

DRAFT

MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE, ABANDONMENT, AND / OR NEGLECT

To comply with appropriate Florida law which makes mandatory the reporting of child abuse, abandonment, and / or child neglect, any teacher or other school employee who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been:

- subject to abuse, abandonment, ~~or~~ neglect or
- a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care

shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Families at the statewide toll-free hotline: 1-800-96-ABUSE ~~and immediately notify the principal or his/her designee that a report has been made.~~ After the report has been made, reporters may notify the principal or the child abuse designee to ensure appropriate support. Principals and child abuse designees shall maintain the confidentiality of the reporter.

Concern that a child has been sexually or physically abused by a person who is not a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for a child's welfare shall be reported to law enforcement immediately.

~~In addition to the above requirement, reports alleging that the perpetrator of the abuse, abandonment, or neglect is an employee of the school district, shall also be made directly by the hotline reporter to the local law enforcement jurisdiction. The principal shall notify the Board's Professional Standards & Special Investigative Unit so a joint investigation can be conducted.~~

If there are any questions related to child abuse, abandonment, neglect or a child in need of supervision and care, ~~tThe school employee shall consult with the school-based child abuse designee, regarding any questions related to child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.~~

Florida law provides penalties: "A person who is required to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree...." ~~"Any person who willfully or knowingly makes public or discloses any information contained in the child abuse registry or the records of any child abuse case... may be held personally liable. Any person injured or aggrieved by such disclosure shall be entitled to damages."~~

~~Implementation of this policy shall be in accordance with The School Board Critical Resource Manual—Student Welfare Situation—Suspected Child Abuse.~~

Authority: F.S. 1001.41 (1) (2) F.S. 39.401 201, 205(1), 39.01(46)

Procedures Adopted: 9/5/74; 5/8/78; 11/1/84; 12/7/93; 9/15/98; 5/2/00; 9/3/03

Policy Amended: 9/3/03