



PARAMUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Culture, Climate & HIB Prevention Plan

Elementary Schools

Memorial · Midland · Parkway · Ridge Ranch · Stony Lane

About This Plan

This plan describes how the Paramus elementary schools work together to prevent harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) and to build a safe, respectful, and inclusive school climate. It reflects the practices in place across all five elementary schools and aligns with the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act.

At the elementary level, prevention focuses on foundational social-emotional skills: empathy, kindness, respectful communication, resolving conflicts, and knowing when and how to ask a trusted adult for help. All five schools use shared language and expectations, so every student receives the same core instruction and families hear a consistent message from school to school.

Within the district's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), the practices in this plan make up Tier 1: universal supports that reach every student and work to prevent problems before they start. They are the foundation for the more targeted and individualized supports schools provide when a student needs additional help.

Our commitment

Through these coordinated efforts, the district seeks to create learning environments where all students feel safe, respected, and supported, and where kindness, empathy, and responsible decision-making are reinforced across the school community.

Our Focus at a Glance

Students

13 PRACTICES IN PLACE

Build social skills, empathy, and conflict-resolution strategies, and know how to seek help from a trusted adult.

Families

5 PRACTICES IN PLACE

Reinforce school expectations at home and help children develop positive, respectful friendships.

Staff

4 PRACTICES IN PLACE

Understand legal responsibilities and reporting procedures, and promote respectful, inclusive classrooms.

For Students

What students learn and experience

Students learn what bullying is, how it differs from everyday conflict, and what to do when they see or experience unkind behavior. Lessons are taught by school counselors and reinforced through schoolwide programs.

Classroom lessons

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Understanding Bullying Classroom lessons	Age-appropriate lessons on what bullying is, how to recognize kind and unkind behavior, and which trusted adults students can go to for help.	September	School counselors
Bullying vs. Peer Conflict Classroom lessons	Students learn the difference between everyday disagreements and bullying, and when a problem calls for an adult's help.	Fall	School counselors
Upstander vs. Bystander Classroom lessons	Students learn safe ways to support a peer and report concerns to a trusted adult when they see unkind behavior.	Fall	School counselors
Digital Citizenship Classroom lessons, grades 2–4	Lessons on safe, responsible technology use and how online actions can affect others.	Fall	School counselors
Growth Mindset Classroom lessons	Lessons on perseverance, effort, goal-setting, and managing challenges that build resilience and positive peer interactions.	Fall	School counselors
Respectful Communication Classroom lessons	Lessons on the impact of words, respectful language, and empathy, with a focus on reducing hurtful or derogatory language.	Winter–Spring	School counselors
Conflict Resolution Skills Classroom lessons	Strategies for resolving disagreements, expressing feelings respectfully, and keeping friendships positive.	Spring	School counselors
Social-Emotional Learning Second Step curriculum	Structured instruction in the five core SEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.	Ongoing	School counselors

Schoolwide programs

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Week of Respect Schoolwide activities	Themed activities and classroom discussions that reinforce kindness, empathy, and a safe, respectful learning environment.	October	School counselors, principals, teachers

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Red Ribbon Week Schoolwide activities	Activities and discussions that encourage healthy, positive choices and a healthy school climate.	October	School counselors, principals, teachers
Great Kindness Challenge Schoolwide and classroom activities	Students complete acts of kindness and reflect on how respectful behavior shapes the school community.	January	School counselors, teachers, administrators
Multicultural Events Events, assemblies, and classroom activities	Celebrations of diverse traditions, perspectives, and experiences that reinforce respect and inclusion.	Throughout the year	School counselors, teachers, administrators
Moving Up to Middle School Visits, tours, and orientation	Grade 4 students visit the middle school, tour the building, and take part in activities that reinforce kindness, respect, and positive peer interactions.	Spring	School counselors, principals, teachers

For Families

How we partner with parents and guardians

Families are partners in prevention. Schools share information and resources that help families understand district expectations, recognize the difference between conflict and bullying, and talk with their children about friendships and respectful behavior.

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
HIB Parent Information Series Recorded videos on the counselor website	Short videos explain the district's HIB policy, how to report a concern, and how families can reinforce respectful behavior at home.	Ongoing	School counselors
Week of Respect Family Communication Newsletters and website updates	Families learn about Week of Respect activities and receive ideas for continuing conversations about kindness at home.	October	Principals, school counselors
Understanding HIB Policies and Electronic Device Expectations PTA meeting or parent information session	Administrators and counselors review HIB policy, reporting procedures, behavior expectations, and school expectations for electronic devices.	February–June	Principals, school counselors
Digital Citizenship for Young Children Online resources, shared in monthly counselor newsletters	Curated resources help families guide children toward safe, respectful technology use.	Ongoing	Principals, school counselors

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Supporting Social Skills at Home Recorded parent workshop series (Care Plus)	On-demand workshops with practical strategies for friendship skills, managing conflict, and respectful communication.	Available anytime	Care Plus workshop series

Schools keep families informed through school websites, newsletters, PTA meetings, social media updates, and family communications following assemblies.

For Staff

How we prepare the adults who support students

All elementary staff are trained to prevent, recognize, and respond to HIB, and to build classroom communities where every student feels safe and respected.

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
HIB Law and Reporting Responsibilities Faculty meetings	Review of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act and district procedures for identifying, reporting, and documenting potential HIB incidents.	September & January	Principals, school counselors
Peer Conflict vs. Bullying Faculty meetings	Examples and guidance to help staff decide when a situation calls for conflict resolution and when it must be reported as possible HIB.	Fall & Spring	School counselors, principals
Respectful and Inclusive Classrooms Professional learning discussions and coaching	Classroom strategies that build community, positive peer relationships, empathy, and responsible decision-making.	Ongoing	School counselors
Responding to Student Conflict Faculty or grade-level meetings	Developmentally appropriate strategies that support student problem-solving while making sure HIB concerns are reported and addressed.	Fall & as needed	School counselors, principals

Working Together

How our schools coordinate and stay consistent

The five elementary schools coordinate so that students, families, and staff receive clear, consistent information. Schools use shared vocabulary for bullying and peer conflict, common expectations for student behavior, and the same visual supports and schoolwide messages.

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
School Safety Team Ongoing meetings	Each school's team reviews HIB data and school climate indicators to guide prevention, staff communication, and student supports.	September–June	School Safety Team chairperson

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Elementary–Middle School Counselor Collaboration Counselor meetings	Counselors discuss trends in student behavior and strategies to keep expectations for respectful behavior consistent across grade levels.	December	Student wellness coordinators, elementary counselors
Counselor Transition Meetings Counselor meetings	Elementary and middle school counselors meet to discuss student needs and ensure continuity of support.	May–June	School counselors

Plan Development and Review

This plan was developed by the school counselors and principals of the five elementary schools, under the leadership of the district’s anti-bullying coordinator.

Plan last updated on: October 2026

The plan will be reviewed and updated periodically so that prevention efforts stay responsive to student needs and continue to support a positive school culture and climate.