

Bullying Incidents Data Gathering

School districts are required to collect data on the number of reported incidents of bullying and the number of incidents that have been verified and to make such data available to the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Education and to the public.

As stated in the model bullying plan:

Bullying means any overt act or combination of such acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

- a) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity;
- b) is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
- c) is repeated over time.

As defined above, bullying is “repeated over time,” and thus requires two or more incidents to meet the definition. (Of course, the incidents must also meet the other two prongs of the definition.) If you are using the Combined Incidence Reporting Software (CIRS) provided by the Department to collect bullying data, school districts may elect to either:

- (1) enter separate incidents into the general misconduct entry screen and run periodic reports to identify multiple incidents with the same victim which may later be moved to bullying category, or
- (2) enter separate incidents into the bullying entry screen and run periodic reports to identify single incidents/one victim that may need to be moved to the general misconduct category.

In either case, to move data from one category to the other, it must be deleted and re-entered. This problem will be corrected in the 05-06 version of the software and we apologize for any inconvenience.

However a school district elects to enter data, once the school district has determined that the conduct has been “repeated over time,” it should count each subsequent incident as one bullying data entry.