

# Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying

## A Handbook for Parents and Students



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# SOMERSET HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

### Overview

The Somerset Hills School District prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a pupil. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe and disciplined environment. Since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

***For the purposes of this Policy, the term "parent," pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.3, means the natural parent(s) or adoptive parent(s), legal guardian(s), foster parent(s), or parent surrogate(s) of a pupil. Where parents are separated or divorced, "parent" means the person or agency which has legal custody of the pupil, as well as the natural or adoptive parent(s) of the pupil, provided such parental rights have not been terminated by a court of appropriate jurisdiction.***

## Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Definition

Types of Behaviors include:

- Any gestures, or
- Any written, verbal, or physical act, or
- Any electronic communication
- Can be a single incident or a series of incidents

Motivation for HIB Behavior:

- Any actual or perceived characteristic

Examples: race, color, religion, ancestry, nation origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or mental/physical/sensory disability, or any other distinguishing characteristic(s)

Location of Incident:

- On school property
- At school-sponsored function
- On a school bus
- Off school grounds (including cyberspace)

Must meet one of the following conditions in addition to causing substantial disruption or interference with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students:

- Reasonable should know, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or place the student in a reasonable fear of emotional harm to self or property or
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning student or groups of students or
- Creates a hostile educational environment for students by interfering with students' education or
- Severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to students

## Implementation of the HIB Legislation

### Anti-bullying Assignments

- Establishment of Anti-Bullying Coordinator (District)
- Establishment of Anti-Bullying Specialists (School)
- Establishment of School Safety Team (School)

### Investigation Procedures

- Detailed, Specific Timelines
- Verbal reports must be made to **Principal** on the **same day incident occurs**
- Follow-up written report must be completed within **two (2) school days** of verbal report; written by whoever reports the incident. When submitting a written report of HIB to the principal, the written report shall be on the **HIB 338 Form**.
- **Principal or Designee** must initiate investigation within **one (1) school day** of receiving (verbal) report
- **Principal** must contact parents/guardians and inform them about incident within **one (1) school day** of receiving (verbal) report
- Investigation must be conducted by **Anti-Bullying Specialist**
  - **Principal** may appoint others to assist
- Investigation must be completed as soon as possible; no later than **ten (10) school days** from date of the written report
- Results shall be reported to the **Anti-Bullying Coordinator** within **two (2) school days** of completing the investigation
- **Anti-Bullying Coordinator** in collaboration with principal must decide actions to be taken:
  - Intervention Services
  - Training Programs
  - Impose Discipline
  - Order Counseling
- **Superintendent** reports the results of the investigation to the board at the first board meeting following completion of the investigation

### Due Process Rights for Alleged Accused and Alleged Victim(s)

- Parents of all parties involved have the right to receive information – includes parents of alleged victim and alleged bully. Report includes allegations and findings.
- District must provide information to both parties within **five (5) school days** after the results of the investigation were reported to the board
- Parents may request a hearing of the board after receiving information; hearing of the board must be provided within **ten (10) school days** of the request
- Board must issue a decision in writing at the **first board meeting** following the receipt of the report
- Parents of alleged victim may separately file a complaint with the NJ Division on Civil Rights within **180 calendar days** of alleged incident
- Parents may also file in Superior Court

