



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# ***Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR)*** **and School Climate**

**August 5, 2015**

# Historical Perspective: NJDOE Focus

**Prior to ABR**

Conduct/climate: guidance, prevention, intervention, data collection



**2002: NJ enacted an anti-bullying law**

Model policy/technical assistance: roles, responsibility, compliance



**2007: NJ Supreme Court decision**

Training and guidance updates



**2009: Commission on Bullying in Schools**

Member of Commission

# Historical Perspective (cont.)

## 2011: ABR signed into law

Strengthen standards and procedures for **reporting**, **investigating** and **responding** to incidents of HIB.

**Address school climate** using a **comprehensive** approach to **prevent** harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB).

Policies, procedures, training, guidance, and data collection

## 2012: Anti-Bullying Task Force and Bullying Prevention Fund

Positive school climate, guidance and training, code amendments

# HIB Definition

ALL

Any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or series of incidents, that:

- is reasonably perceived as being motivated by 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 by any other distinguishing characteristic, and that:
- takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L. 2010, c 122, and
- substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students, and that:

# HIB Definition (cont.)

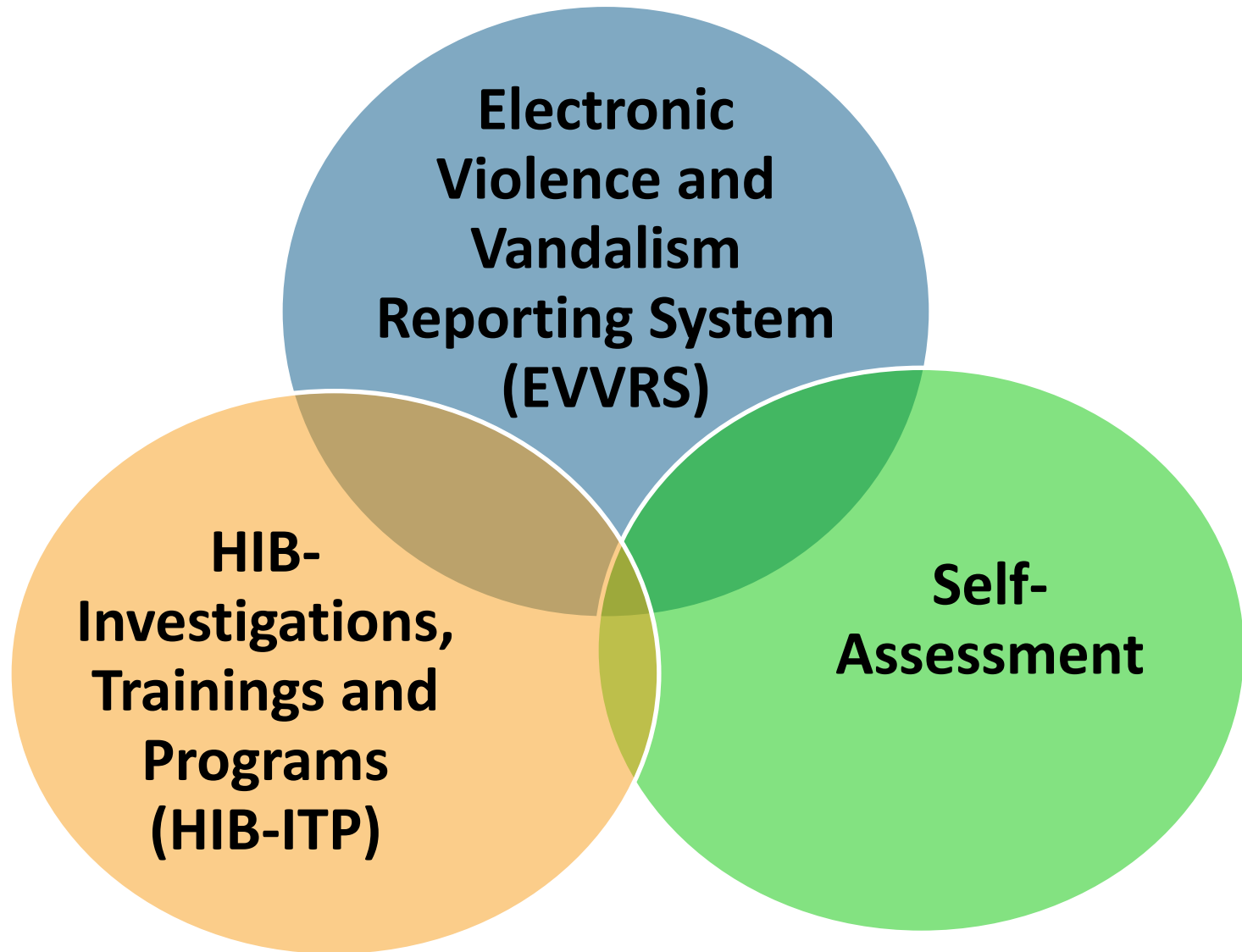
AT LEAST ONE

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

# ABR Requirements for School Districts

- Develop and implement an anti-bullying policy
  - Utilize ABR definition for HIB
- Create new school roles
  - Appoint district anti-bullying coordinator (ABC)
  - Appoint school anti-bullying specialist (ABS)
  - Establish school safety team (SST)
- Implement anti-bullying prevention trainings and programs
- Investigate allegations of HIB
- Publicly report all HIB incidents and required information
- Develop, foster and maintain a positive school climate

# Reporting to the NJDOE



# 1. Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS)

- School districts must report incidents of violence; vandalism; substance offenses; weapons offenses; and harassment, intimidation or bullying
- Information reported two times per school year
  - Report Period 1: September 1 through December 31
  - Report Period 2: January 1 through June 30
- Incidents reported must meet NJDOE definitions

