August 19, 2014

TO: Chief School Administrators  
Charter School Lead Persons  
Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

FROM: Susan Martz, Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Student Services and Career Readiness

SUBJECT: School Violence Awareness Week, Week of Respect and Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Reports

School Violence Awareness Week – Since 2003, schools and districts have been observing School Violence Awareness Week during the week beginning with the third Monday in October, which is **October 20-24 in 2014**, as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:36-5.1. To help school districts, charter schools and approved private schools for students with disabilities comply with the requirements for School Violence Awareness Week, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has provided guidance that is available online at: [http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/behavior/violence.shtml](http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/behavior/violence.shtml).

Week of Respect – Additionally, the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (P.L.2010, c.122) requires that the week beginning with the first Monday in October (**October 6-10 in 2014**) of each year be designated as a “Week of Respect” in New Jersey. School districts and charter schools (but not approved private schools for students with disabilities), in order to recognize the importance of character education, are required to observe the week by providing age-appropriate instruction focusing on preventing harassment, intimidation or bullying (HIB). To facilitate your planning, the following resources are available on the NJDOE’s website:

1. The Keeping Our Kids Safe, Healthy and in School website, under the Safe and Positive Learning Environment tab, ([http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/sandp/](http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/sandp/)) includes resources about positive learning environments, as well as those specific to character and social development and student behavior.

2. The Core Curriculum Content Standards website ([http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/](http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/)) provides information on integrating concepts into curricular areas and specific Cumulative Progress Indicators in the Health and Physical Education, Social Studies and Technology Standards, as well as links to other resources.
3. The 911 curriculum, *Learning from the Challenges of Our Times*, and the K-4 Holocaust Genocide Curriculum are available on the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education website ([http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/](http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/)). Both guides emphasize the importance of respecting diversity and appreciation of others and provide lesson plans that stress the importance of respect for others and ways to deal with issues of prejudice and bias in the classroom.

4. The HIB web page ([http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib](http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib)) includes all of the NJDOE’s resources in support of the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* and the prevention of HIB.

*Harassment Intimidation and Bullying Reports -* N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15b(6)e requires boards of education (BOE) to issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject or modify the chief school administrator’s (CSA) decision on each reported incident of HIB. The CSA must report every HIB complaint to the BOE and the BOE must make a decision on the CSA’s report of each reported HIB incident, irrespective of the findings from an HIB investigation. The BOE must provide a hearing regarding any reported incident of HIB, if requested.

Additionally, you are reminded that the Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS) and the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying – Investigations, Trainings and Programs Data Collection System (HIB-ITP) are designed for reporting *student-on-student HIB* and *not adult-on-student HIB*. School districts are required to investigate all reports of both *student-on-student* and *adult-on-student* HIB; however, only *student-on-student* HIB is reported on the EVVRS and HIB-ITP. Please advise appropriate school staff of this reporting limitation.

We hope that you find this information helpful in your planning. Should you have any questions, please contact the Office of Student Support Services at (609) 292-5935.

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