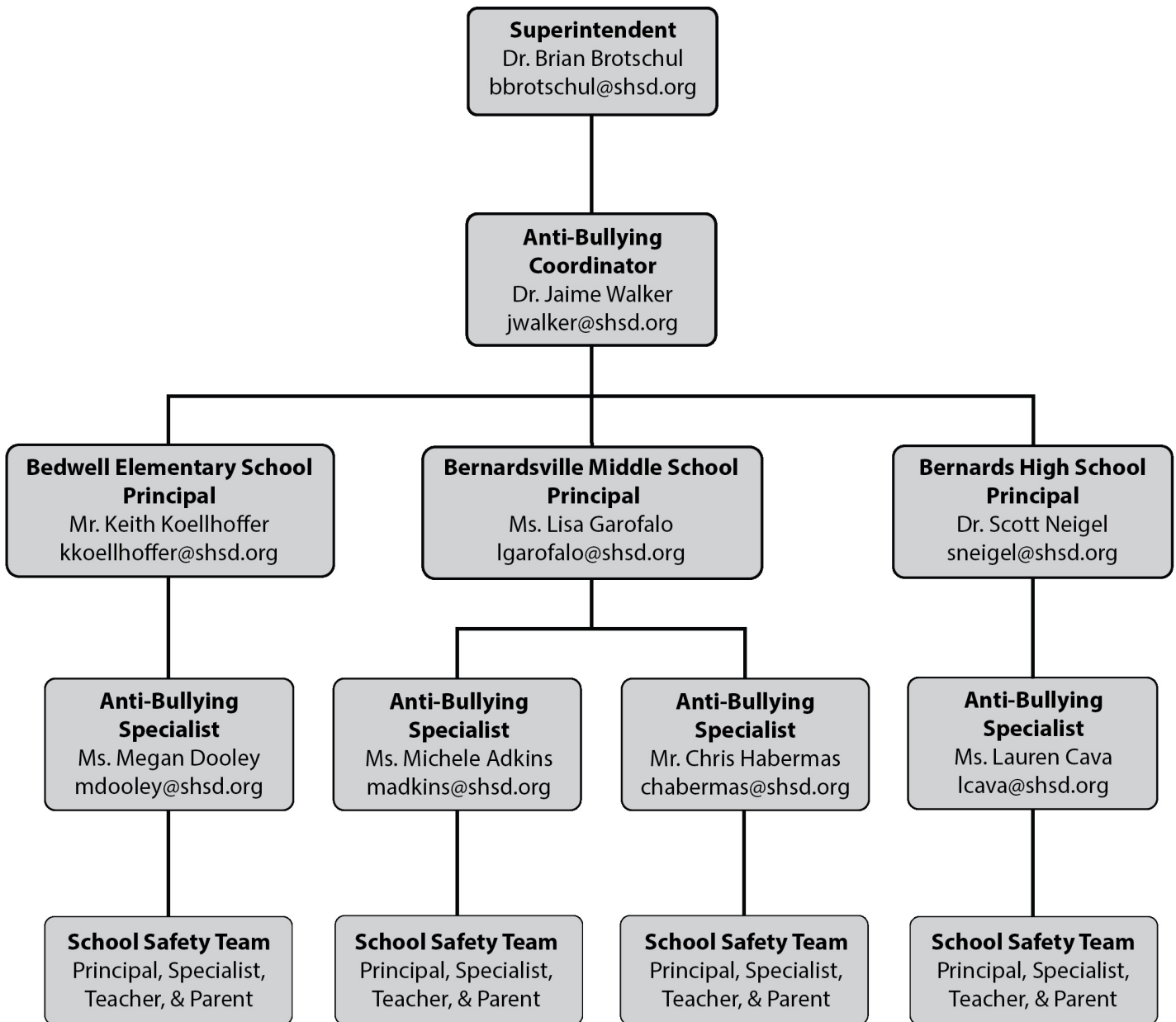
### Student Records

- If an alleged incident of HIB is later founded as a verified incident of HIB, copies of the results of the investigation shall be placed in the student's record.
- If a student is founded to have committed three incidents of HIB, then a principal, in consultation with appropriate school staff, shall develop an individual student intervention plan which shall be approved by the superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee. Each subsequent act of verified HIB would also require a principal, in consultation with appropriate school staff, to develop an individual student **intervention plan** which would be approved by the superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee.

# SOMERSET HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## Anti-Bullying Organizational Chart



## Anti-Bullying Coordinator Responsibilities

The District Anti-Bullying Coordinator shall:

- Be responsible for coordinating and strengthening the school district's policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils;
- Collaborate with school Anti-Bullying Specialists in the district, the Board of Education, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils in the district;
- Provide data, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education regarding harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils;
- Execute such other duties related to school harassment, intimidation, or bullying as requested by the Superintendent; and
- Meet at least twice a school year with the school Anti-Bullying Specialist(s) to discuss and strengthen procedures and policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the district.

