

# WARREN HILLS REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Recently, the New Jersey Department of Education released the first annual **District and School Grade Report determined under the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR)***. The reported grade for both the middle school and the high school, as well as the district, is posted on the district website as required.

The following information is offered in order to better understand the grades reported:

- According to the NJDOE, "...the department issued grade is not represented as a letter grade. The Department is not issuing any associated value or ranking for the raw and average scores. The raw and average scores reflect the school district's degree of compliance with the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR)*, as determined primarily through each school's self-assessment of its implementation of the ABR."
- There were eight (8) specific areas that were self-assessed. The eight (8) areas self-assessed were:
  - ✓ HIB programs, approaches, or other initiatives
  - ✓ Training on the BOE-approved HIB policy
  - ✓ Other staff instruction and training programs
  - ✓ Curriculum and instruction on HIB and related information and skills
  - ✓ HIB personnel
  - ✓ School-level HIB incident reporting procedure
  - ✓ HIB investigative procedure
  - ✓ HIB reporting.
- Each of these areas were composed of various indicators [twenty-five (25) in total] that could be rated using a scale of:
  - ✓ 0 → Does not meet the requirements of ABR
  - ✓ 1 → Partially meets the requirements of ABR
  - ✓ 2 → Meets all the requirements of ABR
  - ✓ 3 → Exceeds the requirements of ABR.
- If a school/district self-assessed itself as *meeting all the requirements* of ABR, the grade would be 50. The maximum grade that a school or district could receive is 75 (achieved by rating *exceeds the requirements* for every indicator).
- Our middle school and high school each received a grade of **63** and therefore, mathematically, the district grade is also **63**. **This means that Warren Hills Regional Middle School and High School both met all the requirements of the 25 indicators and exceeded the requirements in 13 of those 25 indicators!**
- Beginning with the September 2011-2012 school year, our school district has conscientiously implemented the requirements found in the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act*. While completing the self-assessment, we learned that our district has demonstrated strengths in the following areas:
  - ✓ We annually establish HIB programs, approaches, and initiatives, including Seventh and Ninth Grade Academies, peer leadership discussion groups, school safety teams, inclusion of HIB in curriculum scope and sequence, Week of Respect in October, Mix It Up Day, grade level class meetings, Ninth Grade

Academy Awards program, *Ryan's Story* program for students and parents, Rachel's Challenge Club, faculty meeting discussions, pod casts in homeroom, Bionic Day, and ongoing consulting and collaboration with local law enforcement and the county prosecutor's office.

- ✓ Our HIB policy training includes instruction on preventing HIB on the basis of protected categories enumerated in the ABR and other distinguishing characteristics that may incite incidents of discrimination or HIB. Faculty, substitute teachers, and a variety of support personnel all participate.
- ✓ Our HIB policy is discussed with students in a variety of venues including written processes for peer leadership discussions, class meetings, staff assignments, Seventh and Ninth Grade Academies, library materials, and Theatre Arts classes assisting in designing scripts for Bionic Day.
- ✓ The schools' anti-bullying specialists (ABS) are given time during the usual school schedule to participate in various ongoing training activities to serve as effective ABSs. This includes meeting with the Board Attorney, meetings with the Anti-Bullying Coordinator (ABC), revising job descriptions, and articulation meetings between the high school and middle school along with the appropriate administrators.
- ✓ Our HIB investigation procedures followed the delegated mandate, including notification to parents of alleged offenders and victims in each reported HIB incident, completion of the investigation within ten (10) school days of the written incident report, preparation of a written report on the findings of each HIB investigation, and results of the investigation reported to the Superintendent within two (2) days of completion of the investigation.
- The self-assessment helped our district to identify areas for improvement. During the upcoming year we will be working towards improving the following:
  - ✓ We will annually assess HIB programs, approaches, or other initiatives and seek additional alternatives if necessary.
  - ✓ Our School Safety Teams will review cases closely to identify patterns of HIB and review school climate and school policies for the betterment of the students.
  - ✓ We will continue to research training ideas for all staff members and contracted service providers to our district.
  - ✓ Warren Hills Regional Middle and High Schools will provide ongoing, age appropriate instruction on preventing HIB in conjunction with the Common Core State Standards.
  - ✓ The school district will implement an evidence-based program in the middle school and high school to ensure appropriate data collection.