

School Discipline

In addition to ensuring that serious incidents are reported within the schools, Bill 157 also aims to ensure that parents are kept aware of such incidents. Where a principal believes that a student of the school has been harmed as a result of any of the activities listed above, the principal will be required to notify the student's parent or guardian as soon as is reasonably possible. In notifying the parent or guardian, the principal must disclose:

- the nature of the activity that resulted in harm to the pupil;
- the nature of the harm to the pupil; and
- steps taken to protect the pupil's safety, including the nature of any disciplinary measures taken in response to the activity.

The principal is not, however, permitted to disclose the name or other personal information of the student that engaged in the activity, except to the extent necessary to comply with the above requirements. If the student that suffered the harm is 18 years or older, or is 16 or older and has withdrawn from parental control, the principal requires the student's consent before notifying the parent or guardian. Furthermore, Bill 157 prohibits the principal from notifying the parent or guardian where the principal is of the opinion that such notification may put the student at risk of harm from the parent or guardian.

To a large extent the Bill 157 amendments codify many of the existing practices currently employed within schools, such as the internal reporting between teachers and principals. The new legislation will however expand the legislated duties of principals. Under the Bill 157 amendments, school principals must notify the parents or guardians of the victims of incidents unless to do so might put the victim at risk of harm.

Can members of school council bring up incidents or students violent histories for discussion?

Ontario Regulation 612/00

School councils have a defined list of activities. To engage in discussions related to specific incidents or students contravenes *Ontario Regulation 612/00, MFIPPA, S. 31*(disclosure) and the *Education Act, S. 266 (10)* (secrecy).

Can I announce student detentions on the p.a. or post them outside the office?

Doing so would be an unnecessary invasion of privacy. Students may be called over the p.a. but don't equate the name and the consequence. "Posting" should be considered in the same way.

How long should discipline documents be kept in a student's OSR?

These should remain in the OSR for as long as they are conducive to the student's education. The Ministry of Education's Violent Incident Form should stay in for three years and only removed if no other Violent Incident Forms have been placed in the OSR during that period.