

POLICY

Voorhees Township Board of Education

Section: Operations

8462. REPORTING POTENTIALLY MISSING OR ABUSED CHILDREN

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The Board of Education recognizes early detection of missing, abused, or neglected children is important in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of all children. In recognition of the importance of early detection of missing, abused, or neglected children, the Board of Education adopts this Policy pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:36-25. The Board provides this Policy for its employees, volunteers, or interns to provide for the early detection of missing, abused, or neglected children through notification of, reporting to, and cooperation with the appropriate law enforcement and child welfare authorities pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-25 and N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10.

Employees, volunteers, or interns working in the school district shall immediately notify designated child welfare authorities of incidents of alleged missing, abused, and/or neglected children. Reports of incidents of alleged missing, abused, or neglected children shall be reported to the New Jersey State Central Registry (SCR) at 1-877 NJ ABUSE. If the child is in immediate danger a call shall be placed to 911 as well as to the SCR.

The person having reason to believe that a child may be missing or may have been abused or neglected may, prior to notifying designated child welfare authorities, inform the Building Principal or designee if the action will not delay immediate notification. The person notifying designated child welfare authorities shall inform the Building Principal or designee of the notification, if such had not occurred prior to the notification. Notice to the Building Principal or designee need not be given when the person believes that such notice would likely endanger the reporter or pupil involved or when the person believes that such disclosure would likely result in retaliation against the pupil or in discrimination against the reporter with respect to his or her employment.

The Building Principal or designee upon being notified by a person having reason to believe that a child may be missing or may have been abused or neglected, must notify appropriate law enforcement authorities of incidents of potentially missing, abused, or neglected child situations. Notification to appropriate law enforcement authorities shall be made for all reports by employees, volunteers, or interns working in the school district. Confirmation by another person is not required for a school district employee, volunteer, or intern to report the suspected missing, abused, or neglected child situation.

School district officials will cooperate with designated child welfare and law enforcement authorities in all investigations of potentially missing, abused, or neglected children in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1(a)5.

The district designates the School Social Worker as the school district's liaison to designated child welfare authorities to act as the primary contact person between the school district and child welfare authorities with regard to general information sharing, the development of mutual training and other cooperative efforts. The district designates the School Social Worker as the school district's liaison to law enforcement authorities to act as the primary contact person between the school district and law enforcement authorities, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)1, consistent with the memorandum of understanding, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)13.

An employee, volunteer, or intern working in the school district who has been named as a suspect in a notification to child welfare and law enforcement authorities regarding a missing, abused, or neglected child situation shall be entitled to due process rights, including those rights defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1(a)9.

The School Social Worker shall provide training to school district employees, volunteers, and/or interns on the district's policy and procedures for reporting allegations of missing, abused, or neglected child situations. All new school district employees, volunteers, and/or interns shall receive the required information and training as part of their orientation.

There shall be no reprisal or retaliation against any person who, in good faith, reports or causes a report to be made of a potentially missing, abused, or neglected child situation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.13.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-24

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1

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1886 Hinds Road, Suite 1, Toms River, NJ 08753
ph: (732)255-1500 fax: (732)255-1502