harassment, intimidation and bullying policies with students.
3. Implement a bully prevention program school wide.

Questions or Concerns please call:

Ms. Heather Donnelly, Anti-Bullying Coordinator 201-385-4857 hdonnelly@bccdschool.com