

**Policy Statement #1460 (Administration) of the Board of Education
Regarding the Maryland Child Abuse and Neglect Law and Calvert County Public Schools**

I. Purpose

- A. To protect Calvert County public school students who are victims of child abuse and neglect.
- B. To require that Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) informs employees, school bus drivers, and volunteers of their legal obligation to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the local department of social services or a local law enforcement agency and of their immunity from civil liability or criminal penalty in making a report.

II. Definitions

A. Abuse means:

- 1. The physical or mental injury of a child by anyone under circumstances that indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed; or
- 2. Sexual abuse of a child, whether physical injuries are sustained or not.

B. Child - Any person under the age of eighteen (18) years or a student enrolled in Calvert County Public Schools

C. Employees - Individuals whose compensation is paid by the Calvert County Public Schools

D. Mental Injury - The observable, identifiable, and substantial impairment of a child's mental or psychological ability to function

E. Neglect - The leaving of a child unattended or other failure to give proper care and attention to a child by any parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for the supervision of the child under circumstances that indicate:

- 1. That the child's health or welfare is harmed or placed at substantial risk of harm; or
- 2. Mental injury to the child or a substantial risk of mental injury

F. Sexual Abuse

- 1. Any act that involves sexual molestation or exploitation of a child by anyone;
- 2. Includes, but is not limited to, incest, rape, sexual offense in any degree; sodomy; and unnatural or perverted sexual practices.

- G. Volunteer – Any Person at the request of the principal or designee, who provides services for the Calvert County Public School System without receiving monetary compensation.

III. Policy Statement

- A. The Board of Education is committed to protecting children from harm and danger. Accordingly, Calvert County Public Schools will inform employees, bus drivers, and volunteers of their legal obligation to make and the potential consequences of failing to make an oral and written report to the local department of social services or a law enforcement agency whenever they have reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse and/or neglect. Calvert County Public Schools will inform employees, bus drivers, and volunteers of their immunity from civil liability or criminal penalty when making a report. Employees making a report will also immediately notify the Superintendent or his/her designee of the suspected abuse or neglect.

IV. Suspected Abuse and Neglect Investigations

A. Cooperation

1. Calvert County Public Schools' employees, contractors, and volunteers will cooperate with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the police in investigations of suspected abuse and neglect.
 - a. DSS and law enforcement are responsible for the validation of suspected abuse or neglect.
 - b. Once it is determined that a report must be made, the employee, contractor, or volunteer reporting the alleged abuse or neglect, the school principal, or any other school-based employees are not to discuss any aspect of the case or attempt to conduct any internal investigation or independent review of the facts. If the allegation is against a school system employee, CCPS Administrative Policy and applicable Procedures 1750 Regarding Employee Discipline shall apply.
 - c. School system employees are prohibited, in general, from taking action that prejudices the ongoing case, such as giving an indication to the alleged offender of the report of suspected abuse or neglect.
 - d. Interviews on School Property
 - 1) The principal will permit DSS and the police to question a student who is an alleged victim or a non-victim witness of abuse or neglect on school premises during the school day, whether or not the student has already been interviewed, in an investigation involving suspected abuse or neglect under the Family Law Article.
 - 2) The principal will determine, after consultation with the individual from DSS or the police, whether a school official should be present during questioning. The school official should be selected, with input from the victim, on a case-by-case basis for the purpose of providing support and comfort to the student

who will be questioned. All questioning of the victim or the non-victim witness must be done by the police or representative of DSS.

