

# STUDENT ACCIDENT REPORTING

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Business Services Division  
**RISK MANAGEMENT**

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# INTRODUCTION

No one enjoys filling out forms, especially accident report forms, but children getting hurt is a fact of life. When accidents happen, we must respond appropriately, and part of the response is the completion of a Student Accident Report (SAR).

The SAR is a tool to help identify accident trends, assess the severity of the trends, and recommend corrective action. This booklet will guide and reference to help complete the form on <https://studentaccidentreporting.sdcoe.net/>.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

- **What is the criteria for filling out an accident report?**

Ideally, all accidents will be reported, but we recognize the practical limitations of this. Each school district should establish its own policy for accident reporting and administer it consistently at all sites. We do recommend that sites maintain a log of all accidents not reported via the SAR website.

- **What if a parent or guardian requests a copy of the SAR?**

Our legal counsel confirmed that the SAR is confidential and districts are not obligated to release it to anyone outside the district. **Therefore, our position is that the accident report be treated as a confidential, internal document which is not to be shared with anyone else outside the district.** However, a new link for a parent copy of the Student Accident Report has been added to the SAR website for your convenience. Simply click the print link under the parent column when viewing accident reports and the SAR website will generate an informational report to be given the parent.

	Report Number	Date Time	Reported By	Title	Reported Date	Recorded Date	Edit	Del	Confidential	Parent	Attachment
View	267840	10-28-21 10:30 AM	Sarah Espiritu	Program Secretary	Oct-28-2021	Oct-28-2021	Edit	Del	Print	Print	

- **Who should complete the report?**

There is no single answer that would apply across the board, as each district has its own organizational structure and assignment of duties. Generally speaking, the SAR should be completed by the school employee or representative who witnessed the incident, was supervising the activity at the time of the incident, or became aware of the incident. The student involved in the incident should **never** complete the form.

Most students, especially younger ones, do not understand the purpose of the report and can become somewhat defensive, which is evident in the narration of the description provided on previous reports filed by the student. Incomplete or inaccurate information is also submitted by students because they have not been trained in proper reporting procedures.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The name of the district and school is needed for general administrative and data entry purposes. The **age** and **grade** can help evaluate supervision requirements as well as help determine if the activity or equipment involved was age appropriate.

The **time of injury** can be a factor in accidents, e.g., dew on the ground in the morning, lawn sprinklers activating during the school day, whether or not lights were functioning, etc. When entering this information please state the actual time of day, not third period, fourth period, etc., as bell schedules vary from district to district.

**Witnesses** are important to any accident investigation and all should be listed. They may include employees or volunteer staff, other students, or parents. Obtain addresses and phone numbers if possible.

**employee in charge** is the adult responsible for supervising the activity at the time of the accident. The ~~name~~ name of this person should be listed ***even if he/she did not actually witness the incident*** as it indicates supervision was present at the time.

## DATA BOXES

This is the heart of the report from and the basis for summary reports prepared for each district. Accurate and complete information is essential for producing valid summary reports.

Because space is limited we could not design a form that included a block for every possible situation that may arise. What we tried to do was offer enough options that an applicable alternative could be chosen even if an exact description was not listed. If you still can't find an appropriate choice, use **other** but be sure to specify what it is.

When completing the data boxes, please read the entire list before making an entry. You may find a choice that better describes the incident you are reporting. You may also save time by not checking off "other" and typing in a choice that is available on the form.

**Injury Location**

Athletic Field Courts  
 Auditorium  
 Bathroom  
 Classroom  
 Corridor  
 Gymnasium  
 Library  
 Locker Room  
 Lunch Area  
 Off Campus  
 Parking Lot  
 Playground  
 Pool  
 Quad  
 Science Lab  
 Shop Lab  
 Sidewalk  
 Stairs  
 Weight Room  
 Other

Please specify, if **Other** is checked:

• **INJURY LOCATION**

Simply indicate the place where the accident occurred. If the exact location is not shown on the form, review the list and choose something similar. For example, if your site has a **theater**, it could be entered as **auditorium**.

Some other multi-purpose classifications: **athletic fields/courts** take into account facilities such as tennis courts, basketball courts, etc; a **corridor** can be interior or exterior; **lunch area** includes cafeterias and outdoor eating areas; **playground** includes blacktop play areas; **quad** refers to any common outdoor area on campus. Also note there are separate entities for **classroom**, **science lab**, and **shop lab**.

