156-26
OAL Dkt. No. EDU 13112-24
Agency Dkt. No. 269-8/24

New Jersey Commissioner of Education

Final Decision

M.E., on behalf of minor child, D.E.,

Petitioner,

v.

Board of Education of Bridgewater-Raritan School District, Somerset County,

Respondent.

The record of this matter and the Initial Decision of the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) have been reviewed and considered. The parties did not file exceptions.

Upon review, the Commissioner concurs with the Administrative Law Judge that petitioner failed to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that the Bridgewater-Raritan Board of Education's harassment, intimidation, and bullying determination was arbitrary, capricious, or unreasonable.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is adopted as the final decision in this matter, and the petition of appeal is hereby dismissed.

IT IS SO ORDERED.[1]

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Date of Decision: May 6, 2026
Date of Mailing: May 6, 2026

[1] This decision may be appealed to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:6-9.1. Under *N.J.Ct.R.* 2:4-1(b), a notice of appeal must be filed with the Appellate Division within 45 days from the date of mailing of this decision.

State of New Jersey
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

INITIAL DECISION
OAL DKT. NO. EDU 13112-24
AGENCY DKT. NO. 269-8/24

M.E. ON BEHALF OF MINOR CHILD,
D.E.,
Petitioner,
v.
BRIDGEWATER-RARITAN SCHOOL
DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
Respondent.

Christopher C. Dombakly, Esq. for petitioner (Law Office of Rajeh A. Saadeh, LLC, attorneys)

Marc G. Mucciolo, Esq., for respondent (Busch Law Group, LLC, attorneys)

Record Closed: January 13, 2026 Decided: February 27, 2026

BEFORE **JEFFREY N. RABIN,** ALJ:

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Petitioner M.E., the mother of minor child D.E., appeals the determination by the respondent, the Bridgewater-Raritan School District Board of Education (Board), that D.E.

was not the victim of harassment, intimidation, and bullying ("HIB"), which determination overturned a finding by the Board's Anti-Bullying Specialist (ABS).

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Petitioner's challenge to the Board's HIB determination took place on or about May 28, 2024, and on June 5, 2024, the Board notified petitioner that it had affirmed Superintendent Beer's determination that there was insufficient evidence to find that a HIB incident had taken place. (Resp't's Br. Exh. E.) On or about August 15, 2024, petitioner filed a Petition of Appeal ("Petition") with the New Jersey Commissioner of Education, challenging the Board's HIB decision. The Department of Education Office of Controversies and Disputes transmitted this matter to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL), where it was filed on September 12, 2024, as a contested case. N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 to -15; N.J.S.A. 52:14F-1 to -13. A hearing took place on July 16, 2025, and after the receipt of summation briefs, the record closed on January 13, 2026.

FACTUAL DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Testimony for petitioner

D.E., the minor student/petitioner, testified that she was in tenth grade. She is a Sunni Muslim, identifying as an Egyptian and an Arab. Muslims are good people.

An incident occurred on Thursday, April 18, 2024 (the "Incident") with a fellow student (referred to as "A1"). Before the Incident, A1 knew D.E. was Muslim. They had discussed the (recent Israel/Hamas) Mideast conflict together. A1 asked what side D.E. was on, and she said she supported the Palestinians. D.E. was not friends with A1. On the Incident date, A1 and D.E. were involved in a group project. A1 "suddenly" asked which sect of Islam D.E. was, and D.E. responded, "Sunni." A1 responded, "Good, because all Shia are terrorists." D.E. was offended and said, "They're part of my people." A1 also said there was no Palestine.

D.E. felt "targeted" and that A1 was "targeting" all Muslims. D.E. told her teacher she was not feeling well and left the class. D.E. told M.E. about the Incident when M.E. picked her up. As a result, D.E. did not want to return to school. The school made no accommodation. D.E. had a panic attack and became anxious, nervous and depressed. Her grades slipped, and this ruined her school year.

Petitioner offered Exhibit A, which indicated that D.E.'s grades had improved: in tenth grade, she received C+s, and in eleventh grade, she received all As, A+s and Bs.

The ABS found that there was HIB, which validated her feelings. But the Superintendent overturned the ABS.

