



Attorney General's Office Addresses Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying in New Video to School Leaders

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey State Board of Education today viewed a video message from the Acting New Jersey Attorney General, John Jay Hoffman, to school leaders on the issue of harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) in schools. The video from the Attorney General expresses the importance of a proactive, not reactive, approach to HIB, and urges school leaders to make HIB a top priority. The video also emphasizes the importance of vigilant awareness about incidents of HIB, as well as ensuring a positive culture and climate in all school buildings.

A copy of the video message, which was developed with input from the Attorney General's Division on Civil Rights, was previously distributed to all Executive County Superintendents, and will be shown at upcoming county roundtable meetings with district Superintendents.

"I am pleased that the Attorney General created a video that reminds all school leaders about the importance of implementing the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* in a way that does not allow any child to be deprived of a safe learning environment," David C. Hespe, Commissioner of Education said. "A proactive approach to addressing HIB will help to actively reduce the occurrences of HIB in New Jersey's schools.

"The Attorney General's video reminds us about the importance of providing a positive and welcoming school climate for all students," Commissioner Hespe continued. "The Department of Education will continue to work with school districts in making the creation of a safe learning climate a priority."

According to the Attorney General, "I appreciate the opportunity to communicate directly with New Jersey's education leaders about bullying through this video message. The great thing about our system of education is that it gives every child an equal opportunity to learn, to grow, and to make dreams come true. But children cannot explore their full potential if they are living in constant fear of being harassed and bullied. I credit Commissioner Hespe for his commitment to creating and maintaining a safe, bullying-free learning environment, and for his leadership in making this issue a top priority."

"Educators and school leaders recognize how crucial it is to foster a safe and supportive environment for children," said Patricia Wright, Executive Director of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association and Chair of the Anti-Bullying Task Force. "This video highlights the importance of taking proactive measures to ensure a positive school climate, which research clearly shows is the number one deterrent of HIB."

The video has been posted on the [Department of Education's website](#).