Policy/Program Memorandum 120 - Issued May 16, 2011
Questions and Answers

BACKGROUND

Q. Why has the Ministry of Education revised Policy/Program Memorandum (P/PM) 120?

A. Since 1994, P/PM 120- Violence-Free Schools Policy has required boards to report incidents of violence resulting in suspension, expulsion or police involvement, to the ministry by way of the annual September Report.

Beginning in the 2005/06 school year, with the introduction of the Ontario School Information System (OnSIS), this section of the September Report was discontinued.

Since 2005/06, incidents of violence resulting in suspension or expulsion are reported through OnSIS. However, violent incidents that do not result in suspension of expulsion are not currently reported through OnSIS.

As a result of this reporting gap, the ministry did not have a complete picture of the total number of violent incidents in publicly funded schools in Ontario.

Q. Why is the ministry only collecting the number of violent incidents and not data about the nature of these incidents?

A. The ministry is concerned about knowing the number of violent incidents that happen in schools.

Information on the nature of the violent incident is important for boards to collect. P/PM 120 requires that boards collect data on the nature of violent incidents that occur in their schools, and requires that this data be analysed to support the development of board policies, and to better inform board and school improvement plans.

Q. When does the revised P/PM 120 come into effect?

A. The revised P/PM comes into effect on September 1, 2011.
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TRAINING

Q. Will school boards be provided with training to implement this P/PM?

A. The ministry is supplying boards with a violent incident reporting tool for the 2011/12 school year along with instructions.

School boards must review the new requirements with their principals before September 1, 2011.

Q. Will school boards receive funding to support the implementation of P/PM 120?

A. The reporting of violent incidents to the ministry is not a new requirement. Support for the implementation of P/PM 120 is an ongoing responsibility of school boards.

REPORTING VIOLENT INCIDENTS TO THE MINISTRY

Q. What violent incidents are school boards required to report to the ministry?

P/PM 120 defines a violent incident as the occurrence of any one of the following or the occurrence of a combination of any of the following:

- possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm
- physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention
- sexual assault
- robbery
- using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person
- extortion
- hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences

All violent incidents that occur on school premises during school-run programs must be reported to the ministry, whether the violent incident was committed by a student of the school or whether it was committed by any other person.
Q. **Who must report violent incidents to the ministry?**

A. School boards are required to report the total number of violent incidents that occur at each school in their board, on an annual basis, to the ministry.

Q. **Does a violent incident have to be reported to the ministry if it involves individuals who are not from my school?**

A. Yes, a violent incident must be reported to the ministry if it occurred on school premises during school-run programs.

Q. **Is violent incident reporting to the ministry tied to student discipline?**

A. No. School boards are required to report all violent incidents that occur on school premises and during school-run programs to the ministry, regardless of whether the incidents resulted in disciplinary action or involved students of the school.

**EXAMPLES OF SCENARIOS**

(a) A couple of adults (non-students) are arrested on school premises during the school day for robbery. Is this reported as a violent incident to the ministry?

Yes. It is reported as one (1) incident. Even though it did not involve students, it happened on school premises and during school-run programs.

(b) A 14 year old student was the victim of a sexual assault on school premises during the school day, the aggressor was not a student. Does this need to be reported as a violent incident to the ministry?

Yes, as it occurred on school premises and during school-run programs.

(c) Two students from my school are involved in a physical assault that causes bodily harm requiring medical attention, down the street after school. Do I report this as a violent incident to the ministry?

No, as it did not occur on school premises.
(d) Two students from my school are involved in a physical assault that causes bodily harm requiring medical attention, on school property after school at a school practice. Do I report this as a violent incident to the ministry?

Yes, it is reported as the incident occurred on school premises and during school-run programs. It is reported as one (1) violent incident as both individuals were involved in the same incident.

(e) Two students from my school are involved in a physical assault that causes bodily harm requiring medical attention, on school property in the evening during a community event. Do I report this as a violent incident to the ministry?

No, although the incident occurred on school premises, it did not occur during a school-run program.

(f) A student is sexually assaulted on school A’s property during the school day. The aggressor is a student of school B. Is this reported as a violent incident to the ministry?

Yes, it is reported by school A, as it occurred on school A’s premises and during school-run programs. School A reports this as one (1) violent incident as both individuals were involved in the same incident.

The incident is not reported by school B, as it did not occur on school B’s premises.

(g) A student from my school was in possession of a weapon in the neighbourhood on the weekend. Do I report this as a violent incident?

No, as it did not occur on school premises.
(h) Ten young people take part in hate-motivated activities on my school property during the school day. There is a mix of students of the school, students of a neighbouring school, and non-students, do I report this as a violent incident to the ministry?

Yes, it is reported, (as it occurred on school premises and during school-run programs).

It is reported as one (1) violent incident as all individuals were involved in the same incident.

(i) A student comes to school with a weapon, and robs another student on school premises during the school day. Is this reported as one or two violent incidents?

It is reported as one (1) violent incident as the robbery and possession of the weapon happened at the same time.