The Incident was not a political discussion because A1 had asked about her specific religious sect. Now D.E. feels unsafe going to school. A1 had approached D.E. after the Incident, even though her guidance counselor said A1 was not allowed to talk to her. D.E. could not recall the date when this happened. First, D.E. testified that the teacher did nothing but later testified that the teacher told A1 to return to his seat. A1 did not return to his seat, but the teacher did try to keep them apart. D.E. asked for an accommodation to take her final exam separately from A1.

The Exhibit A Petition of Appeal indicated that D.E. said that A1 had attacked the Shia.

On cross-examination, D.E. admitted that she and A1 had previously discussed Middle East issues several times. A1 never said that D.E. was a terrorist. A1 has denied making the Incident comments. The two other people in the study group, the two prior witnesses at the local hearing, denied hearing A1's purported comments. D.E. said these witnesses actually told A1 to stop, although that comment was not reflected in the HIB report. (Exh. C.)

There was a second incident, which D.E. reported to her mother, teacher and guidance counselor, but nobody filed a report on the second incident.

There were interview summaries from the local investigation, but they are incomplete; they do not represent everything D.E. told the ABS.

A1 continued to approach D.E. daily for a month after the Incident. D.E. could not recall what A1 specifically said, but it was to discuss Israel, Palestine, race, religion, and Ramadan. Soon thereafter, D.E. testified that A1 had only asked about Ramadan prior to the Incident. When interviewed on April 22, 2024, D.E. never reported that A1 had approached her on April 19, 2024.

M.E. was the mother of D.E. She is Greek-American, and her husband is Egyptian. They raised D.E. as a Muslim. D.E. was a bubbly, happy child who made friends and enjoyed dancing.

On the Incident date, M.E. picked D.E. up from school. D.E. was sweaty and flushed. Before leaving, M.E. called a school administrator who recommended that M.E. file a HIB report. She had D.E. go to school on April 19. M.E. did not know if D.E. had language arts on April 19; D.E. was not correct in saying she did, and D.E.'s "testimony was not accurate." D.E. was not interviewed on April 22.

Once A1 was interviewed after the Incident, he stopped approaching D.E. every day. D.E. was upset that Superintendent Beers overturned the ABS finding, so M.E. appealed to the Board, which upheld the reversal. Beers only cared about statistics and optics. He treated her dismissively. She received the Board's decision of May 15, 2024, but no copy of the HIB report was attached; she did not receive it until July 14, 2025.

A1's comments were against her religion, which is protected under HIB policy.

On cross-examination, M.E. testified that she did not witness the Incident. She did not witness any of the interviews. M.E. never called the teacher, Mr. Romanak, only Mr. Lehman, the "grade-level administrator" (assistant principal). Exhibit F, M.E.'s email to Mr. Romanak, confirmed that D.E. never told him what happened during the Incident, only that she needed to leave because she wasn't feeling well.

On redirect, Exhibit F was referenced for Superintendent Beers, stating that Mr. Romanak did not know D.E. was distraught, that Romanak confirmed that A1 never approached D.E. again after the Incident, and that Mr. Lehman said that D.E. told him that she was friends with A1 and did not want to file a report. But M.E. testified that D.E. never spoke with Lehman, and assistant principals never speak directly with students.

D.E. was recalled to the stand and contradicted what was in Exhibit F, the May 28, 2024, email wherein Beers said Lehman and D.E. had spoken; D.E. said she never spoke with Lehman.

Testimony for respondents

Robert Beers was the Superintendent of Schools for respondent, in that position for four years. He was involved with the HIB process, receiving five to ten HIB files before every Board meeting. He reviewed the recommendations of the ABS based on the timelines and documents provided to him. He then presented his conclusions to the Board of Education. A second Board of Education meeting takes place if a petitioner seeks an appeal.

