

Harassment Intimidation and Bullying (HIB)

Introduction: As we approach this new school year in which many of our districts, schools, staff and students will be working remotely, questions around handling HIB situations have arisen. This is especially true as we all recognize an intensified overlap between traditional bullying and digital/cyberbullying. We start with a very quick overview of the updated HIB RCW, policy and procedures, walk through some practical considerations, and finish with a list of resources for you to work with.

1. [RCW 28A.600.477](#) - HIB Policy & Procedures:

[3207/3207P](#) - Prohibition of Harassment Intimidation and Bullying

- [Policy](#)
- [Procedure](#)
- NEW: Briefly:
 - Requirement to update policy
 - Requirement for annual HIB Compliance Officer training
 - Inclusion of Hazing information
 - Transgender/Gender Inclusive Policy & Procedures

[RCW 28A.642.080](#) - Transgender / Gender Inclusive Schools

[3211/3211P](#) - Gender-Inclusive Schools

- [Policy](#)
- [Procedure](#)
- NEW: Briefly:
 - Policy & Procedures
 - Compliance officer – may be the same person as the HIB CO
 - Online training materials

We are working together with the Equity Office to develop trainings to meet the new requirements.

2. HIB & COVID - Considerations

- In reading the revised and updated WSSDA Model Policy & Procedures, you will see that the *core requirements have not changed*. The main revisions deal with the added requirements around training, hazing and coordination with the new Gender Inclusive policy and procedures.
- That said, we are currently living, teaching and dealing with situations differently in this time of COVID.



- More students, staff, family members and others are online, actively and collaboratively engaged in the educational process on a daily basis than in previous times.
- Harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) have very often been difficult for adults to “see”. With so much online activity, so many platforms, apps and sites being used, this difficulty to see HIB is even more apparent.
- The old “on school grounds, during the school day” rule of thumb has changed. With students and staff accessing education through school and class-specific websites, using school and district devices, and networks, the school grounds have expanded. With synchronous and asynchronous lessons, the school day is no longer necessarily bell-to-bell.
- Our young people – and their families – are adapting along with staff.
 - Some young people may not have had as much online time as others in the past.
 - Some may not be quite as comfortable in the current non-face-to-face environment.
 - They may not know how to “read” the actions and reactions of their peers without those face-to-face clues.
 - They may also be experiencing some things virtually for the first time.
 - For others, this may be quite comfortable and normal.
- **With that as context**, teachers and school staff should:
 - **Encourage** students to “See something. Say something.” This is more important than ever.
Proactively provide mechanisms to do so. And to follow up! Again, very important.
Save digitally reported things: emails, texts, pictures, links, etc...These will be useful if an investigation is called for.
 - **Teach** *digital citizenship, digital literacy, and digital safety*.
Incorporate these into regular curricular areas.
 - **Familiarize** themselves with apps, platforms, sites, etc. which their students are likely to be accessing. These will probably vary from location to location, school to school, grade level to grade level.
 - **Be more aware** of the ‘grooming’ process. As more adults are also online more of the time, grooming is becoming more of a digital safety issue.
- **Think SEL:** [CASEL](#) defines social-emotional learning (SEL) as “the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.” [CASEL](#) outlines five core competencies central to SEL:
 - **Self-awareness:** Do I have insight into my strengths, limitations, and needs?



- **Self-management:** Can I manage my emotions and physical behaviors in ways that align with expectations in a range of circumstances?
 - **Social awareness:** Can I empathize with those who are different from me? Can I accurately detect the rules of social engagement relevant to my current context?
 - **Relationship skills:** Can I cultivate and deal with the challenges inherent in maintaining relationships with diverse individuals and groups?
 - **Responsible decision-making:** Can I deliberate and settle upon a course of action with adequate attention to various considerations and possible outcomes?
- **Also with that as context**, the lines between old-fashioned, bricks-and-mortar HIB/bullying and digital/cyberbullying have become somewhat blurry:
 - Bullying is bullying, whether it occurs IRL (In Real Life) or online.
 - [RCW 28A.600.477](#) defines HIB/bullying as behavior which:
 - Physically harms a student or damages the student's property,
 - Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education,
 - Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment,
 - Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
 - This still applies in our virtual, online schools with no bells.
 - *All the reporting and investigating requirements still apply* – although as with everything else, this may happen differently from our old “normal” days.
 - *This only serves to underscore the need for teaching digital citizenship, literacy and safety.*
 - **All this leads to the question** of what is and what is not within a school’s purview. If something happens late at night or on the weekend, do we have to intervene? Is an investigation required?
 - Cyberbullying has always been potentially within the purview of schools and districts to respond to if it fell within the definition of the RCW. It is understood that personal devices walk in, out of, and around school every day. Things that happen “on the weekend” came walk in and disrupt or interfere any time of any day. And if something is reported by a student, it should be addressed *in some way*. Think liability issues. Think CYA. (Consider Your Academics!)
 - Use “substantially interfering with a student’s education” or “substantially disrupting” school as your starting points.
 - Consider whether a student (target or peer), parent or staff member has reported a potential HIB/bullying incident.
 - Encourage teachers to handle misbehaviors as they would if they were in their classrooms: recognize it, call it out and stop it immediately.



- Connect with the students' families. Partner with them to help maintain a positive digital environment.
- If there is an IEP or 504 Plan involved, include and involve your Sp. Ed. staff.
- As always, encourage staff to keep their professional antennae up, use common sense and err on the side of caution.

3. Resources – Below is a list of excellent resources for staff, students and families. It is by no means a complete list of all the possible resources available, but it is a good starter list. Included within the list are resources with a particular focus on diversity and racial inequity.

Included are HIB/bullying, cyberbullying, SEL, and other resource materials. Also included are links which parents, in particular, might find interesting and engaging.

- <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>
- <https://www.connectsafely.org/>
- <https://cyberbullying.org/>
 - <https://cyberbullying.org/coronavirus-online-learning-social-isolation-cyberbullying>
 - <https://cyberbullying.org/videos>
- <https://www.commonsensemedia.org>
 - <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/16-apps-and-websites-kids-are-heading-to-after-facebook>
 - <https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/teachers-essential-guide-to-cyberbullying-prevention>
- <https://www.facinghistory.org/topics/bullying-ostracism?page=1>
- <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/12/covid-19-fueling-anti-asian-racism-and-xenophobia-worldwide#>
- <https://ibpaworld.org>
 - <https://ibpaworld.org/resources/education/>
- [https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/countering-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-stigma-and-racism-tips-for-parents-and-caregivers](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/countering-covid-19-(coronavirus)-stigma-and-racism-tips-for-parents-and-caregivers)
 - <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity/social-justice/supporting-vulnerable-students-in-stressful-times-tips-for-parents>
- <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/speaking-up-against-racism-around-the-new-coronavirus>
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/>
- <https://www.pacer.org>
 - <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/video/> (Great for virtual classrooms.)
- <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>
 - <https://www.stopbullying.gov/resources/get-help-now>



- Digital Parenting Group:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/DigiParentCoach>

