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March 12, 2013

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons

FROM: Christopher Cerf, Commissioner

SUBJECT: Commissioner's Program and Guidance for Determining Grades under the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* (N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46)

This memorandum announces the program to grade each public school and school district's efforts to implement the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* (ABR). Attached is the *Commissioner's Program and Guidance for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* (guidance). The program was developed in consultation with experts in anti-bullying strategies and school climate improvement and school district representatives from the 21 counties.

The first step of the grading program is for each school, through its School Safety Team, to complete a self-assessment of its implementation of the ABR from January 5, 2011 through June 30, 2013. It is recommended that school staff review the guidance and self-assessment as soon as possible. Once the self-assessment is completed, the chief school administrator is required to obtain public comment and board of education approval prior to submitting each school's ratings to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). The guidance describes all of the steps in the assessment and public review process. The NJDOE anticipates opening the web-based system to collect the self-assessments on April 2, 2013 and will provide instructions at that time. The due date for completing, certifying and submitting the self-assessment will be August 15, 2013. The NJDOE will issue the district/school grades in the fall of 2013.

You are encouraged to use this self-assessment as an opportunity to reinforce and strengthen your school district's HIB prevention and intervention programs, policies and practices, in addition to fulfilling your responsibilities for the program to grade schools and districts under the ABR. Thank you for your ongoing efforts to provide safe and positive learning conditions for our students.

If you have any questions, please call (609) 292-5935 or email hib@doe.state.nj.us.

CC/BG

Attachment

c: Members, State Board of Education
Senior Staff
Susan Martz
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NJ LEE Group
Garden State Coalition of Schools
Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers
Executive County Business Administrators
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