Exhibit C was the HIB report from the ABS regarding D.E. Beers disagreed with the ABS's findings. He found that the witness statements did not support petitioner's claims. The Israel-Gaza issue was a current topic of conversation amongst students. He found that D.E. and A1 had discussed these matters prior to the Incident. Beers did not see the issue as one of race and religion but of politics, and he found that A1 had not intended to upset D.E. but rather was just continuing their ongoing dialogue. Witness One was present but did not hear A1's alleged anti-Muslim statements. Witness Two did not hear A1's alleged statements. A1 denied making the statement that all Islamic people were terrorists.

The Board found at its meeting of May 14, 2024, that there was no HIB. The second hearing was on 5/28/24, when M.E. presented her case. Beers noted that M.E. had stated that A1 approached D.E. when actually, they were sitting together doing a class project. Beers offered that since none of the witnesses heard any potentially

inflammatory statements by A1, there was a lack of substantiating evidence. The Board then upheld Beers' decision.

Beers noted that parents are provided with a summation of HIB findings prior to hearings, not the actual HIB report, in order to protect a student's confidentiality, as set out in the Board's HIB policy. (Exh. H.)

Exhibit F shows that M.E. had tried to pressure the teacher, Mr. Romanak, into supporting her position.

Beers stood by his conclusions.

On cross-examination, Beers emphasized that he cannot simply accept a witness's statement but needs corroborating proof and repeated that he did not have enough evidence for a finding of HIB. Even if A1 said what he was alleged to have said, that statement was not aimed towards D.E.; as reported by D.E., A1 did not call D.E. a terrorist. Further, A1 denied saying that all Islamic people were terrorists. Beers reiterated that he considered the Israel-Palestine issue a political matter because they are political entities. People are able to debate the Arab-Israeli conflicts without it becoming a religious attack. Discussing whether Palestine is a country is a political discussion. The Israel-Hamas conflict was a news topic post-October 2023.

The Board handles thirty to fifty HIB cases per year. Beers typically gave deference to ABS findings, but up to five times each year, Beers overturned an ABS finding. He checked to see whether timelines were met and whether the evidence comported with the claims. In this case, Beers never concluded that nothing happened; he concluded that there was a lack of evidence to confirm the claims. Further, HIB law was not met here: there was no evidence that A1 intended to harm D.E., in addition to there being no evidence that A1 made anti-Islam statements.

Beers could not give any credence to an article in a local newsletter claiming a decline in HIB reports. (Pet'r's Exh. B). The article was written a year after the Incident,

and there was no proof of the accuracy of the writer's claims. I note that petitioner failed to proffer actual numbers regarding HIB cases.

Beers denied that HIB cases were being "swept under the rug."

FINDINGS OF FACT

For testimony to be believed, it must not only come from the mouth of a credible witness, but it also has to be credible in itself. It must elicit evidence that is from such common experience and observation that it can be approved as proper under the circumstances. See Spagnuolo v. Bonnet, 16 N.J. 546 (1954); Gallo v. Gallo, 66 N.J. Super. 1 (App. Div. 1961). A credibility determination requires an overall assessment of the witness's story in light of its rationality, internal consistency, and the manner in which it "hangs together" with the other evidence. Carbo v. United States, 314 F.2d 718, 749 (9th Cir. 1963). Also, "[t]he interest, motive, bias, or prejudice of a witness may affect his credibility and justify the [trier of fact], whose province it is to pass upon the credibility of an interested witness, in disbelieving his testimony." State v. Salimone, 19 N.J. Super. 600, 608 (App. Div.), certif. denied, 10 N.J. 316 (1952) (citation omitted).

A trier of fact may reject testimony because it is inherently incredible, or because it is inconsistent with other testimony or with common experience, or because it is overborne by other testimony. Congleton v. Pura-Tex Stone Corp., 53 N.J. Super. 282, 287 (App. Div. 1958).

D.E., the student-petitioner, was a minor child giving personal opinions about perceived events. She did not answer the questions posed to her. She claimed A1 said, "All Shias are terrorists," which differs from petitioner's general claims that A1 stated that all Muslims are terrorists. Additionally, D.E. testified that she was Sunni, not Shia, and thus this alleged statement from A1 did not address her either personally or address her religious sect. The Petition of Appeal stated that "A1 attacked Shia and D.E. had to defend herself," but again, that does not comport with the fact that she is Sunni. D.E. testified that the Incident was not a political discussion but testified that A1 said that there

is no Palestine. I **FIND** that the question of whether Palestine is or isn't a country is political, one that continues to be debated.

