

Beginning with the September 2011-2012 school year, our school district implemented the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR). Last summer, schools completed a self-assessment to assist in determining the impact of our programs relating to harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB), school climate and culture. The following report provides us with the feedback to assist the district with reinforcing and strengthening our prevention and intervention efforts. The maximum total score for a school is 78. The Piscataway School District's grade of 70 is the average of the total score for each school.

During the first three years of implementation, Piscataway made progress in addressing the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act by appointing Mr. David Rubin as the Anti-Bullying Coordinator for the district and an anti-bullying specialist at each school. Training is ongoing and includes programs on improving school climate and culture; identification of harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB); and response to HIB within the schools. All administrators, teachers and aides receive training and parent workshops are offered. A self-assessment was completed by each school at the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

Through the self-assessment, we found evidence that Piscataway made progress in addressing and improving the response to harassment, intimidation and bullying, school climate and culture. Each building has a School Safety Team which meets monthly to analyze HIB data, identify areas of concern within the building and recommend prevention strategies and programs. Monthly lessons with the counselor/behaviorist are designed to encourage respect and tolerance while providing a common language that promotes responsible pro-social behavior. Student assemblies are conducted at all grade levels on anti-bullying strategies, tolerance, internet safety and cyber-bullying. Parent workshops have been held and a parent information letter is posted on the district webpage explaining the steps of an HIB investigation.

In reviewing our self-assessment results, schools reported they needed to continue to provide effective training on our Board of Education HIB policy annually. All of our schools, however, have met the training requirements set forth by the DOE. While the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act requires staff members to have two hours of training in a five year cycle, we do not believe this is sufficient. In order to provide all of our students a safe and positive learning environment, we need to evaluate the success of our programs annually and provide on-going training for staff. In the coming year, we plan to infuse strategies into the classroom for dealing with topics, such as conflict and respect, designed to promote successful school climate. The Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act also required school safety teams to meet twice per year but this year Piscataway determined that teams should meet monthly. Best practices from each school will be shared annually.

We look forward to working with the community on this important topic. We hope you will continue to support us in this important endeavor.

