

**Bill 157 Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act**

HPEDSB Question & Answers February 10, 2010

**REPORTING**

**Q Can staff have an electronic copy of the incident reporting form so that they can print their own copies as they need them?**

A Employees are required submit a written report of serious student incidents for which the principal must consider suspension or expulsion (Form 378-13). We recommend that the Principal/ Vice-Principal maintain hard copies of the form in his/ her office for distribution to employees as needed. In addition, we recommend that the office staff have reporting forms available in the event that the Principal/ Vice-principal is not available when an employee comes to the office to complete and submit a report. This process will support Principals in maintaining a numbering system for each Reporting Form submitted.

**Q When employees come in contact with students from another school and may become aware of student behaviour for which the Principal must consider suspension or expulsion, what process should the employee follow to report to the principal of the student(s) involved, who may be located in another building (e.g., elementary students located in high schools, secondary students on co-op placement in elementary schools)**

A Follow the established process for addressing student discipline concerns between schools. Submit the report to the Principal in the employees building, which will be forwarded to the Principal of the student at the other school.

**Q How will employees ensure that they have stored Student Incident Reporting Form – 2 (when action has been taken by the Principal) in a secure location? Should this secure location be in the school? Will we be providing locked file cabinets for all employees to use?**

A When employees receive the Reporting Form – Part 2 from the Principal indicating that based on the Principal's investigation of an incident for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, that NO ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN, the employee is directed through Procedure 378 to destroy the Form – Part 2. In this case, it is recommended that the Form- Part 2 be shredded.

When employees receive the Reporting Form – Part 2 from the Principal indicating that based on the Principal's investigation of an incident for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, that ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN, the employee has a choice to destroy the form or to store it in a secure location for up to one year. If the employee decides not to destroy the form

(e.g., shred it), the employee assumes the responsibility for ensuring the security of the Form – Part 2 and the required confidentiality included in that assumption.

**Q If the Principal or Vice-Principal becomes aware of a inappropriate student behaviour for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, is he/she required to complete a reporting form?**

A No. The reporting requirement for all employees is to ensure that Principals have timely access to information about serious student incidents so that they can follow up and investigate as soon as possible. Principals will continue to record all progressive discipline actions taken for each student involved in a situation.

**Q If two or more employees become aware of an inappropriate student behaviour for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, are they able to complete and submit a reporting form together, all signing on the name and signature lines.**

A Yes, more than one employee can make a report together and sign it.

**Q If an employee becomes aware of serious student incident for which suspension or expulsion must be considered by the Principal, should the employee complete a Reporting Form-1 if the student has special education needs?**

A Yes. Principals must in their investigations consider mitigating and other factors in determining if any progressive discipline is required, including suspension or expulsion

**Q Will we be given more specific criteria to determine how to make judgments about less serious/obvious incidents?**

A We recommend that employees continue to familiarize themselves with the training and information materials that are available on the website. We encourage staff to continue to have open discussion with principals about school wide progressive discipline plans – from preventative actions through to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

**Q What happens if the incident involves a staff member and a student?**

A If an employee becomes aware of a serious student incident for which the principal must consider suspension or expulsion, the incident must be reported to the principal using Reporting Form 1 as soon as reasonably possible, and by the end of the day in writing. If the employee requires further direction or clarification regarding a situation, they should seek advice from their supervisor.

**Q What if a teacher has a child of his/ her own in the school and learns of an incident while at home? What supports will be coming to support admin and teachers?**

A All employees have a responsibility to report any serious student incidents for which suspension or expulsion must be considered by the principal as soon as it is reasonable to do so and in writing by the end of the school day upon which they obtain the information.

**Q What does “action taken” include?**

A When the principal provides a copy of the reporting receipt from 378-13A to the staff member who reported the original student behaviour incident with the “Action Taken” box checked off it means that action from the Progressive Discipline continuum has been employed with the student. This could include anything from Prevention and Positive Behaviour Management to Early and Ongoing Intervention and Consequences, through to and including suspension and/or expulsion. See examples within the Progressive Discipline continuum in Procedure 378 Student Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention.

## **STUDENT SUPPORTS**

**Q Where does the Victim Support Plan go?**

A When a student has been the victim of an incident for which suspension or expulsion has been considered, according to Procedure 378, the principal is required to outline steps to protect the victim’s safety. This might include the development of a Victim Support Plan (see From 378-0). If a victim support plan is developed it should be shared with the victim’s parents, if they are under 18 and the Principal has decided to notify them of the incident. The Victim Support Plan should also be shared with the Superintendent of the school. The Victim Support Plan should be stored in the student’s OSR or in a secure location. The Principal should also notify the parent that if they are not satisfied with the Victim Support Plan, they should contact the School Superintendent.

## **OTHER**

**Q Will Principals have to complete the Delegation of Authority – Teacher-in-Charge Form 378-14 each time they delegate authority to a teacher-in-charge?**

A Principals will need to complete the Delegation of Authority-Teacher-In-Charge Form 378-14 each time they delegate authority to a Teacher-in-Charge. Principals may delegate this authority for one or more days using the form and are able to identify the specific days for which the delegation of authority applies.

**Q Will support be pursued for appropriate technology based solutions from ITS?**

A Yes, discussions will occur regarding possibilities with IT.

**Q Will this new bill compel principals to suspend/ expel students who have a negative impact on the school?**

A Principals continue to have the responsibility to investigate all inappropriate student behaviour and including serious incidents for which suspension or expulsion must be considered. The infractions for which suspension or expulsion must be considered have, for the most part, remained consistent. Details are outlined in HPEDSB Procedure 378 Student Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention.

**Q Will we be working with transportation re Bill 157 requirements? Do buses follow the Code of Conduct?**

A Yes, Tri-board will be using the Ministry and board materials to train their staff during the week of Feb 8, 2010. Yes, buses follow the Code of Conduct.

**Q Can the board create a handbook on the new requirements of Bill 157?**

A The Ministry training materials and additional information materials are now on the HPEDSB Safe School website. Please have a look at the DVD, slides, Q&A, summary and media release as well as other resource supports for staff and community members. In addition, HPEDSB Procedure 378 Student Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention is posted on the board website as well.

**Q When we have accumulated a number of less serious incidents and progressive discipline application and we get to the decision to suspend, do we go back to previous incidents and fill our reporting forms? I am thinking of the “moral tone” infraction?**

A No. Each serious student incident is reported on as soon as it is reasonable to do so to the principal and in writing using Form 378-13 by the end of the day on which the employee becomes aware of the incident. The principal keeps progressive discipline notes on all student occurrences and will consider progressive discipline that has been used in the past and the results of the progressive discipline in improving the student’s behaviour when determining what progressive discipline steps to take in each situation. There are no requirement to “go back” and fill out reporting forms.

**Q What happens when a teacher feels a student should be suspended and a principal does not (mitigating circumstances)? Will there be times when a teacher wants to/ can appeal or argue with the perceived non action?**

A The decision to suspend or not to suspend a student rests with the principal of the school. The factors that must be considered by the principal when making a decision about whether or not to suspend a student are outlined in Procedure 378 Student Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention. There may be times when it will be difficult or not possible for the principal to share some or all of the information regarding this decision with an employee for reasons of confidentiality. Open communication is necessary as we learn more about Bill 157 and as we work together to ensure a safe, effective and respectful working and learning environment in our schools.

**Q Is there a place to review the implementation of the procedures to collect best/ promising practices?**

A We will continue to share Q & A sessions at Principal meetings and will endeavour to share best/promising practices as well.