She testified that her grades had suffered, but her testimony about Exhibit A indicated that her grades had actually improved over the next year after the Incident. No educational expert was brought in to analyze her academic performance. The final Board decision was dated May 28, 2024, just before the end of the school year, but petitioner was unable to show any connection between the Incident and D.E.'s performance during the last weeks of the school year.

D.E. could not recall the dates of events referred to. Regarding the Incident, D.E. first testified that her teacher did nothing, but subsequently D.E. testified that the teacher told A1 to return to his seat and then made efforts to keep A1 away from her. D.E. claimed to have had a "panic attack" on the day of the Incident, but petitioner offered no medical or psychological evidence to prove any lingering effects from the Incident.

D.E. testified about a second incident, but petitioner offered no proofs or reports to confirm that there was a second incident or that she told anyone about it. D.E. claimed to have told her teacher, mother and guidance counselor, but neither the teacher nor the guidance counselor was called to offer any corroborating testimony. Nothing was offered to support D.E.'s claim that the interview summaries failed to indicate everything D.E. purportedly told the ABS. Further, although D.E. referred to a second incident, she also testified that A1 approached her daily to discuss Israel and Palestine, yet she did not qualify each of those daily conversations as additional "incidents" and did not file complaints about those encounters. When questioned about what A1 said to her during those alleged daily encounters, D.E. could not remember.

I cannot give a great deal of weight to her testimony.

M.E. is the mother of D.E. I found her testimony to be biased and self-serving. She contradicted D.E.'s testimony that D.E. had a language arts class on April 19. She offered no corroborating evidence that she had requested the HIB report on four separate occasions. She claimed that A1's statement was "against her religion," although his

alleged comment was regarding Shia Muslims, and D.E. testified that her family was Sunni Muslim.

Petitioner M.E. did not produce any expert witnesses to prove that D.E. suffered any harm from the Incident.

M.E. did not witness the Incident. M.E. did not witness any of the interviews. I can therefore only give limited weight to her testimony.

Robert Beers was a well-prepared, knowledgeable witness who testified in a clear manner. He remained calm on cross-examination and asked for questions to be restated when they were not clear to him. He had a great deal of experience with HIB cases. He had been personally involved in this case. He was knowledgeable about HIB protocols. He testified clearly about what the other witnesses to the Incident reported to him; petitioner failed to call any of these witnesses to testify in the within matter, which could have impeached Beers' testimony.

I found his testimony to be credible.

Therefore, after reviewing the testimony and evidence, I **FIND**, by a preponderance of credible evidence, the following additional **FACTS**:

D.E. and A1 had discussed Middle Eastern politics prior to the Incident; the Israel-Hamas issue was a current topic of conversation amongst students because of Hamas' attack on Israel in October 2023; as part of their discussions on the Israel-Hamas conflict, A1 asked D.E. her opinion on the Palestinian people and asked her which sect of Islam she was a member of; there was no proof that A1 called Shiites, or all Muslims, terrorists; A1 had discussed these matters with D.E. before, and there was no evidence that A1 intended to cause her any harm by continuing the discussion; Superintendent Beers never concluded that nothing happened during the Incident, only that he concluded that there was a lack of evidence to confirm the claims.

LEGAL ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The issue before this Tribunal is whether the Board's determination that there was insufficient evidence to uphold the Anti-Bullying Specialist's determination that a HIB event had occurred was arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable.

I agree with petitioner's contention that all students have the right to attend school in an environment free of offensive and degrading comments about their race or religion. That is why there are HIB laws. Petitioner properly cited to the statutory definition of HIB, which is set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, which provides that:

> 2. "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L.2010, c.122 (C.18A:37-15.3), that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that:
>
> a. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property;
>
> b. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
>
> c. creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

If there had been a preponderance of credible evidence that A1 had said “All Shia are terrorists” or “All Muslims are terrorists,” then the above-cited analysis would be taken into consideration. I have already found insufficient proof that A1 made any such statements against Islam or Muslims. I have already found that a discussion of the Israel-Hamas conflict or whether Palestine is a country is, on its face, political. There was no evidence as to what else A1 had ever said to D.E. during their running conversation on Middle Eastern politics. Thus, the only remaining question is whether A1 asking D.E. what sect of Islam she was a member of met the definition of HIB and whether Superintendent Beers and the respondent school Board acted arbitrarily, capriciously or unreasonably in deciding that such a statement sufficed to constitute an incident of HIB.

