



NEBO SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: J - Students
POLICY TITLE: Child Abuse or Neglect
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1. PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

Child abuse and neglect are not normally single events but usually involve repeated events affecting the same child, growing more severe the longer the problem continues. The damage, both physical and psychological, is cumulative. The longer the offender's behavior continues unchecked, the greater the chance of serious and permanent disability to the child. School administrators, teachers, and other school district employees have an important role to play in the elimination of child abuse because they are in a unique position to observe children over extended periods of time on a daily basis. This reporting policy should help administrators, teachers, and other school district employees in understanding and fulfilling their legal responsibilities regarding child abuse.

2. REQUIRED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

- 2.1 Utah law requires that whenever any person, including any school employee, has **reason to believe** that a child has been subjected to incest, molestation, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in such, he/she shall immediately notify the nearest peace officer, law enforcement agency, or office of the Division of Child and Family Services. All school district personnel shall comply with the legal requirements as outlined in this policy.
- 2.2 It is not the responsibility of school administrators, teachers, or other school district employees to prove that the child has been abused or neglected, or to determine whether the child is in need of protection. Investigations are the responsibility of the Division of Child and Family Services. Investigation by school personnel prior to submitting a report shall not go beyond that necessary to support a reasonable belief that a reportable problem exists. School personnel shall refrain from interviewing the child or having contact with the suspected abuser.
- 2.3 School personnel shall cooperate with social service and law enforcement agency employees authorized to investigate reports of alleged child abuse and neglect, assisting as asked as members of interdisciplinary child protection teams in providing protective diagnostic, assessment, treatment, and coordination services.
- 2.4 Persons making reports or participating in good faith in an investigation of alleged child abuse or neglect are immune from any civil or criminal liability that otherwise might arise from those actions. (Utah Code Ann., §62A-4a-401, et seq.)
- 2.5 School administrators, teachers, school district employees, Division of Child and Family Services, and law enforcement personnel are required to preserve the anonymity of those making the initial report and any others involved in the subsequent investigation.

- 2.6** The District Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall distribute annually to all school employees copies of the District's procedures for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect and the District's Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form.
- 2.7** To determine whether or not there is reason to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred, professional school employees may (but are not required to) gather information only to the extent necessary to determine whether a reportable circumstance exists.
- 2.8 Interviews with the child or suspected abuser shall not be conducted by school administrators or school district employees.** Notes of voluntary or spontaneous statements by the child shall be made and given to the investigating agency. Interviews conducted by anyone other than the investigating agency could jeopardize proper handling of a child abuse or neglect case.
- 2.9** School administrators or other school district employees shall not contact the parents, relatives, friends, neighbors, etc. for the purpose of determining the cause of the injury and/or apparent neglect.
- 2.10** If there is reason to believe that a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect, a verbal report of the abuse or neglect shall be made **immediately** by the school employee to:
- 2.10.1** the school principal, or his/her designee; then to
 - 2.10.2** the appropriate legal authorities in accordance with the Nebo School District's Child Abuse and Neglect Protocol Handbook. The teacher or other school district employee is responsible to personally report the abuse or neglect to the proper legal authorities. The school principal should not report the abuse or neglect for the teacher or other school district employee, although the principal may be present when the report is made. When making the verbal report, always have the person receiving the report identify himself/herself. The notified person's name shall be entered on Nebo School District's Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form.
 - 2.10.3** Complete a Nebo School District's Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form within forty-eight (48) hours, and distribute as follows:
 - 2.10.3.1** one copy shall be put in a Child Abuse or Neglect file at the District's Student Service's office;
 - 2.10.3.2** one copy shall be placed in a separate file to be maintained by the school principal for all reported cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. The Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form shall not be placed in the child's educational file; and
 - 2.10.3.3** if the student is eligible for special education services, one copy shall be placed in a separate file to be maintained by the Special Education Department at the District office for all reported cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. The Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form shall not be placed in the child's special education file.

EXHIBITS

None

REFERENCES

Utah Code Ann., §62A-4a-401, et seq.

FORMS

Nebo School District Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form
Nebo School District School Liability Release Form
