

SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT
Salem, Connecticut

PERSONNEL – CERTIFIED/NON-CERTIFIED
STUDENTS

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes its legal and ethical obligations in the reporting of suspected child abuse, neglect and sexual assault. Any person applying for employment with the Board shall submit to a record check of the Department of Children and Families Child Abuse and Neglect Registry before the person may be hired. Mandated reporters include all school employees, specifically Superintendent, administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, guidance counselors, school paraprofessionals, coaches of intramural and interscholastic athletics, as well as licensed nurses, physicians, psychologists and social workers either employed by the Board or working in one of the District schools, or any other person who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in District schools. Such individual(s) who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused, neglected or placed in imminent risk of serious harm, is required to report such abuse and/or neglect or risk.

Furthermore, the Board of Education requires all personnel who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child, under the age of eighteen (18), has been abused, neglected, has had non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of such injury, or is placed in imminent danger of serious harm to report such cases in accordance with the law, Board policy and administrative regulations.

A mandated reporter shall make an oral report, by telephone or in person, to the Commissioner of Children and Families or a law enforcement agency as soon as possible, but no later than twelve (12) hours after the reporter has reasonable cause to suspect the child has been abused, neglected or sexually assaulted. In addition, the mandated reporter shall inform the building principal or his/her designee that he/she will be making such a report. Not later than forty-eight hours of making the oral report, the mandated reporter shall file a written report with the Commissioner of Children and Families or his/her designee. (The Department of Children and Families has established a 24 hour Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-842-2288 for the purpose of making such oral reports.)

The oral and written reports shall include, if known: (1) the names and addresses of the child and his/her parents/guardians; (2) the child's age; (3) the child's gender; (4) the nature and extent of the child's injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect; (5) the approximate date and time the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred; (6) information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment or neglect of, the child or his/her siblings; (7) the circumstances in which the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter; (8) the name of the person(s) suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect; (9) the reasons such person or persons are suspected of causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect; (10) any information concerning any prior cases in which such person or persons have been suspected of causing an injury, maltreatment or neglect of a child; and (11) whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist the child.

If the report of abuse or neglect involves an employee of the District as the perpetrator, the District may conduct its own investigation into the allegation, provided that such investigation shall not

interfere with or impede any investigation conducted by the Department of Children and Families or by a law enforcement agency.

The Board recognizes that the Department of Children and Families is required to disclose records to the Superintendent of Schools in response to a mandated reporter's written or oral report of abuse, neglect or sexual assault or if the Commissioner of Children and Families has reasonable belief that a school employee abused, neglected or sexually assaulted a student. Not later than five (5) working days after an investigation of child abuse, neglect or sexual assault by a school employee has been completed, DCF is required to notify the Superintendent and the State Department of Education of the investigation's results. If DCF has reasonable cause, and recommends the employee be placed on DCF's Child Abuse and Neglect Registry, the Superintendent shall suspend such employee.

The Board, recognizing its responsibilities to protect children and in compliance with its statutory obligations, shall provide in-service training regarding the requirements and obligations of mandated reporters. District employees shall also participate in training offered by the Department of Children and Families.

State law prohibits retaliation against a mandated reporter for fulfilling his/her obligations to report suspected child abuse or neglect. The Board shall not retaliate against any mandated reporter for his/her compliance with the law and Board policy pertaining to the reporting of suspected child abuse, neglect and sexual assault.

In accordance with the mandates of the law and consistent with its philosophy, the Board in establishing this policy directs the Superintendent of Schools to develop and formalize the necessary rules and regulations to comply fully with the intent of the law.

This policy will be distributed annually to all employees. Documentation shall be maintained that all employees have, in fact, received the written policy and completed training related to mandated reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault as required by law.

Establishment of the Confidential Rapid Response Team

The District shall establish a confidential rapid response team to coordinate with DCF to (1) ensure prompt reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect; or 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th degree sexual assault; 1st degree aggravated sexual assault; or 3rd degree sexual assault with a firearm of a student not enrolled in adult education by a school employee and (2) provide immediate access to information and individuals relevant to DCF's investigation of such cases.

The confidential rapid response team shall consist of (1) a local teacher and the Superintendent, (2) a local police officer, and (3) any other person the Board of Education deems appropriate.

DCF, along with a multidisciplinary team, is required to take immediate action to investigate and address each report of child abuse, neglect or sexual abuse in any school.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes: 17a-101 Protection of children from abuse. Reports required of certain professional persons. When child may be removed from surroundings without court order. (as amended by PA 96-246, PA 00-220, PA02-106, PA 03-168, PA 09-242, PA 11-93, and PA 15-205.) 10-151 Teacher Tenure Act. 10-220a In-service training. Professional development committees. Institutes for educators. Cooperating teacher program, regulations (as amended by PA 11-93). 10-221d Criminal history records check of school personnel. Fingerprinting. Termination or dismissal (as amended by PA 11-93 and PA 15-205). 17a-28 Definitions. Confidentiality of and access to records; exceptions. Procedure for aggrieved persons. Regulations (as amended by PA 11-93 and PA 14-186). 17a-101 a Report of abuse or neglect by mandated reports (as amended by PA 02-106 and PA 11-93). 17a-102 Report of danger of abuse (as amended by PA 02-106). 17a-106 Cooperation in relation to prevention, identification and treatment

of child abuse/neglect. PA 11-93 An Act Concerning the Response of School District and the Department of Education and Children and Families to Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect and the Identification of Foster Children in a School District. PA 14-186 An Act Concerning the Department of Children and Families and the Protection of Children.

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