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***Guidance for Determining Grades  
under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (P.L.2010, c.122)***

***2015-2016 School Year***

The Commissioner of Education is required to grade each public school and school district's efforts to implement the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR)* (N.J.S.A.18A:17-46). This guidance document has been developed to help the School Safety/ School Climate Team (SS/SCT) fulfill its responsibility to complete the School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the ABR (Self-Assessment) and the chief school administrator (CSA), charter school lead person (CSLP) and renaissance school project lead person (RSLP) to fulfill their required responsibilities. For the purpose of this guidance, the term CSA includes CSLP and RSLP and references to the Board of Education (BOE) include the charter school and renaissance school governing authority.

***Conducting the School Self-Assessment***

Each school, through its SS/SCT, is required to evaluate its implementation of the ABR from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016 by using the attached Self-Assessment (Appendix A). The Self-Assessment tool has not changed from the prior year and includes eight core elements which address all of the ABR requirements for schools. SS/SCTs must assign a rating for each indicator based on the criteria and available documentation. Samples of documentation that could be used to substantiate the ratings are provided for each indicator. It is essential for school staff to maintain sufficient documentation that will substantiate its ratings on each indicator. The maximum grade a school may receive remains 78.

Each school's Self-Assessment must be consistent with associated information and data collected by the district and data reports submitted to the NJDOE. In selecting a rating category on the Self-Assessment, each school must consider, at a minimum, the following information to verify its status regarding the indicators under each of the core elements:

- Data submitted by schools in each of the following data collection systems:
  - *Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System,*
  - *Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying – Investigations, Trainings and Programs System,* and
  - *County District School System;*
- The findings from monitoring under the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC);
- The findings from investigations of complaints of noncompliance conducted by the NJDOE's county offices of education or the Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance; and
- Other sources of information (e.g., student conduct referrals and dispositions, student and staff attendance, student suspensions, school climate surveys, at-risk student behavior surveys).

**NOTE:** Schools are not permitted to assign a rating of “exceeds the requirements” for any indicator that has not been corrected after there has been documentation of non-compliance during the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. The NJDOE reserves the right to adjust the school’s selected rating for any indicator, if the rating is inconsistent with data or information available to the NJDOE. The NJDOE will adjust a school’s grade if data inconsistencies between the Self-Assessment and other data collection systems are identified over the past two years of reporting, which may negatively impact the school and district grades.

***Entering, Certifying, and Submitting the Self-Assessment Data***

Once the Self-Assessment is completed, a school-level user must enter the school’s ratings into a web-based system titled HIB Grades, found on the NJDOE Homeroom page at <http://homeroom.state.nj.us/>. After the school-level user enters the ratings, he/she will be prompted to send the data to the CSA. The CSA (district-level user) will have the ability to review the Self-Assessment, print a *Summary Report* (Appendix B) and request the school make any necessary changes prior to officially submitting the data to the NJDOE.

**The CSA is responsible for presenting the completed Self-Assessment at a public BOE meeting in order to obtain public comment and BOE approval.** Once the BOE approval is granted, the CSA will formally submit the ratings. The system will not permit the user to submit the Self-Assessment prior to the date of the BOE meeting. The formal submission includes the CSA’s certification of the school’s electronically submitted ratings and the *Statement of Assurances* (Appendix C). The district-level user will be able to print a receipt of the submission. The **due date** for completing, certifying and submitting the Self-Assessment is **September 30, 2016**.

**NOTE:** The ratings may not be changed once submitted. Instructions for completing the web-based form will be available upon logging into the system.

***Support Resources***

In addition to the attached *Overview of Activities* checklist (Appendix D), the Department has developed a technical assistance module to guide school staff on how to access and use the HIB Grades online system and understand the Self-Assessment core elements (Appendix E). The technical assistance module, *An Overview of HIB Grades: Understanding the Self-Assessment Process & Data Entry Requirements*; and additional resources to support schools in successfully completing all aspects of this program may be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/guidance/>.