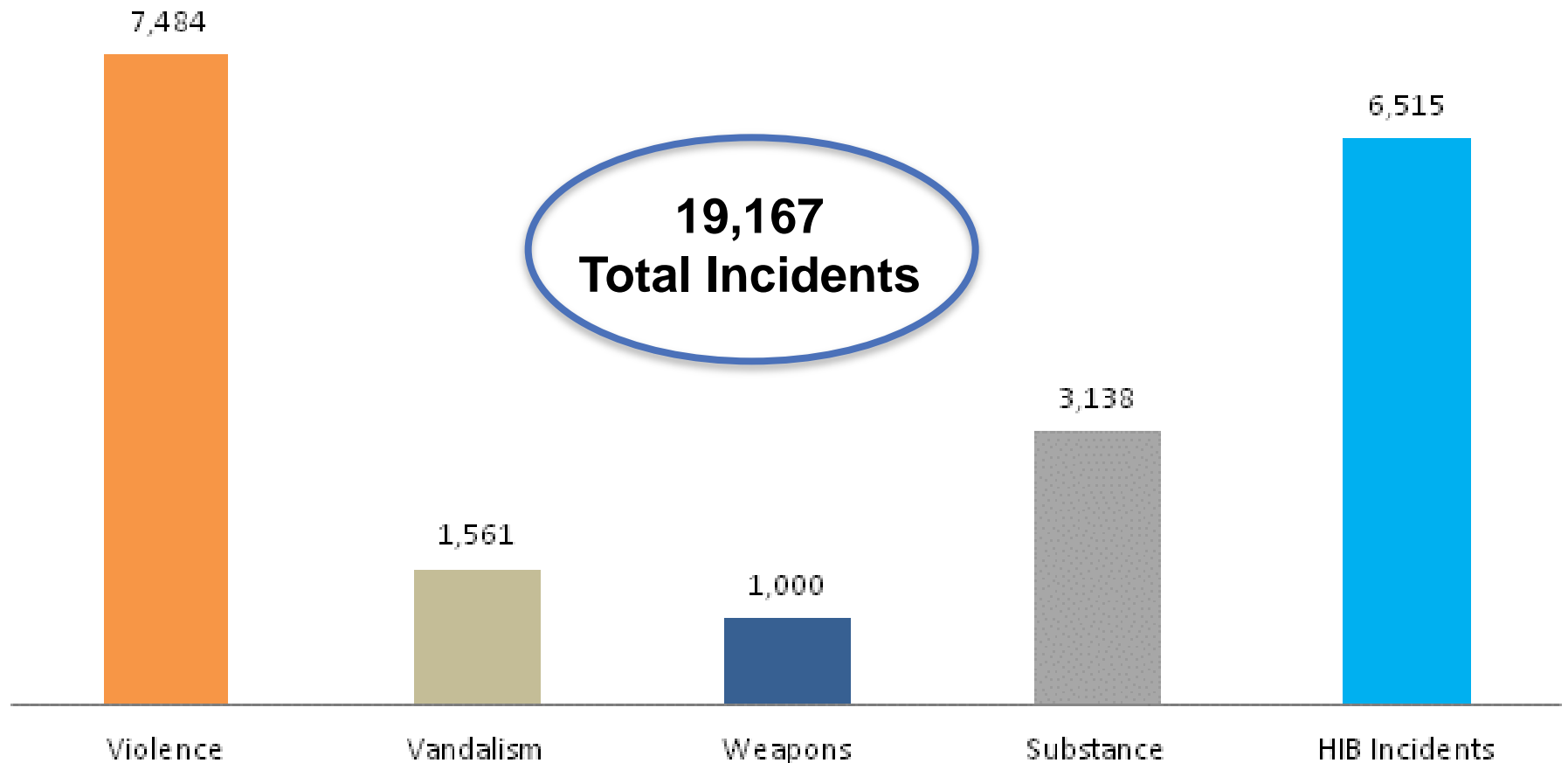
<http://homeroom.state.nj.us/evvrs/EVVRsincidentdefinitionsSep2014.pdf>

# Types of Data Collected in EVVRS

- **Incidents by Category:**
  - Violence
  - Vandalism
  - Weapons
  - Substance offenses
  - HIB
- **Incident Details:**
  - Location
  - Offender and victim characteristics
  - Disciplinary and remedial actions
  - Police notification

