

STUDENT WELFARE

Code **JLF** Issued **9/10**

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for the reporting of child abuse (sexual, physical or mental) and neglect.

The schools of this district will cooperate vigorously to expose the problems of child abuse and neglect.

Any principal, assistant principal, school teacher, school attendance officer, nurse or counselor who has received information in his/her professional capacity which gives him/her reason to believe that a child under the age of 18 has been or may be abused or neglected as defined by law must report such a situation. These individuals may make the report to a law enforcement agency in the county where the child resides or to the county department of social services.

Other school employees who have reason to believe that a child under the age of 18 has been or may be abused or neglected as defined by law may also report or cause a report to be made, and are encouraged to do so, as stated above.

The State of South Carolina provides both civil and criminal immunity to those reporting suspected child abuse or neglect. Anyone required to report who knowingly fails to do so may be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Reporting procedures

School personnel who suspect child abuse or neglect may make a report in good faith. It is not the responsibility of school personnel to prove that the child has been abused or neglected, or to make a determination of whether the child is in need of protection. Any involvement of school personnel in investigation or treatment should be in conjunction with the local child protection unit of the department of social services.

The teacher or other school employee first suspecting the abuse must make an oral report by telephoning or otherwise which includes the following information.

- name, address and age of student
- name and address of parent/legal guardian or caretaker
- nature and extent of injuries or description of neglect
- any other information that might help to establish the cause of the injuries or condition

The person making the report should tell the principal of the school of any oral or written report submitted in a case of child abuse or neglect.

School employees who make child abuse or neglect reports must maintain the confidentiality of the information contained in the report. Employees will release this information only to the department of social services or, in the alternative, the county law enforcement agency.

Adopted 4/17/78; Revised 8/13/91, 9/16/96, 10/14/03, 6/14/05, 9/14/10

Legal references:

- A. S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:
1. Section 63-1-10, et seq. - South Carolina Children's Code.

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2. Section 63-7-20 - Definitions.
3. Section 63-7-310 through 350 - Persons required to report.