I **FIND** that A1 verbally made a communication to D.E. in the form of a question about her religion on school property.

The next question then becomes whether that question substantially disrupted or interfered with the orderly operation of the school. No evidence was proffered showing that school operations were affected by A1’s question. Their language arts class continued, with D.E. leaving the class and claiming to her teacher that she was feeling ill.

The next question is whether A1’s question interfered with D.E.’s rights. However, no evidence was proffered showing that D.E.’s rights as a student were affected by A1’s question. She, in fact, continued to attend school, and her grades not only remained good but improved in the next school year.

Next, one must analyze the three-pronged test from the HIB statute. First, whether a reasonable person should have known, under the circumstances, that their comment would have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property. Here, no evidence had been proffered to show what the “reasonable person” standard meant. No evidence had been proffered to show that there had even been any physical or emotional harm or fear of harm. This is an area where expert psychological testimony might have been helpful; without such evidence, the only thing presented was that D.E. felt “anxious.” No explanation of what “anxious”

meant or what caused anxiety was proffered by petitioner. Nothing A1 allegedly said to D.E. on its face contains threatening language towards D.E.

Next, the issue is whether A1's question had the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students. Petitioner failed to prove that A1 asking D.E. which sect of Islam she belonged to in and of itself was demeaning to D.E. Petitioner's entire case was based on its allegations that A1 had insulted Muslims and Islam by stating that Shia or Muslims were all terrorists, but, again, there was no credible evidence that such a statement was ever made.

Finally, the third prong was whether A1's question about D.E.'s religion created a hostile educational environment for D.E. by interfering with her education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student. Here, no evidence had been proffered by petitioner to show that a hostile educational environment had been created for D.E.; D.E. continued attending school, and her grades were good and improving. D.E.'s claim that the Incident "ruined" her school year is not a specific enough standard to be addressed by this Tribunal. Additionally, no credible evidence was proffered to show any physical or emotional harm to D.E.

Without any qualifying language that could be interpreted as an insult to D.E. or to Islam, I **CONCLUDE** that A1 asking D.E. what religion she was a member of did not comport with the definition of HIB.

Petitioner correctly wrote that in HIB appeals, the role of the ALJ is not to substitute his or her own judgment for that of the Board but to determine whether the Board's decision has a reasonable basis in the record and complies with the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act. The Board's decision is entitled to a presumption of validity, and the petitioner bears the burden of showing that it was arbitrary, capricious, or unreasonable. Thomas v. Morris Twp. Bd. of Educ., 89 N.J. Super. 327, 332 (App. Div. 1965); Kopera v. W. Orange Bd. of Educ., 60 N.J. Super. 288, 294 (App. Div. 1960). Kopera stated it was well established that the discretionary actions of a local board of education "may not be upset unless patently arbitrary, without rational basis or induced by improper motives." Kopera, at 294−296.

Thus, as argued by the respondent, the Commissioner of Education ("Commissioner") will not substitute his or her judgment for that of the Board, whose exercise of its discretion is entitled to a presumption of correctness and may not be disturbed unless shown to be arbitrary, capricious, or unreasonable. To overcome that presumption, the petitioner must prove that the board "acted in either bad faith or in disregard to the circumstances." T.B.M. v. Moorestown Bd. of Educ., OAL Dkt. No. EDU 2780-07 (Feb. 6, 2008), aff'd, Comm'r (April 25, 2013) (citing Thomas v. Morris Twp. Bd. of Educ., 89 N.J. Super. 327, 332 (App. Div. 1965), aff'd, 46 N.J. 581 (1966)). In the absence of a finding that the board acted arbitrarily, capriciously, or unreasonably, neither the Commissioner nor an ALJ has the authority to overturn a discretionary decision of the board. Id.

