

Safety Situations

A student in my school was hit by a car and suffered serious injury. I want to reinforce safety rules with my student population. What MFIPPA ideals might apply?

It's always good to review safety considerations with students after an accident. You could outline, in general terms, the nature of "a recent traffic accident" but should not elaborate so far as to divulge enough information to identify the student in question. You might make that student's parents aware of what you want to say/do and provide a "heads-up" out of consideration.

A parent wanted to know the name of the perpetrator who punched his son in the eye, and copies of all relevant notes of the discipline investigation. He claims that knowing personal information is in the interest of public safety. What do I do?

Bill 157 stipulates that the principal must disclose the nature of the injury suffered by the child and its extent, as well as the specific disciplinary response the school has undertaken. The principal must not disclose any personal information, such as the student's name, telephone number and address that will identify that student. If the parent persists and begins to speak of MFIPPA and "public safety", contact your Superintendent of Education, but do not provide written notes or details, even with certain parts severed (blacked-out) from the document.

I was required to file an accident report with the school board's insurance carrier. May I provide the student's parent with a copy?

Typically, you collect consent to provide the board's insurer with student personal information at the beginning of the year. In the case of providing the actual report to a parent, consult with the insurer first.

Principal's Best Practice: For announcements about safety, environmental concerns, etc., consider consulting with your board's Communication Officer. You should be able to fulfill your MFIPPA responsibilities in a concise manner and in a way that is media-friendly.