

NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

SERIES 1000: STUDENTS

P1300

PREVENTION AND REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

All school personnel who are mandated reporters having reasonable cause to suspect or believe that abuse, maltreatment or neglect of a North Branford student has been caused or may be caused by the parent, guardian or person responsible for such child's health, welfare or care or by a person given access to such child by such responsible person, including any school employee, shall report this suspicion or belief orally to the Commissioner of Children and Families or a law enforcement agency within 24 hours of having reasonable cause to so suspect or believe, and as otherwise required by the Connecticut General Statutes and this policy. A mandated reporter shall submit a written report to the Commissioner of Children and Families, or his/her representative, within 48 hours of making an oral report.

Definitions

"Child abuse" is defined as a situation in which any child under the age of eighteen (18) years has had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him/her other than by accidental means, or has injuries which are at variance with the history given of them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

"Child neglect" is defined as a situation in which any child under eighteen (18) years has been abandoned, or is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotional or morally, or is being permitted to live under conditions or circumstances injurious to the child's well being, or has been abused.

"Mandated reporter" is defined as a psychologist, school teacher, school principal, school guidance counselor, school paraprofessional, social worker, physical therapist, physician or surgeon licensed under the provisions of Chapter 370 of the Connecticut General Statutes, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, dentist, dental hygienist, mental health professional, any person who is a licensed substance abuse counselor, or any person who is a sexual assault counselor, or as this term may hereafter be defined by Connecticut General Statutes.

Immunity from liability is provided by statute for all individuals who are required to make this report and do so in good faith. The Board of Education shall cause the defense, or reimburse the defense, of any school personnel and pay damages in any litigation arising from a good faith attempt to comply with state statute and this policy. Failure by the

applicable school personnel to comply with the obligations imposed by statute and this policy may result in withholding of this indemnification and disciplinary action up to and including their possible suspension or termination from employment in accordance with law.

In addition, failure by certified school staff, doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers and guidance counselors to make the report may result in a statutory penalty of up to \$500.

If an inquiry is made whether the school system has made a required report of abuse, maltreatment or neglect, it is the policy of the Board of Education not to confirm or deny the existence of a report unless it involves a report concerning possible misconduct by a school employee, in which case it is the policy to disclose only whether or not a report has been made, and that established procedures are being followed to protect students, and not to disclose any names or details of the report.

The Board shall establish a program for keeping its members and employees informed of their legal obligations, protection and penalties for complying or failing to comply with state statute and this policy and shall establish programs for employees to learn and keep skilled in the procedures and guidelines for identifying and reporting abuse, maltreatment and neglect.

Legal References: C.G.S. §17a-101 (Protection of children from abuse. Reports required of certain professional persons. When child may be removed from surroundings without court order.)
 C.G.S. §17a-102 (Report of danger of abuse)
 C.G.S. §17a-103 (Report of others)
 C.G.S. §46b-120 (Definitions of “Abused” or “Neglected”)

Policy Adopted: 11/21/02