Superintendent Beers had a great deal of experience in HIB cases, handling five to ten HIB files before every Board meeting. The Board handled thirty to fifty HIB cases per year during his four years as Superintendent. Beers testified that he typically gave deference to ABS findings, but up to five times each year, he overturned an ABS finding. It is therefore not unheard of for him to overturn an ABS finding. He testified as to the procedures he followed in every case and in the within case: he checked to see whether timelines were met and whether the evidence comported with the claims. He was quite clear during his testimony that he had never concluded that nothing happened, but rather that there was a lack of evidence to confirm D.E.'s claims. This Tribunal can also agree that there was a noted lack of evidence presented to show that A1 made the comments D.E. has claimed.

There was no showing that Superintendent Beers reached his conclusions in an "arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable manner" or that the Board had acted in such a manner by accepting Beers's recommendation. No evidence was proffered that Beers misapplied the HIB statutes or protocols. The testimony of D.E. and M.E. was clear that A1 had not called D.E. a terrorist. There was no corroborating evidence that A1 called all Shia or all Muslims terrorists. There was no evidence proffered to show that Superintendent Beers disregarded any available information. Beers reviewed the ABS report and evaluated the information gleaned from the interviews `D.E., A1 and the other

students in their language arts project group. Based on these interviews, Beers was able to conclude that none of the other three students heard A1 say that all Shia were terrorists and that none of these students could corroborate what D.E. claimed. Petitioner has failed to prove that Beers had any ulterior motive when he overturned the ABS findings. They suggested that school boards in general seek to reduce the number of HIB cases, but in the within matter, petitioner was not denied any due process: D.E. reported the Incident, an ABS wrote a report on it, the Superintendent reviewed the ABS findings and reviewed all the interview materials on the case, and the matter twice went before the Board. Petitioner was afforded every opportunity to prove HIB, and Beers and the Board followed statutory protocol in reviewing this as a HIB case. Nothing offered by petitioner indicated that any definition of "arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable" had been met.

Based on the foregoing, I **CONCLUDE** that petitioner failed to prove by a preponderance of the credible evidence that the decision of the respondent Board, that there was insufficient evidence to uphold a finding of HIB by A1 against petitioner D.E., was made in an arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable manner.

ORDER

I **ORDER** that the decision of the respondent Board, that there was insufficient evidence to uphold a finding of HIB by A1 against petitioner D.E., is **AFFIRMED**, and the within appeal is **DISMISSED**.

I hereby **FILE** this initial decision with the **COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION** for consideration.

This recommended decision may be adopted, modified, or rejected by the **COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**, who by law is authorized to make a final decision in this matter. If the Commissioner of the Department of Education does not adopt, modify, or reject this decision within forty-five days and unless such time limit is otherwise extended, this recommended decision shall become a final decision in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:14B-10.

Within thirteen days from the date on which this recommended decision was mailed to the parties, any party may file written exceptions with the **COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, ATTN: BUREAU OF CONTROVERSIES AND DISPUTES, 100 Riverview Plaza, 4th Floor, PO Box 500, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0500**, marked "Attention: Exceptions." A copy of any exceptions must be sent to the judge and to the other parties.

February 27, 2026
DATE

JEFFREY N. RABIN, ALJ

Date Received at Agency:

Date Mailed to Parties:

JNR/onl/gd

APPENDIX

Witnesses

For petitioners:

D.E.

M.E.

For respondent:

Robert Beers, Superintendent

Exhibits

Treated as Joint Exhibits**:**

R-Exh. A	Petition of Appeal
R-Exh. B	Answer to Petition
R-Exh. D	Board decision letter, dated May 15, 2024
R-Exh. E	Silvestro correspondence
R-Exh. G	HIB Incident log
R-Exh. H	Board HIB policy

For petitioner:

P-Exh. A	Transcript
P-Exh. B	Bullying news article

For respondent:

R-Exh. C	HIB report, aka HIBster report
R-Exh. F	May 2024 mail chain
R-Exh. I	Report card for school year 2024−25
R-Exh. J	Student transcript