

OLD TAPPAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
277 Old Tappan Road
Old Tappan, NJ 07675
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Danielle M. Da Giau
Superintendent

September 3, 2014

Dear Parents:

On January 6, 2011, Governor Christie signed the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, deemed by many to be the toughest anti-bullying law in the nation. This law took effect on September 1, 2011, and prohibits harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB). In addition to providing definitions of HIB, the law specifies procedures for reporting suspected incidents, investigations, discipline, and appeals. Districts are required to identify school Anti-Bullying Specialists and a district Anti-Bullying Coordinator, as well as establish school safety teams. The legislation also addressed incidents of HIB that take place away from school grounds.

HIB is defined as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication 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 handicap, or by any distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus and that:

1. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) of HIB will have the effect of harming a student or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his person or damage to his property; or
2. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

In the event a staff member, coach, volunteer, or employee of the school district witnesses an act of HIB, he/she shall report it to the principal on the same day that it occurs. The principal will inform the school's Anti-Bullying Specialist and all parents of students reported to be involved in the incident. The Anti-Bullying Specialist will conduct an investigation with the assistance of other staff members in compliance with specified timelines. While the investigation of alleged HIB is taking place, students are still subject to consequences, under the Code of Student Conduct, for an action ultimately determined not to be an incident of HIB.

All provisions of the new law have been incorporated in the Old Tappan Board of Education's revised HIB policy no. 5131.2 which reflects the input of a committee of parents, staff, and community members.

Full copies of the following policies are available on the district's website (www.oldtappanschools.org): Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (5131.2), Conduct/Discipline-Code of Student Conduct (5131), Threats via Modern Technology (5131.10), and Sexual Harassment (5131.1).

I am asking you to please review this information and discuss it with your child. You must then sign the attached form and return it to your child's homeroom teacher by Monday, September 8, 2014.

Sincerely,

Danielle M. Da Giau

Superintendent of Schools

cc: Board of Education
Mr. Doug Barrett, SBA
Mrs. Angela Connelly
Mr. Dennis Rossi
File

HIB Policy Review Form

This form must be printed, signed, and returned to your child's teacher.

I have read and understand the policies Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (5131.2), Conduct/Discipline-Code of Student Conduct (5131), Threats via Modern Technology (5131.10), and Sexual Harassment (5131.1), which are on the Old Tappan Board of Education website. I understand the definition of HIB and the procedures and consequences outlined in the Board policies. I have discussed these policies with my child.

Print Student's Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature (Grades 3-8)

Date