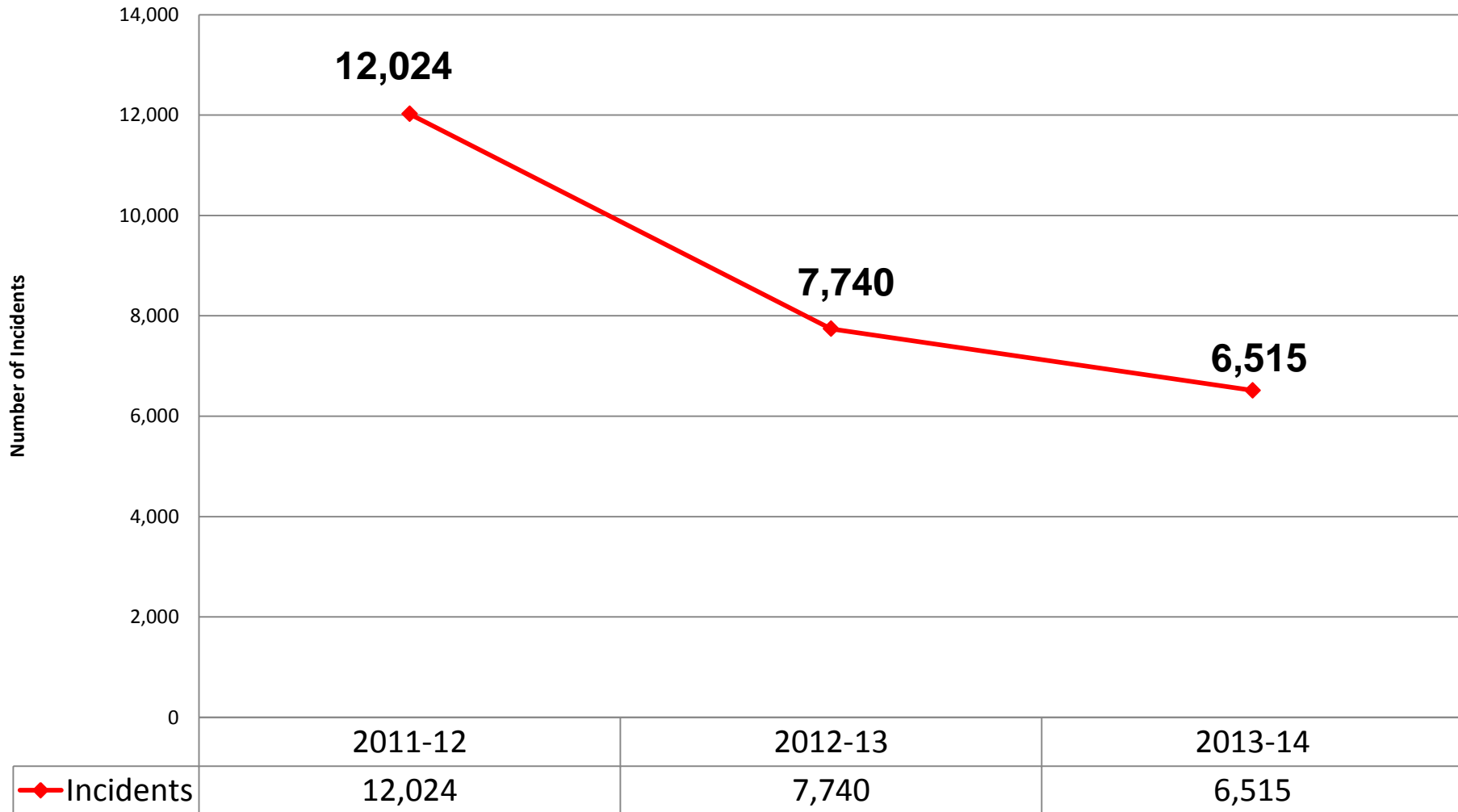
# Data Reported in EVVRS

## Total Incidents for Major Reporting Categories 2013-14



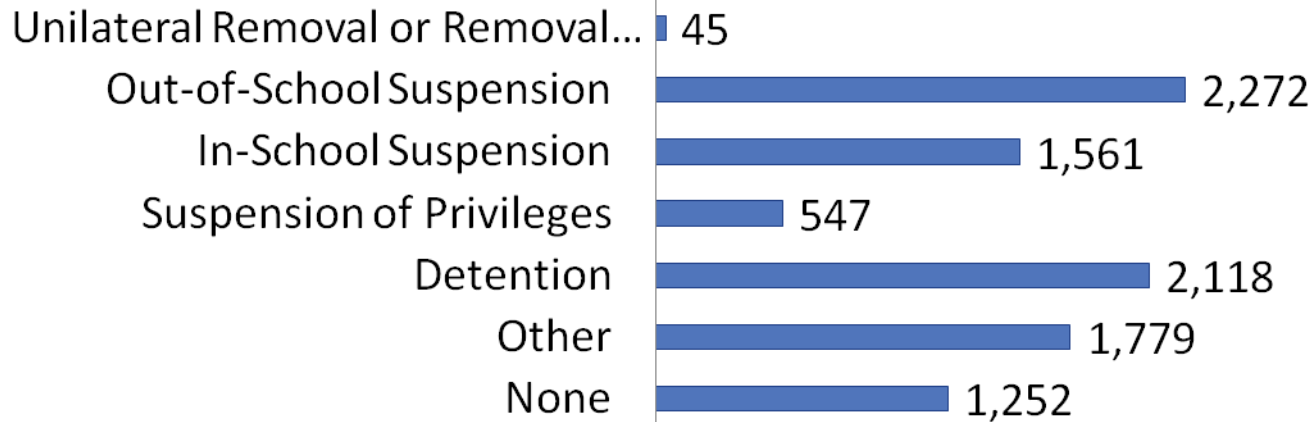
# HIB Incidents

HIB Incidents by School Year 2011-2014

