

POLICY: Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

School Statement of Prohibiting HIB

Hackensack Christian School prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment. Since students learn by example, school administration, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

School Definition of HIB

Hackensack Christian School establishes that "harassment, intimidation, and bullying" means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication (including but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer, etc.) that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus, whether it is a single, isolated incident or a series and patterns of incidents, that is:

1. reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or any other distinguishing characteristics.
2. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) 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/her person or damage to his/her property.
3. 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.

False accusations against another as a means of HIB are also prohibited.

Expected School Behavior from Students

Hackensack Christian School expects student to conduct themselves in keeping their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the education purpose underlying all school activities and the care of school facilities and equipment. Students are required to conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior; respect the person, property and rights of others; obey constituted authority; and respond to school teachings. This policy also requires all students to

submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of these rules and guidelines.

Students are expected to behave in a way that creates a supportive learning environment. Hackensack Christian School believes that the best discipline is self-imposed, and that it is the responsibility of staff to use instances of violations of the code of student conduct as opportunities for helping 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 student conduct problems and foster students' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

Students will be expected to sign an Anti-Bullying Pledge to stop any HIB at Hackensack Christian School.

Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Action

The Hackensack Christian School Committee requires and authorizes its school principal to implement procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses for students who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying, consistent with the code of student conduct, and the consequences and remedial responses for staff members who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

The Hackensack Christian School Committee recognizes that some acts of HIB may be isolated incidents requiring that the school officials respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or parts of a larger pattern of HIB that they require a response either at the classroom, school building or by law enforcement officials.

The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by the school administration in the implementation of appropriate consequences and remedial measures for each situation. These consequences and actions are those that are graded according to the following:

1. severity of the offenses/degree of harm
2. the developmental ages of the student offenders
3. the students' histories if inappropriate behaviors
4. surrounding circumstances
5. relationships between the parties involved
6. contexts in which the alleged incidents occurred.

It is only after meaningful consideration of the factors described above those appropriate consequences and remedial responses can be determined

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for pupils who commit acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Some examples are as follows:

1. admonishment
2. temporary removal from the classroom
3. deprivation of privileges
4. detentions
5. in-school or out-of-school suspensions
6. after-school work program
7. expulsion
8. legal action (only in some cases)
9. counseling

Parent involvement in all the above is necessary for the remediation of the behavior(s) of concern.

Reporting of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Issues

The principal is responsible for receiving all complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school committee members, school employees, and volunteers, contracted service providers, parents and students who have contact with students, are required to verbally report alleged violations of this policy to the principal on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident. They shall also submit a report in writing to the principal within two day of the verbal report. The principal is required to inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents. Students and parents may report an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying anonymously. However, formal action for violations of the student code of conduct may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The principal will initiate an investigation within one school day of the report of the incident. The principal may appoint additional personnel to assist in the investigation. The investigation shall be completed as soon as possible, but not later than 10 school days from the date of the written report of the incident.

The results of the investigation shall be reported to the school chancellor within two days of the completion of the investigation. The principal and school chancellor will determine the consequences and remediation. The school committee shall be given the results of the investigation no later than the date of their next meeting. Parents of the students who are parties to the investigation shall be entitled to receive information about the investigation.

The parent or guardian may request a meeting with the school committee after receiving the information, and a meeting shall be held within 10 days of the request. The school committee will hear from the principal and chancellor as well.

At the next school committee meeting following its receipt of the report, the committee shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the decisions made by the school chancellor and principal.

The response to HIB must be in a manner that provides relief to victims and does not stigmatize victims or further their sense of persecution.

A school principal who receives a report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and fails to initiate or conduct an investigation, or fails to take sufficient action to minimize or eliminate the issue may be subject to disciplinary action.

Retaliation

A member of the school committee, school employee, student or volunteer shall not engage in reprisal, retaliation or false accusation against a victim, witness, or one with reliable information about an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The principal shall determine the consequences for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation, after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act.

Distribution of Policy

The principal is responsible to annually distribute the HIB policy to all school employees, school volunteers. Parents and students will have access to the HIB policy via the official school handbook.

The principal will provide training on the school's HIB policy. The training shall include instruction on preventing bullying and information regarding the school policy.

The principal will discuss annually the school policy concerning HIB with the student body.

The Hackensack Christian School Committee and the principal will annually conduct a reevaluation, reassessment, and review of the HIB policy, with recommended revisions and additions to the policy.