

## **Child Abuse and Neglect - Duty to Report**

Pursuant to MCL 722.622(f), child abuse must be reported to the Department of Human Services (DHS) where the suspected perpetrator is the parent(s)/guardian(s), or any other person responsible for the child's health or welfare or by a teacher, a teacher's aide, or a member of the clergy.

Any school administrator, school counselor, or teacher of the District who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect will immediately report, or cause a report to be made, to the Department of Human Services.<sup>1</sup> School employees will not contact the child's family or any other persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect. It is not the responsibility of the school employees to determine or prove that the child has been abused or neglected.

### Access to Students on School Premises (Cf. 8140)

The building Principal is authorized to act in loco parentis to protect the interests of the student when a student is to be interviewed by DHS representatives on school premises. The District recognizes, however, that the DHS may, lawfully, interview a child alleged to have been abused without the presence of the building Principal or other school personnel. However, in appropriate cases, the Principal may request that he or she, or a designated representative, be present during the interview.

### Cooperation between School and Agencies

Elementary and secondary schools, DHS, and law enforcement agencies shall cooperate with each other in the investigation of reports of suspected child abuse or neglect. To the extent that safety and practical consideration allow, it is the preference of the District that law enforcement officers on school premises to investigate a report of suspected child abuse, or neglect, should not be in uniform.

Administrators shall make this District preference known to law enforcement officers and ask for their cooperation.

Approved: January 10, 2011

LEGAL REF: MCL 722.621-638; *Commonwealth v Allen*, 980 S.W. 2d 278 (Ky., 1998); *People v Beardsley*, 263 Mich App 408 (2004).

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<sup>1</sup> Reasonable Cause exists where the facts and circumstances within a person's knowledge and of which he/she has reasonably trustworthy information are sufficient to warrant a mandate of reasonable caution in the belief that abuse/neglect has or is occurring.