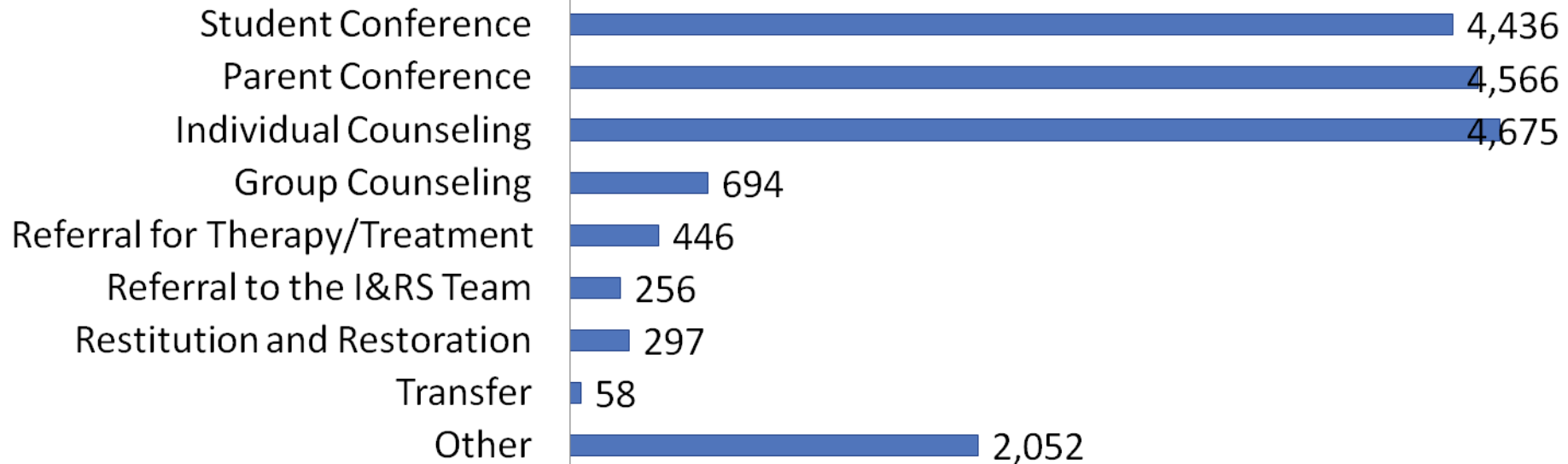


# Disciplinary and Remedial Actions Taken for HIB Offenders, 2013-2014

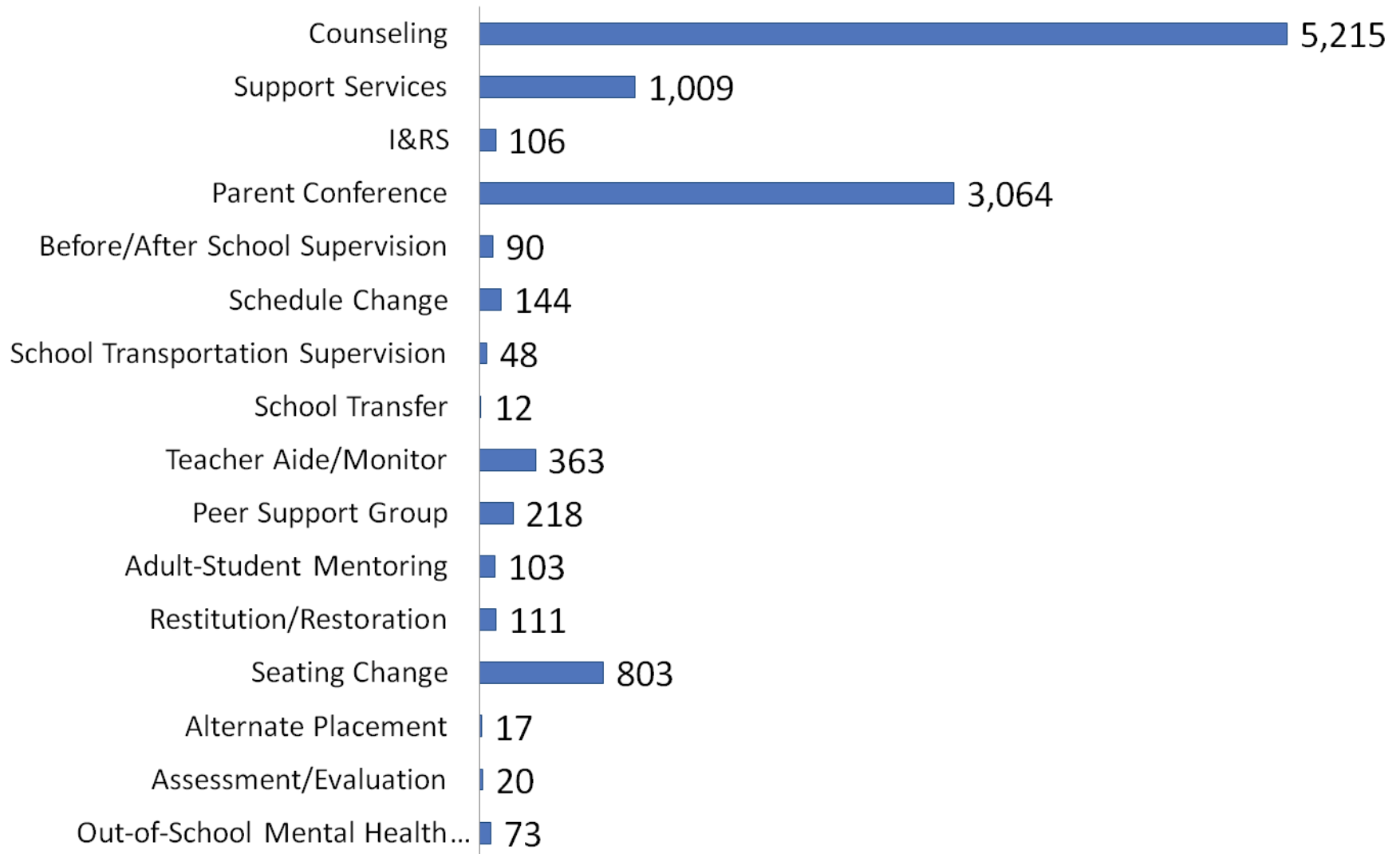
## Disciplinary Action Taken



## Remedial Action Taken



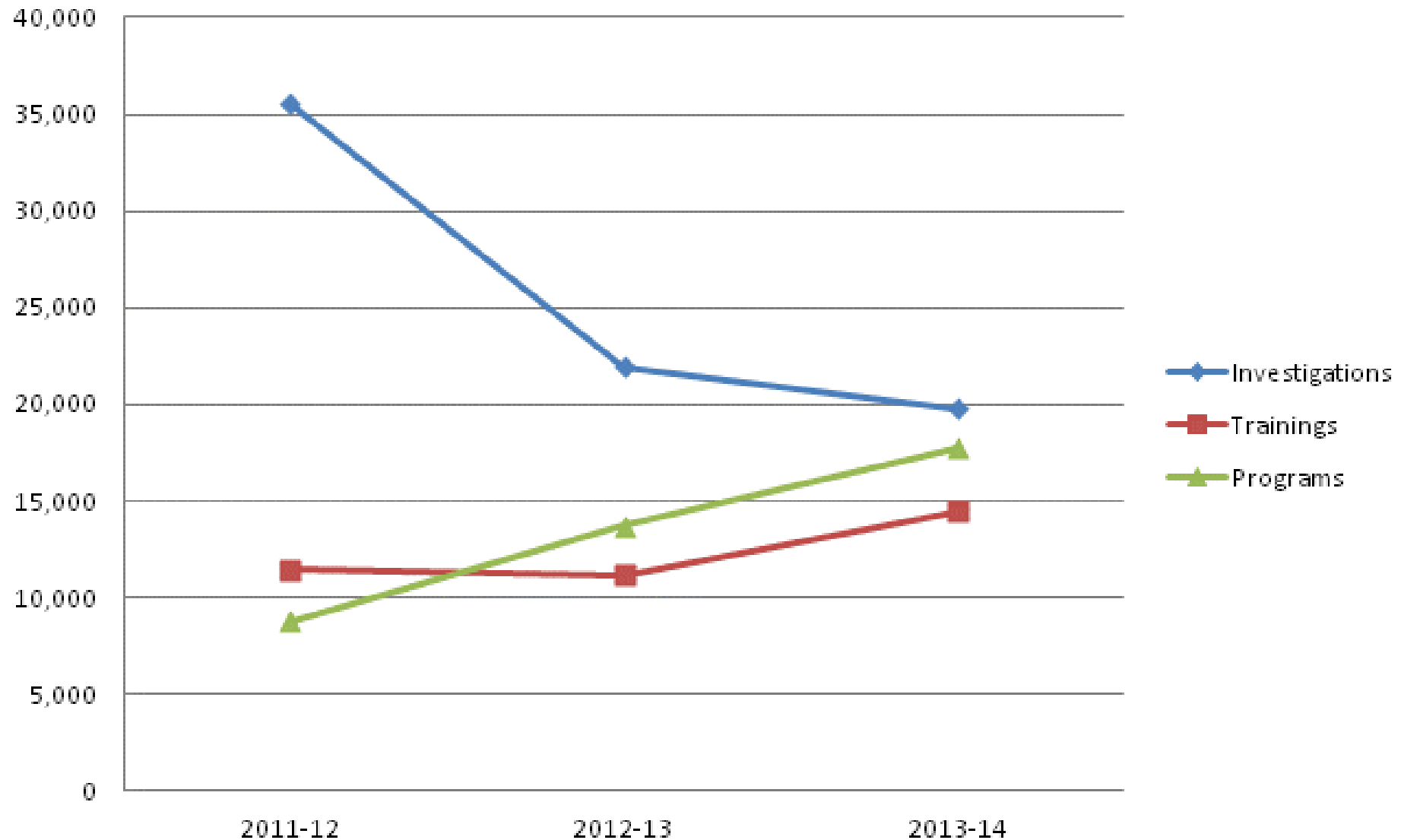
