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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Principals  
FROM: Tracy Watterson, Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Program Manager,  
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SUBJECT: Combined Incident Report Software (CIRS) Reporting Instruction Updates  
SY1617  
DATE: November 16, 2016

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During the 2015 Legislative Session, the Senate Education Committee took testimony on S.67, *an act relating to school discipline reform*, including detailed testimony from our Director of Analysis & Data Management, Dr. Wendy Geller, and other Agency of Education (AOE) staff. Following testimony, the Committee chose to submit a request for data from the AOE in order to inform any further discussions, rather than pass S.67 during the 2015 session.

The Committee's requested data regarding whether standardization of data collection rules and practices is appropriate. This data is used to provide each school with important information about their school climate and support their improvement efforts, show trends throughout the state which can inform policy decisions, and provide evidence of compliance with federal and state requirements. Therefore we believe that clarifying definitions and terminology is required for more accurate data submission. Regulatory guidance will be provided in the following four ways:

1. A one-page document, "Combined Incident Reporting Software (CIRS) Reporting Instructions: The Essentials," intended as a quick reference to why CIRS data is collected and key points to remember when reporting exclusionary discipline incidents.
2. A four-page document, "Definitions in Combined Incident Reporting Software (CIRS) SY1617," to be used as a refined list of incident type definitions to make the reporting of incidents more accurate and efficient.
3. Updated CIRS Reporting Instructions, and CIR Software Instructions to reflect the two documents referred above, and offer more detailed instruction when needed, and
4. Interactive webinars to support report filers with an opportunity to problem solve how to record challenging situations, and to ask questions about the use of the CIRS.

We now turn to you, as the leaders of your schools, to join us in this important work of accurately reflecting the low rate of exclusionary discipline taking place in Vermont schools.

We welcome your feedback on the effectiveness of these regulatory guidance tools, look forward to working with you during the interactive webinars offered this school year, and welcome the suggestion of additional tools to support your efforts.