ASSISTANCE WITH INSTANCES OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING AGAINST STUDENTS.

Described below are options available to the public for receiving assistance with instances of harassment, intimidation, and bullying against students.

Contact the Principal or the Superintendent of Schools – The ABR requires all acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) to be reported to the school principal. The principal must notify parents of alleged student offenders and victims, and may discuss the availability of support services. The principal must initiate an investigation to be conducted by the school anti-bullying specialist. A report must be provided to the chief school administrator (CSA), who may take additional actions. The CSA must make a report on the incident to the board of education (BOE) and must provide parents with the required information about the investigation. The BOE must issue a written decision on the CSA's report. Parents have the right to a BOE hearing, in executive session, within 10 days of their request, which could occur before or after the BOE's decision.
Contact information for school districts and schools can be found on the New Jersey School Directory.

Contact the County Office of Education – If there is a concern that a school has not complied with a provision in the ABR, the county office can be contacted for advice on the way to proceed or to file a written complaint. A written complaint should explain, at a minimum: The issues, the concerns, and the legal allegations that are the basis for the complaint; the actions taken by the complainant and by the school or school district staff to resolve the situation; and the complainant's expected resolution of the complaint. Contact information for each county office of education, which is the New Jersey Department of Education's representative in each county, can be found at County Information & Services.
Contact the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)

- County Office Administrative Unit – If there is a concern with an HIB incident(s) or the way the incident(s) is being addressed by a school district, contact this unit at (609) 984-6755.
- Office of Student Support Services – If there is a question about the ABR or the NJDOE's HIB policies or materials, contact this office at HIB@doe.nj.gov or (609) 376-9109.

Appeal to the Commissioner of Education – A petition may be filed with the Commissioner of Education to hear and make determinations on controversies and disputes regarding school district implementation of the ABR (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15b(6)(e) and N.J.A.C. 6A:3-1.2(a)1). Information can be found at Controversies and Disputes.

File a Complaint with the Division on Civil Rights – When a student has been subjected to bias-based HIB, that is, the student is harassed based on membership in a protected class (i.e., race, color, national origin, sex, ancestry, nationality, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status) as set forth in the Law Against Discrimination (N.J.S.A. 10:5), a complaint against a school district may be filed with the Division on Civil Rights, within 180 days of the harassing conduct.

File a Complaint with the Superior Court of New Jersey –

- As an alternative to filing a complaint with the Division on Civil Rights (DCR), a student who has been subjected to bias-based HIB may file a complaint against a school district alleging a violation of the Law Against Discrimination (LAD), N.J.S.A. 10:5, directly with the Superior Court of New Jersey. The same conditions apply as in a complaint filed with the DCR: to assert a violation of the LAD, the harassment must be based on the student's membership in a protected class (i.e., race, color, national origin, sex, ancestry, nationality, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status). A Superior Court complaint alleging a violation of the LAD must be filed within two years of the bias-based HIB; and
- A decision of the Commissioner may be appealed to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-24a(5)).

Information is available at New Jersey Courts or contact the Appellate Division Clerk's Office at (609) 292-4822.

Contact Law Enforcement – A complaint should be filed with law enforcement officials for alleged violations of law, including but not limited to assault, harassment or robbery. Contact Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) – A report must be made to CP&P within the Department of Children and Families and to the local law enforcement authority for incidents of alleged missing, abused or neglected children, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-25 and N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10.