September 23, 2014

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

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

SUBJECT: Media Violence and Youth: Impact of a Child’s Exposure to Media Violence

The American Academy of Pediatrics reports that by the age of 18, the average American child will have viewed 200,000 acts of violence on television. Some studies suggest that exposure to violence in the media increases the chances that children will behave more aggressively, experience more anger and hostility, think more about aggression and violence, and become “numb” to images of violence.

In response to this concern and in an effort to increase awareness, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed P.L. 2013, c. 146, which requires the New Jersey Department of Education to prepare and make available on the department’s website information on how a parent can limit a child’s exposure to violence on television, cell phones, computers, and other electronic devices.

In accordance with the law (N.J.S.A. 18A:40-44(c)), school districts are required to distribute the pamphlet to the parents or guardians of students attending the schools of the district. A copy of the pamphlet is attached. The pamphlet is also available on the department’s website at http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/behavior/media.shtml for electronic distribution.

Thank you for your efforts to support positive student development. Should you have questions on these requirements, please contact the Office of Student Support Services at (609) 292-5935.

SM/NC/s: Members, State Board of Education
David C. Hespe, Acting Commissioner
Senior Staff
Nancy Curry
Kelly Allen
Elaine Lerner
Greg Kocher
Executive County Business Officials
Executive County Superintendents
Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers
NJ LEE Group
Garden State Coalition of Schools

Attachment

c: Members, State Board of Education