

Creating a Culture of Safety Mindedness

This update outlines activities underway as part of the Student Injury Prevention Initiative (SIPI) Phase Three Project, and provides information to assist boards in the development of their three- to five-year SIPI Phase Three system plans.

Background

In 2013, the Ministry of Education (Ministry) introduced the Student Injury Prevention Initiative (SIPI). To date, two phases of SIPI have been completed; Phase Three is currently underway. Boards are working diligently to ensure that student injury prevention remains the highest of priorities.

Two key components of Phase Three are:

- Gathering information on current board policies, procedures and structures that lead to a culture of safety mindedness and student injury prevention; and
- Preparing system wide plans (by boards) that address student injury prevention in a sustained and proactive manner.

Student Injury Prevention Initiative: Phase Three Surveys

An important outcome of the SIPI Phase Three project is to better understand the depth and breadth of current board policies, procedures and structures that lead to a culture of safety mindedness and student injury prevention. With this aim, boards were asked to complete six surveys. The information gathered through these surveys is intended to assist boards as they complete their three- to five-year student injury prevention plans.

What the Surveys Included

As explained in the Deputy Minister of Education's **memorandum** of June 21, 2016, SIPI Phase Three focuses on expanding the capacity of boards to support long-term planning so that student injury prevention and safety can be approached in a sustained, proactive, and systematic way. As a first step, CODE surveyed school boards to a) determine student injury prevention strategies currently being used across all curriculum areas, and b) identify related activities such as training and operational procedures (the Board General Survey).

The remaining five surveys covered the following specific curriculum areas in which learning activities have the potential for student safety risks:

- The Arts*: Dance, Drama, Music, Visual Arts (Gr. 1–8, 9–12), Media Arts (Gr.10-12) & Integrated Arts** (Gr. 9–12)
- Health and Physical Education (Gr. 1–8, 9–12)
- Science (Gr. 9–12)
- Science and Technology (Gr. 1–8)
- Technological Education (Gr. 9–12)

*Including Expressions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Cultures within the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies Curriculum (NAC10, Gr. 9)

**Includes Integrated Arts (Gr. 9 or 10), Exploring and Creating in the Arts (Gr.11 or 12)

What Boards Reported

In general terms, board responses revealed the following:

Policies, Procedures and Processes

- 60% have a process in place to coordinate staff and student safety initiatives
- 58% have a process to reduce the likelihood of a serious student injury being repeated
- 50% of boards have a plan in place to manage students engaged in high-risk activities in Technological Education programs
- 70% do not have an assigned budget for SIPI-related initiatives
- 71% of boards do not have subject-specific procedures in place for high-risk subject areas

Training and Professional Development

- 57% provide subject-specific SIPI-related training
- 50% of boards offer safety training to science teachers
- 92% do not provide training for short-term occasional teachers in higher-risk subject areas
- 92% of boards do not provide safety training for Health and Physical Education teachers

Facilities and Equipment

- 75% of boards complete inspections of Health and Physical Education facilities or equipment
- 73% of boards have an assessment plan to approve the installation or use of donated equipment in Technological Education facilities
- 67% have an equipment preventative maintenance plan in place for Technological Education

Further, responses for The Arts outlined a number of unique safety issues that should be carefully considered by boards when developing system plans. These include: providing well-maintained and regularly inspected spaces; adequate storage and ventilation; safety procedures when building sets and using costumes, props and lighting; and working with the wide range of materials often found in visual arts programs.

Please note: Boards will receive provincial summaries of the six surveys.

Developing the Board Plan

As part of their overall responsibilities, boards make student health and safety a top priority. The *Considerations and Suggestions* offered in this update are intended to assist boards as they develop their three- to five-year student injury prevention plans.

In reviewing and analyzing the information submitted by boards as part of the SIPI Phase Three surveys, it was apparent that system-wide student injury prevention plans are most effective when they outline how boards will adopt, develop, or update:

- Board-wide policies, procedures, and processes
- Policies and procedures common to curriculum areas that potentially pose a higher risk for student injury—such as considerations for The Arts and Health and Physical Education

School boards may also wish to integrate into their plans how they are addressing relevant existing legislative requirements (e.g., from the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Education Act). Creating a culture of safety mindedness and ensuring student injury prevention is the responsibility of all staff members, and plans should clearly indicate the steps required for students to learn in safe and healthy environments.

The findings from the analysis of the board survey responses are not intended to be directive or prescriptive in nature; rather, they should be considered as helpful information. Boards have both the responsibility and authority to develop plans per their own internal development and approval processes.

Student Injury Prevention Initiative – Phase 3 Multi-Year Board Planning

While recognizing there are different requirements among boards, the following supports were developed to assist in the development of a multi-year Student Injury Prevention Initiative (SIPI) plan. Note that these organizers are *not* intended to form a comprehensive or mandatory list. They do, however, provide considerations (based on the SIPI survey data) that may be useful to the development of individual board plans.

A proactive and sustainable multi-year student injury prevention plan is the critical foundation in promoting a culture of safety mindedness for staff and students in a school board.

Pre-Plan Development Organizer

The “Pre-Plan Development Organizer” outlines suggested initial considerations to have in place prior to developing a board SIPI multi-year plan.

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
Designate lead(s) to oversee the development and implementation of board SIPI plan and to coordinate the plan with ongoing staff safety initiatives.				
Locate appropriate resources (e.g., staff time) to support the development and implementation of the SIPI plan.				
Compare board SIPI survey responses to the provincial SIPI survey findings and reflect on these differences.				
Conduct a gap analysis of current board SIPI processes/procedures.				

Board Multi-Year SIPI Plan Development Organizer

a) General Board Considerations

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
Appropriate resources allocated to support SIPI plan development and implementation.				
Process to engage community partners in SIPI initiatives (e.g., local Emergency Services providers in developing the best process for responding to a serious classroom injury).				

