

NORWOOD SCHOOL

HOME OF THE EAGLES

BRIAN P. GATENS
SUPERINTENDENT/PRINCIPAL

August 2011

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In January of 2011, the “Anti-Bullying Bill or Rights Act” became law and will take effect with the start of the 2011-12 school year. The Act defines harassment, intimidation and bullying and specifies procedures when harassment, intimidation or bullying are reported or observed.


The Act requires a formal investigation at the school level if and when an incident, as defined by law, is observed or reported. Parents will be notified if their child is involved in an investigation and they will be notified of the outcome. We are also required to report the outcome of each investigation to the Board of Education, and to record any findings of harassment, intimidation or bullying in student discipline records.

We are committed to providing a school environment in which appropriate treatment and respect of others is expected of all members of our school community. It is our belief that respectful behavior fosters a rich and challenging school environment. As part of our efforts, students are regularly advised of appropriate behavioral expectations, teachers are expected to discuss and model these expectations, and the overall school environment is one in which students feel safe and secure. In addition to these efforts, we will be celebrating a ‘Week of Respect’ during the week of October 3rd.

At the conclusion of this letter, you will find the legal definition of harassment, intimidation and bullying. A link to the Board of Education policy regarding harassment, intimidation and bullying may be found on our main page. On our website you will also find relevant policy regarding student conduct. I would ask that you familiarize yourself with the definition found below and with the Norwood Board of Education policies and procedures regarding harassment, intimidation and bullying. **Equally important, I would also ask that you discuss with your child the importance of respectful and inclusive behavior at home, in the classroom, on the playground and athletic fields, and in all activities.**

As part of Norwood School’s tradition of excellence, we are dedicated to upholding ourselves as a model of care, kindness and respect for the dignity of every individual. The new anti-bullying law is another critical component in furthering our longstanding efforts. I thank you in advance for taking the time to learn about the new anti-bullying law and discussing it with your family.

Go Eagles,


Brian P. Gatens
Superintendent/Principal

“Think ~ Lead ~ Serve”

Definition of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying from NJSA: 18A:37-14

“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, 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.*

L.2002, c.83, s.2; amended 2007, c.129, s.1; 2010, c.122, s.11