

## HIB Definition

### Harassment, Intimidation & 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 an 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;
- Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus; or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3,
- Substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; and that
- A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, 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 person or damage to his property; or

- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or

- 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

*Conflict vs Bullying* - bullying is not a phase young people must endure or outgrow. Bullying is not a conflict between students or among groups of students. *Conflict* is a mutually competitive or opposing action or engagement, including a disagreement, an argument or a fight, which is a normal part of human development. *Bullying* is one-sided, where one or more students are victims of one or more person's aggression, which is intended to physically or emotionally hurt the victim(s).

There generally are four types of bullying behaviors. These behaviors and some examples are identified below:

- *Verbal* - Includes taunting, name calling, malicious teasing or making threats (U.S. Department of Justice, 2001);
- *Psychological* - Includes spreading of rumors, purposefully excluding people from activities, breaking up friendships (U.S. Department of Justice, 2001);
- *Physical* - Includes hitting, punching, shoving, spitting or taking personal belongings (U.S. Department of Justice, 2001); and
- *Cyberbullying* - Includes using the Internet, mobile phone or other digital technologies to harm others.

Feeling safe in schools powerfully promotes student learning and healthy development. Bullying, which is a serious impediment to school safety, negatively affects the atmosphere of a school and disrupts the learning environment.