

~~Child Abuse and/or Neglect~~ Reporting Potentially Missing or Abused or Neglected Children

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8462 ~~CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT~~ REPORTING POTENTIALLY MISSING OR ABUSED OR NEGLECTED CHILDREN

The Board of Education is concerned with the physical and mental well-being of the children of this district, and recognizes the importance of early identification in halting child abuse and /or neglect. In recognition of the importance of early detection of missing, abused, or neglected children, the Board of Education adopts this Policy pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:36-24 and 18A:36-25. The Board provides this Policy for its employees, volunteers, or interns to provide for the early detection of missing, abused, or neglected children through notification of, reporting to, and cooperation with the appropriate law enforcement and child welfare authorities pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-24 and 18A:36-25 et seq., N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1, and N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10. . The Board of Education directs the Superintendent to promulgate policies and procedures for reporting child abuse.

Employees, volunteers, or interns working in the school district shall immediately notify designated child welfare authorities of incidents of alleged missing, abused, and/or neglected children. Reports of incidents of alleged missing, abused, or neglected children shall be reported to the New Jersey State Central Registry (SCR) at 1-877 NJ ABUSE or to any other telephone number designated by the appropriate child welfare authorities. If the child is in immediate danger a call shall be placed to 911 as well as to the SCR.

~~School personnel having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse and/or neglect or acts of child abuse and/or neglect as defined under N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.9 shall immediately report to DYFS and law enforcement authorities, as provided for under N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10, and N.J.S.A. 18A: 36-25. School personnel reporting such abuse and/or neglect shall inform the school principal or his/her designee of the report unless the school personnel believes this notice will endanger the child or likely result in retaliation against the child or discrimination against the reporting personnel with respect to his/her employment.~~

~~The Board of Education and administration assure all school personnel there will be no employment discrimination in regards to compensation, hire, tenure or terms, conditions or privileges of employment upon making a good faith report or causing such report.~~

~~The Board of Education shall appoint a DYFS liaison to facilitate communications and cooperation. The Board will provide for the annual delivery of information and in-service training of school personnel regarding child abuse and/or neglect. The Board and administration will cooperate with DYFS to investigate reports and provide staff to comfort and support the child(ren) during DYFS interviews and investigations. The Board will incorporate information regarding child abuse and/or neglect and its prevention into the district's health education program in accordance with the consultation procedures set forth in Policy No. 2422. The Board and administration will permit DYFS to remove pupils from school during the course of the day to protect the child(ren) and cooperate to relocate child(ren) to another school if necessary. Policies and procedures for reporting child abuse shall include provisions for the annual delivery of information and in-service training programs to school personnel concerning child abuse or neglect, and instructional methods and techniques relative to issues of child abuse or neglect in the school curriculum and personnel responsibilities pursuant to N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10 et seq.~~

The person having reason to believe that a child may be missing or may have been abused or neglected may inform the Principal or other designated school official(s) prior to notifying designated child welfare authorities if the action will not delay immediate notification. The person notifying designated child welfare authorities shall inform the Principal or other designated school official(s) of the notification, if such had not occurred prior to the notification. Notice to the Principal or other designated school official(s) need not be given when the person believes that such notice would likely endanger the reporter or student involved or when the person believes that such disclosure would likely result in retaliation against the student or in discrimination against the reporter with respect to his or her employment.

The Principal or other designated school official(s) upon being notified by a person having reason to believe that a child may be missing or may have been abused or neglected, must notify appropriate law enforcement authorities. Notification to appropriate law enforcement authorities shall be made for all reports by employees, volunteers, or interns working in the school district. Confirmation by another person is not required for a school district employee, volunteer, or intern to report the suspected missing, abused, or neglected child situation.

- School district officials will cooperate with designated child welfare and law enforcement authorities in all investigations of potentially missing, abused, or neglected children in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1(a)5.

- The Board will delegate, annually, a staff member as the school district's liaison to designated child welfare authorities to act as the primary contact person between the school district and child welfare authorities with regard to general information sharing and the development of mutual training and other cooperative efforts. The District designates the Superintendent or designee as the school district's liaison to law enforcement authorities to act as the primary contact person between the school district and law enforcement authorities, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)1, consistent with the Memorandum of Agreement, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)13.

The Board and administration will release, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-19 and N.J.A.C. ~~6:3-6 et seq.,~~ ~~6A:32-7.5(e)12~~ pupil records of students referred to the agency responsible for protective and investigative services to students the child(ren) under investigation that are deemed to be relevant to the assessment or treatment of child abuse and/or neglect. School district records of child abuse and/or neglect shall be kept confidential and disclosed only as prescribed by N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10a., N.J.S.A. 18A:36-19, and N.J.A.C. ~~6:3-6 et seq~~6A:32-7.5.

An employee, volunteer, or intern working in the school district who has been named as a suspect in a notification to child welfare and law enforcement authorities regarding a missing, abused, or neglected child situation shall be entitled to due process rights, including those rights defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1(a)9. ~~Any employee's act of unbecoming conduct in the treatment of children, including alleged acts of child abuse and/or neglect reported to DYFS and law enforcement authorities, shall be promptly reported to the Principal who shall immediately inform the Superintendent.~~ The Superintendent may temporarily reassign or, with the concurrence of the Board President, suspend the employee pending investigation.

Information regarding allegations of child abuse and/or neglect reported to, investigated and reported upon by ~~DYFS~~ designated child welfare authorities about a school employee shall be confidential and may be disclosed only as required in order to cooperate with ~~DYFS~~ the child welfare authority's investigations or by court order. These records shall be maintained in a secure place and be accessible to the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

~~THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY~~

OPERATIONS
8462/page 2 of 2
~~Child Abuse and/or Neglect~~

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training to school district employees, volunteers, or interns on the district's policy and procedures for reporting allegations of missing, abused, or neglected child situations. All new school district employees, volunteers, or interns working in the district shall receive the required information and training as part of their orientation.

- There shall be no reprisal or retaliation against any person who, in good faith, reports or causes a report to be made of a potentially missing-, abused-, or neglected-child situation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.13.

- Any employee, volunteer, or intern with reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, shall report the information to the Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, in a form and manner prescribed by the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services pursuant to N.J.S.A. 30:9A-24.a.

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N.J.S.A. 9:6-90.10; 18A:36-24; 18A:36-25 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1; 6A:32-7.5

~~The Board will provide due process rights to school personnel who have been reassigned or suspended in accordance with statutes. Temporary reassignment or suspension of school personnel alleged to have committed an act of child abuse and/or neglect shall occur if there is reasonable cause to believe the life or health of the alleged victim or other children is in imminent danger due to continued contact between the personnel and the child(ren). All records shall be removed from the employee's personnel file if the school district receives official notice from DYFS that the allegation was unfounded. An unfounded allegation shall not be used against the employee for any purpose relating to employment.~~

~~N.J.S.A. 18A: 36-25~~

~~N.J.S.A. 18A: 6-7a~~

~~N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10~~

~~N.J.A.C. 6A: 16-11.2~~

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