



PARAMUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Culture, Climate & HIB Prevention Plan

Middle Schools

East Brook Middle School · West Brook Middle School

About This Plan

This plan describes how East Brook and West Brook Middle 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 at both schools and aligns with the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act.

Middle school brings new social challenges. Peer influence grows, students are developing their identities, and more of their social lives happen online. Building on the skills introduced in elementary school, prevention at this level emphasizes empathy, inclusion, responsible decision-making, and digital citizenship.

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

14 PRACTICES IN PLACE

Strengthen empathy, inclusion, and responsible decision-making, and respond appropriately to conflict and bullying, online and in person.

Families

2 PRACTICES IN PLACE

Help adolescents navigate peer relationships and digital communication, and reinforce respectful behavior at home.

Staff

7 PRACTICES IN PLACE

Understand legal responsibilities and reporting procedures, and support students through the social dynamics of early adolescence.

For Students

What students learn and experience

Students learn what HIB is, how to report it, and how to treat one another with respect, online and in person. Instruction is grade-specific and includes programs delivered with community partners.

Lessons and assemblies

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Understanding HIB and School Expectations Grade-level assemblies and small-group lessons	Students review the definition of HIB, why it happens, how to report it, and how to respond to peer conflict.	September–October	Student wellness coordinator, principal, vice principal
Social Inclusion and Respect for Differences Assemblies, advisory, and classroom lessons	Programs on social inclusion, cultural awareness, and respectful peer interactions.	September–May	Student wellness coordinator, with NJ4S
Digital Citizenship and Cyberbullying Prevention Assembly	Presentations on responsible online behavior, digital communication, and responding to cyberbullying.	December–February	Student wellness coordinator, with the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office
Steps to Respect (Grade 5) Weekly classroom lessons	An 11-week program on recognizing bullying, responding to peer conflict, and building positive peer relationships.	February–April	Student wellness coordinator, with NJ4S
Cultural Diversity Workshop (Grade 7) Two-day workshop and classroom lessons	Students explore cultural diversity, respect for differences, and the value of inclusive school communities.	March	Student wellness coordinator, with NJ4S
Cultural Bias Awareness (Grade 8) Assembly	Students learn to recognize cultural bias, understand its impact, and practice respectful behavior across differences.	March–April	Student wellness coordinator, with the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office
Social Media, FOMO, and Mental Health (Grade 6) Classroom lesson	Students examine how heavy social media use affects self-esteem, relationships, and well-being.	April	Student wellness coordinator, with A Work of Heart Counseling

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Small-group sessions (Peacekeepers)	Students in grades 5–7 build communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills in small-group sessions.	October–March	Student wellness coordinator, school counselors

Schoolwide programs

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Advisory Program Advisory lessons and discussions	Regular advisory sessions build relationships, connectedness, and social-emotional skills.	September–May	Student wellness coordinator, principal, vice principal
Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS) Schoolwide initiatives	Clear behavior expectations and recognition programs (SOAR at East Brook; House Cup at West Brook) that celebrate students' positive contributions.	September–June	Principal, vice principal
Daily Announcements Morning announcements	Daily messages (Project Wisdom) highlight respect, integrity, kindness, and responsible decision-making.	September–June	Principal, student council
Bullying Prevention Month Schoolwide themed activities	Week of Respect, Red Ribbon Week, and other activities that promote kindness, empathy, and inclusion.	October	Student wellness coordinator, administrators
Peer Inclusion and Support Initiatives Structured student activities	Activities that build connections between different student groups and encourage respectful, inclusive interactions.	Throughout the year	Student wellness coordinator, special education staff, administrators
Transition Activities Orientation, visits, and presentations	Incoming grade 5 students are introduced to middle school expectations, including respectful behavior and bullying prevention. Grade 8 students take part in activities such as high school visits and meetings with high school counselors.	Grades 5 & 8	Middle, elementary, and high school staff

For Families

How we partner with parents and guardians

Families play an essential role as adolescents navigate more complex friendships and digital lives. Schools help families understand district policies, recognize signs of bullying or conflict, and support responsible technology use.

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Understanding HIB in Middle School Back-to-School Night presentations	Families receive information about district HIB policy, reporting procedures, and school behavior expectations.	September–October	Principal, vice principal, student wellness coordinator
HIB Policy and Reporting Procedures PTA presentation	Administrators review HIB definitions, district policy, and how the school responds to reports.	September	Principal, vice principal

Both middle 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

Middle school staff are trained to prevent, recognize, and respond to HIB, and to build classrooms and advisories where students feel connected 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	Principal, vice principal, student wellness coordinator
Adolescent Peer Conflict vs. Bullying Faculty meetings and professional learning	Staff examine patterns of behavior and social group dynamics to tell typical adolescent conflict from potential HIB.	Fall & Spring	Student wellness coordinator, principal
Classroom Norms and Management Faculty and grade-level meetings	Strategies for setting consistent classroom expectations and addressing harmful peer interactions.	September–December	Student wellness coordinator, administrators, grade-level team leaders

PRACTICE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHEN	LED BY
Advisory and Student Connectedness Faculty meetings and lesson walkthroughs	Advisory structures and strategies that build relationships and respectful interactions.	September–May	Student wellness coordinator, principal, vice principal
Classroom Community and SEL Workshops with follow-up coaching	Teachers learn social-emotional learning activities that promote connectedness and empathy, with coaching for consistent use.	September–May	Student wellness coordinator, grade-level leaders
Teaching Strategies for Bullying Prevention Faculty meetings and strategy discussions	Classroom practices that reinforce empathy and inclusion and reduce opportunities for exclusion.	September–June	School Safety Team, student wellness coordinator
PBIS Implementation Faculty meetings and planning sessions	Staff review PBIS expectations and recognition systems to reinforce positive behavior consistently.	September–June	Principal, vice principal, student wellness coordinator

Working Together

How our schools coordinate and stay consistent

East Brook and West Brook coordinate so that students and families receive the same clear message at both schools. Staff use shared vocabulary for bullying and peer conflict, as well as consistent expectations for student behavior and staff response. Middle school staff also work with elementary and high school staff to support students as they move between schools.

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

Plan Development and Review

This plan was developed by the student wellness coordinators, principals, and vice principals from the two middle 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.