# Remedial Actions Taken for HIB Victims, 2013-2014



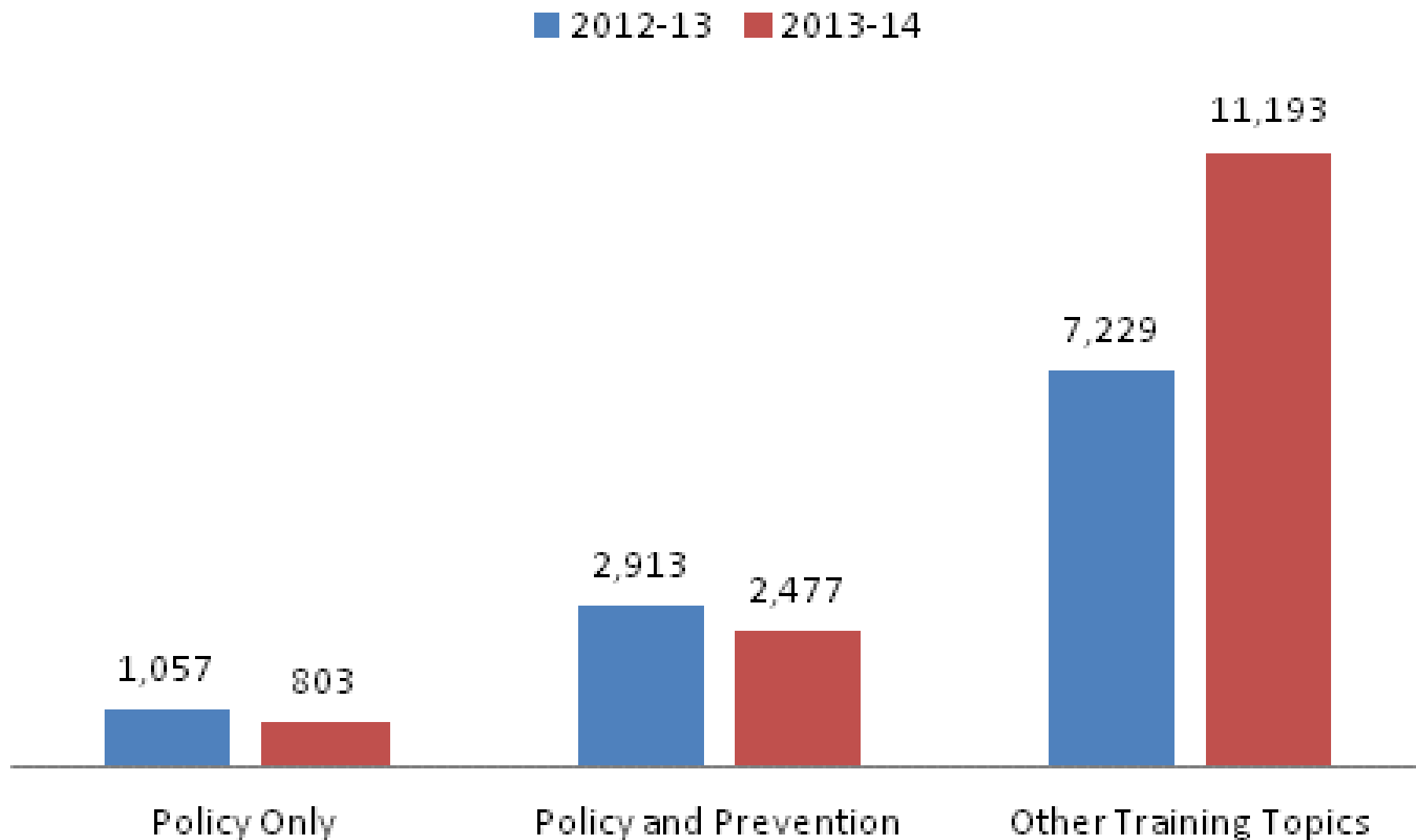
## 2. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying— Investigations, Trainings, and Programs System (HIB- ITP)