- 3) The principal/designee, in collaboration with the Department of Student the Division of Child Protective Services, DSS, or police will decide who will notify parents of a report or interview and when that notification will occur. Notification by the principal/designee is not required in a case where, in the judgment of the principal/designee and personnel from the Division of Child Protective Services, DSS and/or the police, such a disclosure to parents would create a threat to the investigation or well-being of the student. In these cases, the DSS social worker or police officer are responsible for the notification of parents.
- 4) If a student is removed from school grounds the school principal or designee will promptly notify the student's parent/guardian. This is not discretionary. By mutual agreement, such notification may be delegated to DSS or the police, but responsibility for ensuring that prompt notification occurs is that of the school principal. A student may not be removed from the school grounds for questioning or medical investigation without parental approval unless DSS has guardianship or an authorization for shelter care to remove the student or unless there is a medical emergency which is caused by suspected abuse or neglect. Such an authorization does not need to be in hand but will be verified by telephone.

B. Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Against and Employee, Contractor, or Volunteer

1. The process for addressing allegations of abuse or neglect that involves a school system employee, contractor, or volunteer will adhere to appropriate state law and the Memorandum of Understanding.
 - a. Whenever an employee, contractor, or volunteer makes an oral report of suspected abuse or neglect against a CCPS employee, contractor, or volunteer to DSS or the police, the reporter will also notify the Director of Human Resources/designee as soon as possible.
 - b. In every case of alleged abuse or neglect, an internal investigation will be conducted by the school principal and Superintendent's designee.
 - 1) There will be no internal investigation of the allegations until it is clear that such investigation will not interfere with the efforts of either the police or DSS.
 - 2) To the extent that some preliminary inquiry must be made to determine what action should be taken by the school system on an interim basis, the inquiry may be pursued only with the permission of law enforcement and DSS.

- 3) The DSS and/or the police might decide not to pursue a report. If DSS does investigate, it will make one of three determinations:
 - i. Indicated by preponderance of the evidence: a finding that there is credible evidence, which has not been satisfactorily refuted, that abuse or neglect occurred
 - ii. Unsubstantiated: a finding that there is insufficient evidence to support a finding of Indicated or Ruled Out
 - iii. Ruled Out: a finding that abuse or neglect did not occur
- 4) The State's Attorney makes a separate determination as to whether to bring criminal charges.
- 5) The school system's investigation can proceed when permission is granted by DSS and the police.
- 6) The primary purpose of the CCPS investigation is to determine if there is evidence of employee, contractor, or volunteer misconduct, violation of law, or CCPS policy violation.
- 7) In addition, the investigation should determine whether the matter was reported in a manner consistent with the law and school system policy and procedures.
- 8) The Department of Human Resources will ensure the Superintendent is informed of allegations against the employee, contractor, or volunteer, who will provide the Calvert County Board of Education with periodic updates on the status of the investigation. In the case of a contractor, the appropriate official of the contractor's business must also be notified.
- 9) Employees may be placed on a status that restricts their access to students, and contractors' or volunteers' services may be discontinued, until the investigation is complete.

V. Delegation of Authority

- A. The Superintendent is directed to develop administrative procedures to implement this policy in accordance with all local policies and local, state, and federal laws and regulations and to communicate this policy and accompanying procedures to all relevant parties.

VI. Exceptions

- A. There are no exceptions to this policy. However, the Board, by majority vote, may temporarily suspend all or part of this policy. Suspension of all or part of this policy, however, in no way relieves the Board of its obligation to comply with the pertinent local, state, and federal laws and regulations or the rules and regulations of the Maryland State Board of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education.

VII. Review

Administration #1460

Originally Adopted: 8/10/06

Revised: 8/13/2009; 9/6/2012; 10/8/2015; 12/13/18; 1/13/22; 9/11/25

Page 4 of 5

- A. This policy will be reviewed at the end of three years, or sooner, if approved by majority vote of the Board of Education in public session.

VIII. Effective Date

- A. This policy is effective September 11, 2025.

Citations

State Law: Title 5 Subtitle 7 of the Family Law Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland

§ 6-202(a)(1)(ii) of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland

State Reg.: COMAR 13A.12.05.02(C)(4)

Federal Law:

Adm. Reg.:

Neg. Agr.:

Other Citation:

Related Policies

1750 – Regarding Employee Discipline

8123 – Regarding Parent/Caregiver/Community Involvement

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Page 5 of 5