

STUDENTS

Policy 2710 **(Regulation 2710)**

Student Welfare

Reporting Student Abuse

The Board of Education believes that school staff members are in a unique position to assist children, families, and the community in dealing with the issue of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse is defined as any physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means. Neglect is defined as the failure to provide the proper or necessary support, education, nutrition or medical, surgical or other care necessary for the child's well-being. Employees making reports of allegations of sexual abuse of a student will be provided immediate unrestricted use of communication technology and will be temporarily released from their work duties to make an immediate report.

If a school employee has a reasonable belief including a report of abuse to believe that a student has been or maybe subjected to abuse or neglect, such employee and the Superintendent shall report the information immediately upon receiving the information to the Children's Division. Thereafter, the Superintendent will investigate the allegation for the purpose of making decisions about the accused person's employment. Depending upon the specific facts, the District may place the alleged abuser on paid leave of absence; place the employee in a non-student contact position; initiate dismissal proceedings, or continue the employee in their present position pending outcome of the investigation.

Any school district employee, acting in good faith, who reports alleged sexual misconduct on the part of a school employee will not be disciplined or discriminated against because of such reporting.

The District will annually provide employee training, which will include but not be limited to current information concerning identification of the signs of sexual abuse in children as well as the identification of the danger signals of potentially abusive relationships between children and adults. This training will emphasize the importance of mandatory child abuse reporting, including the obligation to report suspected abuse by other mandated reporters. Employees will receive training on the need for and methods to create an atmosphere of trust so that students believe their school and school employees are available to discuss matters concerning abusive behavior.

The District will post in each student restroom and in a clearly visible location in each school office, the toll free child abuse and neglect hotline number established by the Children's Division. These signs will be published in both English and Spanish. Such child abuse and neglect hotline numbers shall be depicted in large print on posters 11 inches by 17 inches and will be placed at eye level for easy viewing. The hotline number will be shown in bold print. The signs shall also contain instructions to call 911 for emergencies and contain directions for accessing the Children's Division's website for more information on reporting abuse and neglect.

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Procedure for Reporting Abuse and Neglect

1. If notice of alleged child abuse or neglect is received. A report will be made to the Children's Division by telephoning the Abuse Hotline at 1-800-392-3738. The call will be logged with the date, time and nature of the report, if the Children's Division declines to accept the report, the name of the CD representative; the date and report made must be documented.
2. When CD representatives interview students on District property, a school staff member will be present. CD representatives may not meet with a child at any school or childcare facility where abuse of the child is alleged to have occurred.
3. When CD receives a report of suspected abuse involving a school employee, other than reports made under subsection (1), the CD is required to notify the Superintendent. If the alleged perpetrator is the Superintendent, CD will notify the Board President. However, if the report relates to spanking or the use of reasonable force to protect persons or property pursuant to Board policy, a report will be made to county law enforcement officials. The investigation into such report will be made by a law enforcement official in the county.
4. When the District and student involved request mediation of the child abuse situation in a school setting, the matter will be referred to the Office of Child Advocate.