- School districts must report
  - Number of HIB investigations
  - Number of HIB affirmed incidents
  - HIB trainings conducted
  - Programs implemented to reduce HIB
- Information reported two times per school year
  - Report Period 1: September 1 through December 31
  - Report Period 2: January 1 through June 30

# Investigations, Trainings, & Programs 2011-2014



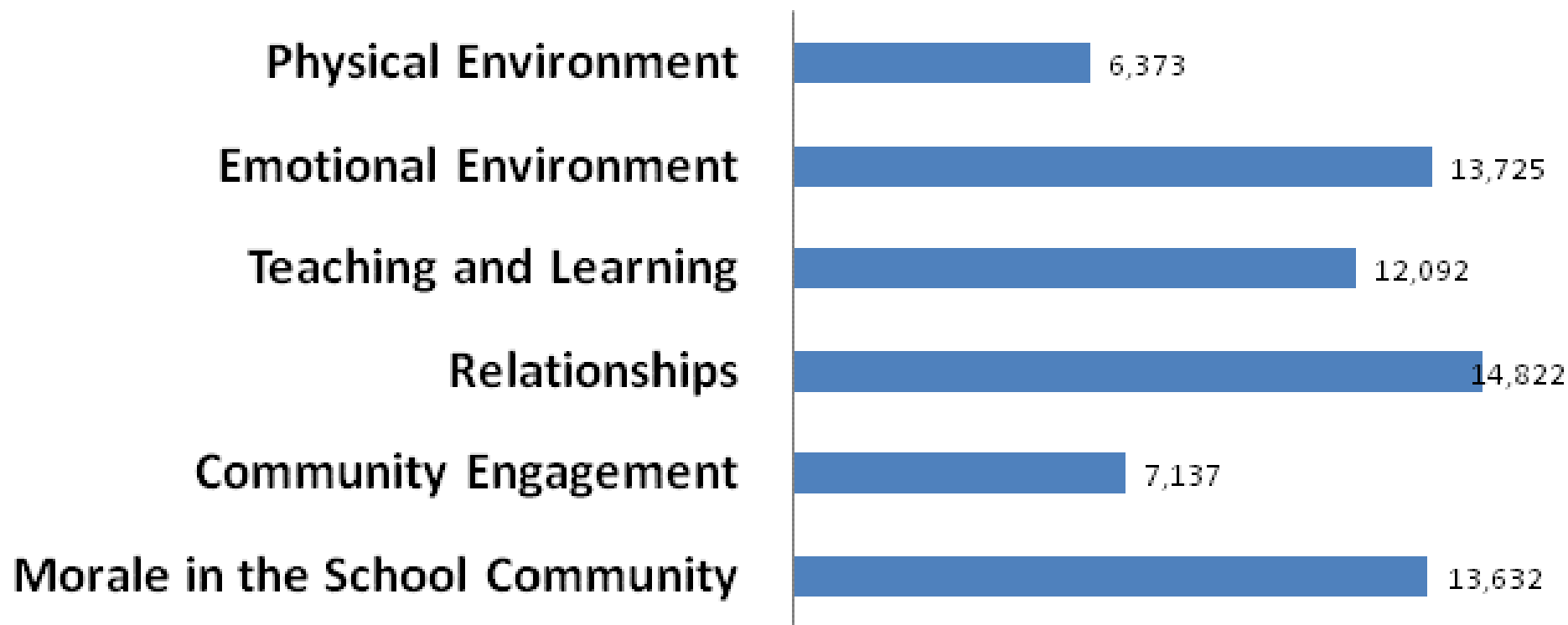
# Training Types



# HIB Prevention Programs in 2013-2014

## School-Wide Conditions as Focus of Programs

**Total: 17,729**



# NJDOE Use of EVVRS & HIB-ITP Data

- Develops annual report: *Violence, Vandalism and Substance Abuse in NJ Public Schools*  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/vandv/>
- Continues to support districts to improve data quality
  - Technical assistance
  - Online modules
  - Annual monitoring of school districts
- Uses data to inform statewide trainings, guidance and supports

### 3. ABR Grade Self-Assessment

- Developed in response to ABR requirement for school and district grading
  - Consulted with two advisory groups and offices across the NJDOE
- School Safety/climate team completes for its school
  - Support documentation required
  - Presented at BOE meeting for public comment and approval
  - Posted on school's and district's homepages
- Constructed to help districts evaluate how they are doing and identify areas of improvement

# ABR Grade Self-Assessment

## Core Elements:

- HIB Programs, Approaches or Other Initiatives (5)
- Training on the BOE-approved HIB Policy (3)
- Other Staff Instruction and Training Programs (5)
- Curriculum and Instruction on HIB and Related Information and Skills (2)
- HIB Personnel (3)
- School-Level HIB Incident Reporting Procedure (2)
- HIB Investigation Procedure (4)
- HIB Reporting (2)

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/guidance/>

# Core Element 1: HIB Programs, Approaches or Other Initiatives

- **Indicator E:** The school safety team identified patterns of HIB and reviewed school climate and school policies for the prevention of HIB.

