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August 29, 2017

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

FROM: Nancy Curry, Director
Office of Student Support Services

SUBJECT: Week of Respect and School Violence Awareness Week – Requirements & Guidance

This memo provides school districts with requirements and guidance on the Week of Respect (October 2-6, 2017) and School Violence Awareness Week (October 16-20, 2017).

School districts statewide recognize the importance of continually fostering a positive school climate. The fundamental work being done to reduce incidences of violence and harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) within the schools is paramount and aids in providing students a safe environment in which they are able to attain academic success and grow as individuals. During both the Week of Respect and School Violence Awareness Week, school districts have the opportunity to build upon their current work by delivering age-appropriate instruction to students on these essential topics.

Week of Respect – The *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (P.L. 2010, c.122)* requires that the week beginning with the first Monday in October of each year (October 2-6 in 2017) be designated as the Week of Respect in New Jersey. In recognition of the importance of social and emotional learning and character education, school districts, charter schools and renaissance school projects are required to observe the week by providing age-appropriate instruction focusing on preventing HIB. Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities are encouraged, but not required, to observe this week. To facilitate planning, see online resources at the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) [School Climate and Culture](#) webpage.

School Violence Awareness Week – According to *N.J.S.A. 18A:36-5.1*, the week including the third Monday in October of each year (October 16-20 in 2017) must be designated as School Violence Awareness Week in New Jersey. To help school districts, charter schools, renaissance school projects and Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities comply with the requirements for School Violence Awareness Week, please refer to the NJDOE's [guidance](#).

The New Jersey Legislature has set aside both weeks to highlight these very important issues. However, it is a district's clear, consistent message throughout the school year about positive school climate and student behavioral expectations that will help reduce violence and create safe and supportive learning environments for all of our students and staff.

Please direct questions to the Office of Student Support Services at schoolclimate@doe.state.nj.us.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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