Operational Services

Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors

Child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors harm students, their parents/guardians, the District's environment, its school communities, and the community at large, while diminishing a student's ability to learn. The Board has a responsibility and obligation to increase awareness and knowledge of: (1) issues regarding child sexual abuse, (2) likely warning signs that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse, (3) grooming behaviors related to child sexual abuse and grooming, (4) how to report child sexual abuse, (5) appropriate relationships between District employees and students based upon State law, and (6) how to prevent child sexual abuse.

To address the Board's obligation to increase awareness and knowledge of these issues, prevent sexual abuse of children, and define prohibited grooming behaviors, the Executive Director or designee shall implement an Awareness and Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors Program. The Program will:

1. Educate students with:
    a. An age-appropriate and evidence-informed health and safety education curriculum that includes methods for how to report child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors to authorities, through policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*;

Information in policy 7:250, *Student Support Services*, about: (i) District counseling options, assistance, and intervention for students who are victims of or affected by sexual abuse, and (ii) community-based Children's Advocacy Centers and sexual assault crisis centers and how to access those serving the District.

2. Train District employees about child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors by January 31 of each school year with materials that include:

    a. A definition of prohibited grooming behaviors and employee-student boundary violations pursuant to policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*;

    b. Evidence-informed content on preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee-student boundary violations pursuant to policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; 5:100, *Staff Development Program*; and 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; and

c. How to report child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and/or employee-student boundary violations pursuant to policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.

3. Provide information to parents/guardians in student handbooks about the warning signs of child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee-student boundary violations with evidence-informed educational information that also includes:
    a. Assistance, referral, or resource information, including how to recognize grooming behaviors, appropriate relationships between District employees and students based upon policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, and how to prevent child sexual abuse from happening;

b. Methods for how to report child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and/or employee-student boundary violations to authorities; and
c. Available counseling and resources for children who are affected by sexual abuse, including both emotional and educational support for students affected by sexual abuse, so that the student can continue to succeed in school pursuant to policy 7:250*, Student Support Services*.

4. Provide parents/guardians of students in any of grades K through 8 with not less than five days' written notice before commencing any class or course providing instruction in recognizing and avoiding sexual abuse, as well as the opportunity to object in writing.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13, 5/22-85.5, 5/27-9.1a, and 5/27-13.2.
105 ILCS 110/3, Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act.
325 ILCS 5/, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.
720 ILCS 5/11-25, Criminal Code of 2012.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:250 (Student Support Services)

UPDATED: October 3, 2024