Dear Franklin Township Parents, Guardians and Students,

On January 5, 2011, Governor Chris Christie signed a new law concerning Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) in school settings. In response, the Franklin Township School Board adopted a new HIB policy to reflect the law. It outlines specific facets of the school's HIB program, whereas, all students are held accountable and school staff are expected to be even more diligent in identifying potentially harmful behaviors.

During the first couple of weeks of school we went over the expectations of students while in school, on the bus and at school sponsored events. We also went over the responsibilities of older students using electronic means of communication, mainly on social networking sites.

As a school we will continue to reinforce the idea of positive behavior and will strive to promote social emotional learning. We look forward to your support in this endeavor. Please review the definition below with your child(ren) and review the policy #5131.1 on our website, where specific reactions to incidents are outlined. Also take notice of what is listed below as NOT being bullying behavior, sign and return the form below.

The definition of HIB is as follows:

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 by a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students.

In addition to the above:

a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property; has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; creates a hostile educational environment for the student; interferes with a student's education by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

What Bullying is Not

The following behaviors (some of which can be inappropriate and need to be addressed) in and of itself are not always considered bullying:

Arguments/Conflict
Not liking someone
Refusing to be friends with someone
Minor Teasing
Making others play things a certain way (being bossy)
Expressing unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others

Please fill out, sign and return to school.

I have reviewed the Parent/Student Handbook, the Pupil Code of Conduct and the HIB policy #5131.1 with my child(ren).

Parent / Guardian (s) Signature:

_____

Date:

_____

Child(ren) Name(s) Homeroom

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____