## Principal's Responsibilities

The Principal shall:

- Initiate the investigation by the Anti-Bullying Specialist
- Contact parent(s)/guardian(s) and inform them of the incident
- Keep abreast of the situation
- Keep in close contact with the Anti-Bullying Specialist. Update them with current information
- May appoint others to assist the Anti-Bullying Specialist as needed
- In conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Specialist shall determine the "range" of ways to address the incidents of harassing and/or bullying behavior. These may include: training, discipline actions, counseling, or intervention programs.
- Be an active participant in the School Safety Team
- The Principal shall proceed in accordance with the Code of Pupil Conduct
- Submit the report to the Anti Bullying Coordinator
- Shall annually conduct a reevaluation, reassessment, and review of the HIB Policy with input from the School's Anti-Bullying Specialist and recommend revisions and additions to the Policy as well as to harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention programs and approaches based on findings from the evaluation, reassessment, and review.

# SOMERSET HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## Anti-Bullying Specialist Responsibilities

The District Anti-Bullying Specialist shall:

- Chair the School Safety Team as provided in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-21;
- Lead the investigation of incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the school;
- Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the school;
- Execute other duties related to school harassment, intimidation or bullying as requested by the principal and/or the Anti-Bullying Coordinator; and
- Meet at least twice a school year with the school Anti-Bullying Coordinator to discuss and strengthen procedures and policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the district.

## School Safety Team Responsibilities

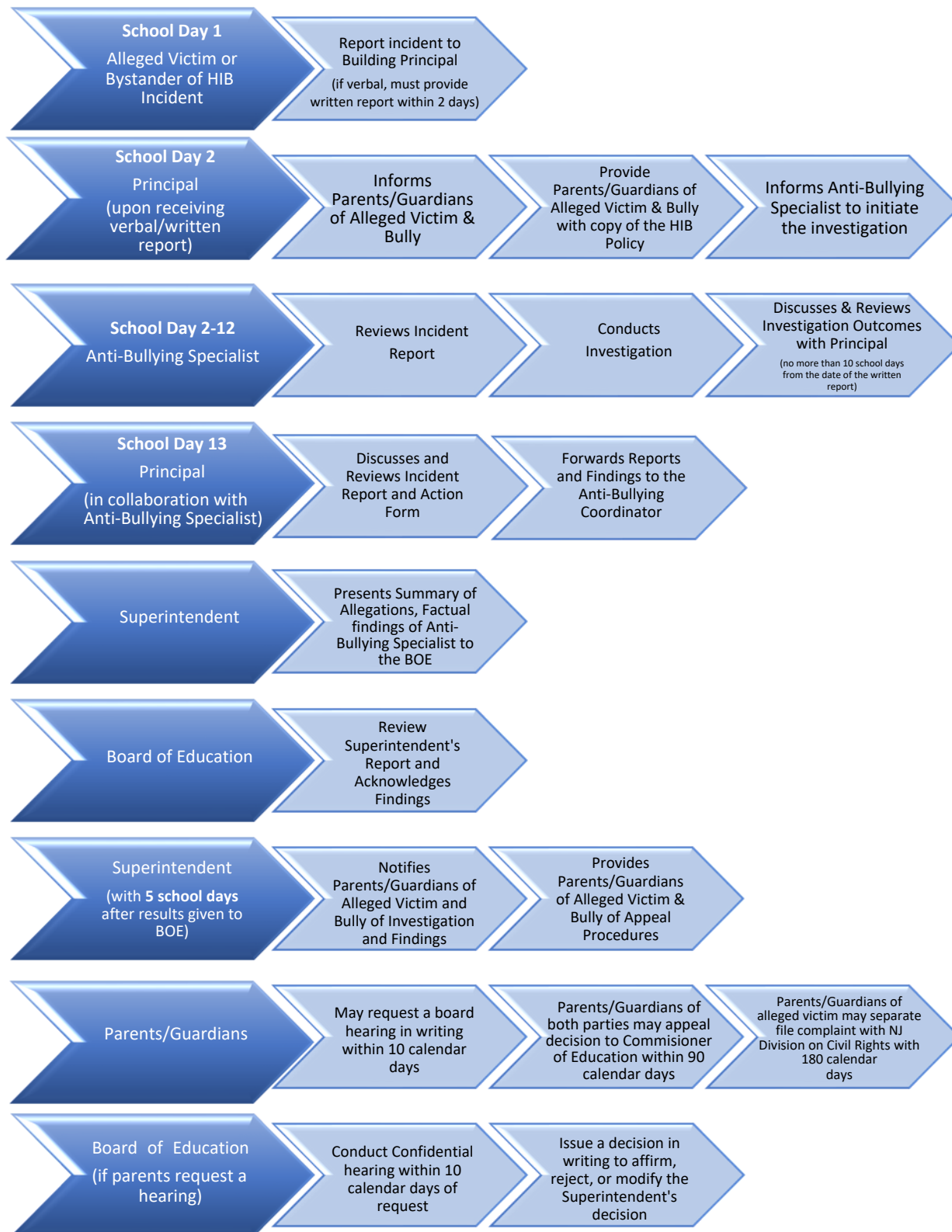
The School Safety Team shall:

