

STUDENT WELFARE REGULATIONS

The State of Massachusetts requires by law that any Principal, teacher, counselor, or nurse report all cases of suspected child abuse/neglect on behalf of children under eighteen years of age. The law also provides legal immunity from civil or criminal liability for all such professional personnel when they, in good faith, report such abuse or neglect. Failure to report may result in a fine not to exceed \$1,000.00.

Definition Of Neglect:

The impairment of a child's physical, mental or emotional condition as a result of the failure of the child's parents or other person responsible for his/her care to exercise a minimum degree of care:

1. In supplying the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter or education, or medical care, though financially able to do so or offered financial or other reasonable means to do so; or
2. In providing the child with proper supervision or guardianship.

Definition Of Abuse:

1. A physical injury by other than accidental means which causes or creates a substantial risk of death or protracted impairment of the function of any bodily organ; and
2. The commission of sex offence against a child as defined in the criminal laws of Massachusetts.

Reporting Procedure:

1. Any professional staff member who suspects that a child has been abused or neglected shall immediately inform the Principal of the appropriate school.
2. The information reported shall include:
 - a. Name and address of the child and parent;
 - b. Child's sex;
 - c. Nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse or neglect;
 - d. Action, if any, taken to treat, shelter, or assist the child;
 - e. Name of the person making the report;
 - f. Date of report; and
 - g. Other pertinent information
3. The Principal shall review the report with appropriate staff member (Teacher, Assistant Principal, Counselor, Nurse, Physician) within two days of the referral.
4. The Principal on the advise of the Superintendent shall telephone the Department of Public Welfare Child Protective Service and notify them of alleged abuse or neglect.

5. The Principal, within two working days, shall submit a written report (Form 51A) by registered mail to the Department of Public Welfare Child Protective Agency. A copy of the report shall be forwarded to the Superintendent. If the Department of Welfare does not respond within a reasonable period, the Principal shall refile Form 51A.

Additional Concerns:

1. Cases of reported abuse or neglect are to remain confidential. Discussion of these situations should be limited to appropriate meetings and staff.
2. School employees shall not contact the child's family or any other person to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect. It is not the responsibility of the school employee to prove abuse or neglect. However, the Principal should notify the parent at his/her discretion, that a report is being submitted to the Department of Public Welfare.

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Hull Public Schools