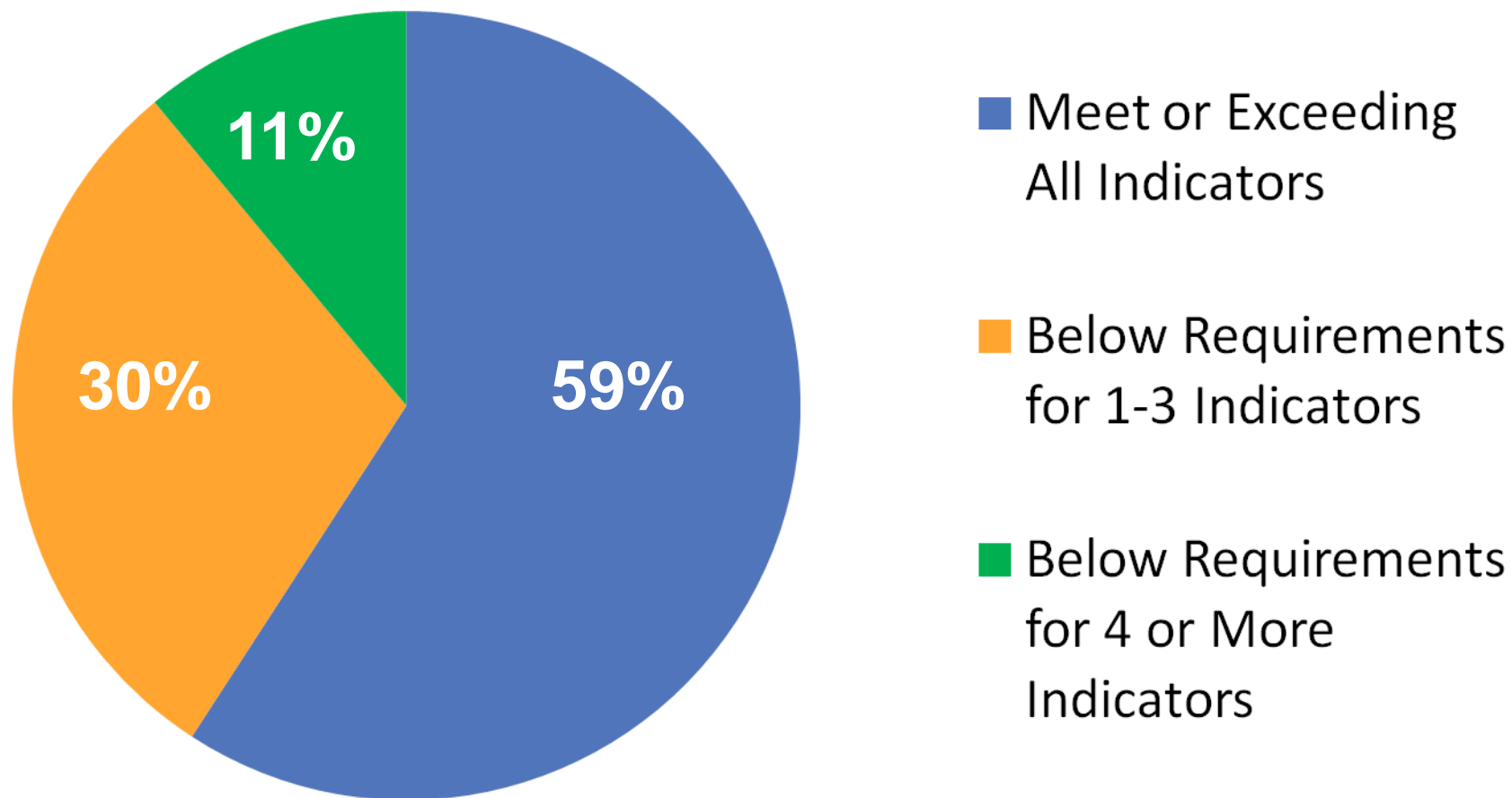
Rating	Criteria
Does Not Meet the Requirements	There is no evidence of a SST.
Partially Meets the Requirements	There is evidence of a SST, but there is no evidence of the SST's identification of patterns of HIB. <b>OR</b> There is evidence of a SST, but there is no evidence of a review of school climate policies for the prevention of HIB.

# Core Element 1, Indicator E (cont.)

Rating	Criteria
<b>Meets All Requirements</b>	<p>There is evidence of a SST and the SST's identification of patterns of HIB and a review of school climate policies for the prevention of HIB. <b>AND</b></p> <p>There is evidence of collaboration with the district anti-bullying coordinator in the collection of district-wide data and in the development of policies to prevent and address HIB. <b>AND</b></p> <p>There is evidence of education to the school community (i.e., students, staff, administrators and parents) to prevent HIB.</p>
<b>Exceeds the Requirements</b>	<p>There is evidence of a SST. <b>AND</b></p> <p>The SST used multiple data sources to identify patterns of HIB and used multiple strategies to review school climate policies and practices. <b>AND</b></p> <p>There are written recommendations regarding the reduction of the identified HIB patterns and the improvement of school climate policies that are based on the review, and there is evidence that the recommendations have been or are being implemented. <b>AND</b></p> <p>There is evidence of collaboration with the district anti-bullying coordinator in the collection of district-wide data and in the development of district policies to prevent and address HIB. <b>AND</b></p> <p>There is evidence of multiple education programs planned with and provided to the school community (i.e., students, staff, administrators and parents) to prevent HIB. The programs address both HIB and the social, emotional and character development of students.</p>