- Receive any complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils that have been reported to the Principal;
- Receive copies of any report prepared after an investigation of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying;
- Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils in the school;
- Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils;
- Educate the community, including pupils, teachers, administrative staff, and parents, to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils;
- Participate in the training required pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq. and other training which the Principal or the district Anti-Bullying Coordinator may request;
- Collaborate with the district Anti-Bullying Coordinator in the collection of district-wide data and in the development of district policies to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils; and
- Execute such other duties related to harassment, intimidation, or bullying as requested by the Principal or district Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

**NJDOE HIB Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) can be accessed here:**

<https://nj.gov/education/safety/sandp/hib/docs/AntiBullyingQA.pdf>

# SOMERSET HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT





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## HIB 338 Form Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB) Reporting Form 2024-2025 School Year



This form should be used by any individual to report allegations of HIB. Once the form is received by the school, the principal is responsible for implementing the school district's policy and procedures. An investigation shall be completed as soon as possible, but not later than 10 school days from the date of the written report of the incident. Should you have any questions about the investigation, please contact the school principal.

### Directions

Complete the form below to provide detailed information of the alleged HIB incident. If some fields are not applicable or if you are uncertain of the response, you may skip those fields. This form may be submitted anonymously.

### Form

Person Reporting Incident Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_ Staff Member \_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_ Volunteer \_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Where did the alleged incident occur? \_\_\_\_\_

*Under New Jersey law, "harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act or any electronic communication, whether it is a single incident or a series of incidents, that is:*

- a. Reasonably perceived as being motivated by either 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
- b. By any other distinguishing characteristic; and that
- c. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils; and that
- d. A reasonable person should know under the circumstances will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
- e. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; or
- f. Creates a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.

# SOMERSET HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT



## HIB 338 Form Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB) Reporting Form 2024-2025 School Year Continued.



Student(s)/Person(s) Accused of Exhibiting Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) Behavior:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Student(s) Alleged to be the Target of HIB Behavior:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

a. Please place an "x" next to the statement(s) that best describes the behavior reported: ☐ physical aggression or contact to a pupil ☐ destruction of property ☐ teasing or name-calling ☐ stalking another pupil ☐ insulting or demeaning comments ☐ publicly humiliating a pupil ☐ threatening comments, gestures or physical acts ☐ stealing or theft ☐ intimidating conduct toward another pupil ☐ defacing/destroying property ☐ spreading harmful rumors or gossip about a pupil ☐ excluding or rejecting a pupil ☐ getting another person to harm a pupil ☐ extorting or exploiting a pupil ☐ harassment, intimidation or bullying through electronic communications ☐  
other – please specify \_\_\_\_\_

b. Please describe below the details of the incident you are reporting:

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# SOMERSET HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT



## HIB 338 Form Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB) Reporting Form 2024-2025 School Year Continued.



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c. Please list below the name(s) of any person(s) or pupil(s) you believe either witnessed or have knowledge of the incident you are reporting:

	Name	Work Location/School/Grade	Witness
1.	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
2.	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
3.	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
4.	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

d. Did you file a verbal report with the Principal or designee on the same day of witnessing or receiving reliable information regarding behavior being reported? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

**I certify the information contained in this Report is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.**

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Signature of Person Making Report	Position (staff member/parent/pupil/etc.)	Date
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Name of Person Receiving Report	Title	Date

Report #: \_\_\_\_\_ (to be assigned by Principal or designee)