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
Process to review Ministry of Labour (MOL) safety inspections for trends and to take system-wide action as required.				
Process to share the results of MOL inspections with schools.				
Process to develop or adopt ongoing, sustainable SIPI-related training for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Joint Health and Safety Committee members b. School administrators (e.g., principals, vice-principals) c. Facilities and maintenance staff who support higher-risk learning environments 				
Process to develop or adopt ongoing, sustainable SIPI-related training for teachers and short-term occasional teachers in higher-risk subject areas.				
Process for the provision of first aid training (e.g., criteria for selection of staff and the number of trained staff required).				
Process to provide regular communication to staff regarding student injury prevention throughout the year.				
Process for school leaders to report serious student injuries (i.e., requiring medical attention), including who receives notifications and a process to reduce the likelihood of a similar accident from reoccurring.				

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
Process for school leaders to report student safety incidents that did not result in a serious student injury, including who receives notifications and a process to reduce the likelihood of a similar accident from reoccurring.				
Ongoing process to assess the effectiveness of the plan.				

b) General Subject-Based Considerations Organizer

The considerations in this organizer are common to all higher-risk subject areas (i.e., The Arts, Health and Physical Education, Science and Technology, Science and Technological Education). Consult the provincial summary report for examples specific to each subject.

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
<i>Maintenance and Inspection</i>				
Maintenance and inspection of all safety equipment (e.g., eye wash stations).				
Inspection and maintenance of board-approved power tools and hand tools (if applicable).				
Equipment inspections and maintenance (e.g., frequency, focus, who conducts the inspections).				

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
<i>Student Safety Procedures</i>				
Emergency medical response plans for student injury and the maintenance of first aid kits.				
Safety training for students while working at heights (if applicable).				
Availability of personal protective equipment, suitable for student activities, of appropriate quantity, size, and type.				
Personal clothing restrictions or dress requirements during higher-risk activities (e.g., no open-toe shoes).				
Approval or ban of hazardous materials for student and teacher use (e.g., an approved hazardous materials list).				
Process to ensure students have received instruction about the safe use of equipment and materials (e.g., how the instruction is conducted and how the teacher documents the training).				
<i>Storage and Use of Equipment and Materials</i>				
Safe storage of equipment and materials (e.g., appropriate containers for chemicals).				
Appropriate disposal of hazardous materials.				
Purchase and use of board-approved materials only.				
Inspection and approval process for donated equipment and materials.				

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
Educator Supports				
Approval process and safety-planning framework for higher-risk activities.				
Controlling the spread of communicable, infectious, or contagious diseases (e.g., control of blood spills).				
Teacher safety training (e.g., frequency, focus, who conducts the training).				
Management and adaptation of existing safety and SIPI resources (e.g., safety resources developed by subject associations, other school boards, and community partners).				

c) Subject Specific Considerations Organizer: The Arts

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
Safety training for students working in a school theatre or auditorium, including working at heights.				
Selection of appropriate footwear for technical crews and dancers.				
Auditorium safety and related training (e.g., students moving and securing risers).				

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
Dance and Drama studio safety (e.g., flooring, mirrors, drapery, lights, ventilation, safety chains on lights).				
Performance production protocols (e.g., use of fog machines, stage fighting, masks, and makeup).				
Managing weapon facsimiles (e.g., imitation swords used in Dance or Drama).				
Reasonable measures to protect students and teachers from 8-hour time-weighted average exposure to hazardous sound levels that result in the exposure limit of 85 dBA being exceeded in music (e.g., loud musical instruments or audio devices).				
Appropriate placement of fixed equipment in Visual Arts and Media Arts facilities (e.g., paper cutter, printmaking press, drying racks, laser printer, editing suite).				

d) Subject Specific Considerations Organizer: Health and Physical Education

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
First Aid certification requirements for supervisors and coaches of higher-risk activities (e.g., football).				
Specific safety protocols for intramural, curricular, and inter-school activities.				
Safe transfer and storage of equipment (e.g., portable soccer nets, volleyball standards).				

e) Subject Specific Considerations Organizer: Technological Education

Consideration	Status Complete – C In Process – I	Priority High – H Medium – M Low – L	Lead	Action
Safe hot work practices (e.g., hot work should never occur on closed containers).				
Inspection, maintenance and cleaning of tools and equipment.				
Placement of fixed equipment in instructional areas (e.g., table saws, hoists, tire changers, pipe benders).				
Equipment lock-out and tag-out training for Technological Education teachers.				

Reminder: The organizers provided above are not meant to be a board’s three- to five- year SIPI Phase Three plan. They are intended to be useful tools to assist boards in the development of their individual plans. The organizers can also be helpful when engaging board health and safety leaders in a reflective discussion about “the current status of student injury prevention” in their board. Recognizing that development of multi-year plans takes time and involves many individuals, a board’s three- to five- year SIPI Phase Three plan is intended to outline the current state of student injury prevention and detail future actions necessary to make safety-mindedness and student safety a priority.

To assist board leads, samples of board plans currently underway are posted on the CODE website www.ontariodirectors.ca. Please visit the site to find SIPI Phase Three supports.

Next Steps

Boards are to develop three – to five-year Student Injury Prevention Plans and submit their plans to CODE to the attention of Janette Jensen at janette@opsoa.org by **April 30, 2017**. All board plans will be reviewed by the CODE Health and Safety Team and advice may be offered for consideration by Student Injury Prevention board leads.

In addition, the CODE Health and Safety Team and CODE Regional SIPI Phase leads are available to assist boards throughout the development of their three- to five-year plans.

Questions can be directed to the CODE SIPI Phase Three leads as follows:

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