# ABR Self-Assessment for 2013-2014

**ABR Grades by School\***

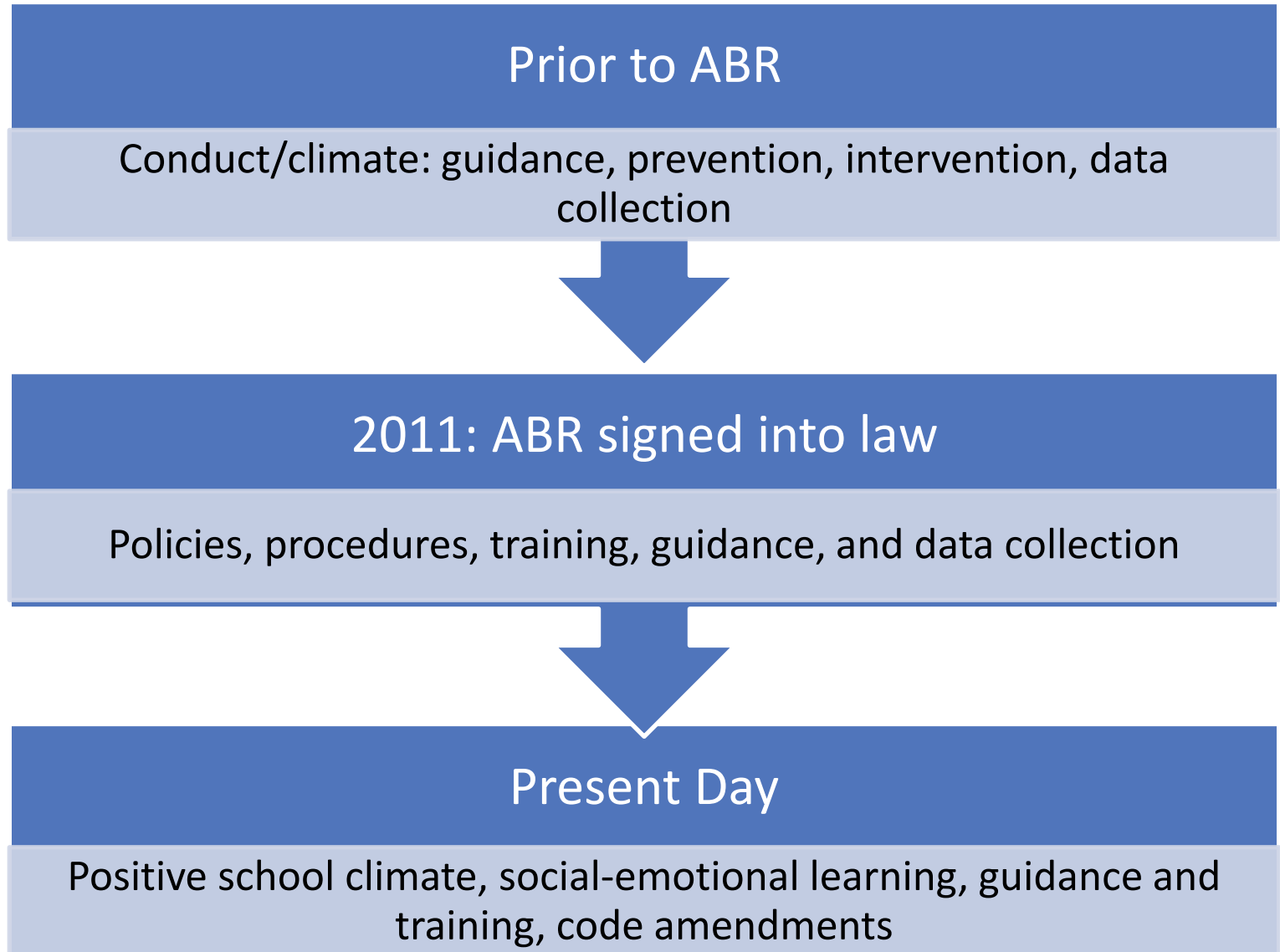


\*Percentages were rounded to nearest percent

# NJDOE Use of Self-Assessment Data

- Target technical assistance
  - Identified 50 schools that did not meet at least half of required core elements in 2013-2014
  - Conducted 3 regional trainings
  - Supported schools to develop action plans to fulfill requirements
- Develop an online module to facilitate accurate completion and submission of Self-Assessment
- Inform statewide trainings, guidance and supports for the core elements

# The ABR Today



# ABR and School Climate

The *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* establishes a School Safety Team to:

**“Develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate by focusing on the on-going, systemic process and practices in the school and to address school climate issues such as harassment, intimidation, or bullying.”**

# Anti-Bullying Task Force Recommendations

## NJDOE:

- Provide annual targeted training to school safety teams
- Provide technical assistance and guidance
- Explore ways to foster SEL for all students
- Amend New Jersey Administrative Code

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/task/>

# Supporting All Students

- Teach students social-emotional skills
  - *“Building social-emotional skills can contribute to students’ academic success and social development.”*
- Focus on building a positive school climate
  - *“Schools that foster positive school climates can help to engage all students in learning by preventing problem behaviors and intervening effectively to support struggling and at-risk students.”*

\* Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline, U.S. Department of Education

# What is Social-Emotional Learning?

Individual



Collaborative for Academic, Social,  
Emotional Learning

## NJ H&PE Standards

- **Social & emotional health**
- **Interpersonal communication**
- Character development
- **Decision making & goal setting**

## Career Ready Practices

- **Responsible & contributing citizen & employee**
- **Communicate clearly, effectively & with reason**
- **Consider impact of decisions**
- **Critical thinking**
- **Integrity & ethical leadership**

# Benefits of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Characteristics of students participating in SEL programs:

- More likely to attend school, less likely to have conduct problems, and received better grades;
- Demonstrated reduced student high-risk behaviors such as delinquency, substance abuse, and school dropout;
- Feel more connected and attached to their schools; and
- Demonstrated improved SEL skills, attitudes, and behaviors.

# What is School Climate?



# Benefits of Positive School Climate

- Associated with and/or predictive of:
  - Positive child and youth development
  - Effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts
  - Student learning and academic achievement
  - Increased graduation rates
  - Teacher retention

# New Jersey School Climate Survey (NJSCS)

## NJSCS History

**2012** Developed and disseminated to schools

**2014** Revised as a result of reliability/validity study

**2015** Translated in Spanish and Creole

# New Jersey School Climate Survey (NJSCS)

- 4 Different Surveys
  - Student Surveys (grades 3-5 and 6-12)
  - School Staff Survey
  - Parent Survey
- Additional Materials and Resources
  - Survey Administration Guide
  - Template Tools
  - Data Display Tool
- Provides technical assistance to schools
- School Climate Transformation Pilot Project (2015-2017)

**FREE  
Resource**

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/njscs/>

# SEL and School Climate in Practice

- Positive Behavior Support in Schools
- Inclusive Schools Climate Initiative
- RAC School Climate Specialists/Turnaround Principle
- Partnership for School-Based HIV/STD and Pregnancy Prevention
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center
- SEL Working Group
- Commission on Holocaust Education Curricula
- Commission on National and Community Service
  - NJ Department of State
- National and State Schools and Districts of Character
  - NJ Alliance for Social, Emotional & Character Development

***Questions?***