**Part of Body**

Ankle  
 Arm  
 Back  
 Chest  
 Ear  
 Elbow  
 Eye  
 Face  
 Finger  
 Foot  
 Groin  
 Hand  
 Head  
 Hip  
 Internal  
 Knee  
 Leg  
 Mouth  
 Neck  
 Nose  
 Ribs  
 Shoulder  
 Stomach  
 Thumb  
 Tooth  
 Wrist  
 Other

Please specify, if **Other** is checked:

• **PART OF BODY**

In general this section produces less confusion than the others, but there are still some areas that need clarification. Consider the following:

<b>INJURED BODY PART</b>	<b>MARK THIS BOX</b>
Forearm, biceps	Arm
Fingernail, knuckle	Finger
Toe, heel, instep, arch	Foot
Lip, tongue	Mouth
Chin, cheek, eyebrow	Face
Forehead, temple	Head
Abdomen, midsection	Stomach
Shin, calf, thigh	Leg

• **NATURE OF INJURY**

We've tried to eliminate as much of the medical jargon as possible because the majority of people who use this form do not have medical backgrounds. For purposes of this form use the following definitions:

<b>TYPE OF INJURY</b>	<b>MARK THIS BOX</b>
Scratch	Abrasion
Bump	Swelling
Laceration	Cut
Twisted	Sprain/Strain
Contusion	Bruise

If the full extent of the injury is not known when the report is filled out, it is acceptable to mark a box and include a clarification in the comments section at the bottom of the form.

- **CAUSE OF INJURY**

This section is subject to the greatest variety of interpretation and confusion. The easiest way to determine the cause is to think of it as the most immediate cause of the *injury*, not the *accident*. For example, if student #1 hits student #2 resulting in a broken nose, the cause is “another student.” If student #1 pushes student #2 resulting in a head injury from striking the ground, the cause is “surface.” Please refer to the table below for examples of what is included in these general terms:

<b>LOCATION OF INJURY</b>	<b>MARK THIS BOX</b>
Walls, doors, window frames and glass, water fountains, sinks	Building
Floors, sidewalks, fields, blacktop, grass, dirt, parking lots, the ground, or any surface normally used for walking	Surface
Desks, tables, benches	Furniture
Ball, rock, pencil, backpack, objects that became airborne from being kicked, batted, etc.	Thrown object

☒ **Cause of Injury**

Animal/Insect    Another Student    Building    Chemicals    Classroom Materials    Fence/Gate  
 Food/Drink    Furniture    Hand Tool    Play Equipment    Pole    Powered Tool  
 Self    Sport Equipment    Surface    Thrown Object    Vehicle    Weapons  
 Other

Please specify, if **Other** is checked:

- **SPORT/RECREATION ACTIVITY**

This refers to any organized or unorganized activity, including interscholastic sports, intramurals, physical education classes, recess, clubs, etc., either before, during, or after school hours.

The primary difficulty in this section is the inclusion of activities which are in no way related to sports or recreation. Activities such as eating lunch, getting off the bus, and a class project are frequently cited but do not belong here. Think of the assignment we did in elementary school where several objects would be pictured and we had to pick out the one that didn't fit (horse, cow, dog, boat). Using this method can help avoid this common pitfall.

- **PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT**

Use this section if the injury was the result of playing on or around playground equipment. This list is limited so you may have to use a generic description such as “climbing equipment” in place of “monkey bars” or “jungle gym.”

## NARRATIVE

The **description** is where the details of the incident are reported. Tell what happened either as first-hand information or as reported by the witness, employee in charge or the student involved. Provide as much detail as possible and include anything that would add clarity to the report. The information provided can help identify physical hazards that need corrective action. It is better to provide too much information than too little.

The next section asks if **the parents were contacted**. Contacting parents helps put them at ease and lets them know that their child is being taken care of. It is also an opportunity to assess their reaction in order to anticipate potential problems; and if needed, begin preparations to defend a claim or lawsuit.

The age of the student and the degree of injury may be factors in deciding whether or not to contact the parents. For example, the parents of an 11th-grade student may not be contacted if the student fell and skinned a knee, but the parents of a first-grade student likely would be called in a similar situation.

If attempts to contact the parent or guardian have been unsuccessful, indicate this on the form.

Occasionally a report will state that a student declined to call his or her parents, which is not the student's decision. It is the JPA's recommendation that parents always be contacted; however, policies and procedures established by individual districts should be followed.

**comment** section is provided for any other information you feel would be useful. It can also be used to indicate the corrective action needed or taken to prevent similar incidents.

The **report completed by** field should include the name and title of the individual who filled out the report. If the report was reviewed by anyone else, their name and title should also be included.

## CONCLUSION

The SAR is an accident prevention tool. In order for the tool to do its job, the process of filling out the accident report form must be taken seriously. Complete, accurate information is essential.

This booklet is only a general guide and cannot address all possible contingencies. We anticipate there will still be unanswered questions; if so, please contact your district office. Please remember that the JPA can come to your district to conduct a training class on student accident reporting. We encourage all of our members to take advantage of this free service.



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