

8464 MISSING CHILDREN

The Board of Education directs the establishment and implementation of a program for the identification and reporting of children missing from the educational system.

Used in this policy, "parent" means the parent or parents or guardian having legal custody and control of a minor child.

The Superintendent shall develop and implement procedures to identify children who have been withdrawn from this district without enrollment in another school or school district or pupils who have been willfully or neglectfully removed from school by protracted absences without good cause. Children so identified shall be reported promptly to the Westfield Police Department. The Board authorizes the release of the child's name, age, gender, last known home address, and physical description and the parent's or legal guardian's name and work place, if known, to the Westfield Police Department. Reasonable attempts shall be made to determine the cause of a child's unauthorized absence and to remediate the cause to the extent possible within the school setting. The Superintendent shall report periodically to the Board the results of the program for the identification of children missing from the educational program.

The Westfield Police Department, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:17B-9.8b, must notify the Superintendent of a missing child, who is currently or was most recently enrolled in the school district, of the disappearance and provide the Superintendent with information concerning the identity of the missing child. The Westfield Police Department shall also notify the Superintendent if the child is located.

If the Superintendent is notified of a missing child by the Westfield Police Department, the Superintendent shall mark the child's school record. The mark will be clearly identifiable and removable so in the event a copy or information regarding the record is requested, the school district will be aware the record is that of a missing child. Once the Westfield Police Department notifies the Superintendent that the child has been located, the Superintendent, or designee, will remove the mark from the child's school record. If a copy of a school record is requested that has been "marked" in accordance with this Policy, the Superintendent, or designee, will remove the marking from only the copy of the school record to be provided

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to the requestor in accordance with Board Policy No. 8330, and without alerting the requestor to the fact that the record has been “marked”. After supplying a copy of or information regarding the “marked” record, the Superintendent will immediately report the inquiry or any knowledge as to the whereabouts of the missing child to the Westfield Police Department.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-24; 18A:36-25

N.J.S.A. 52A:17B-9.8b.

Approved: December 2, 2003

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The following procedures implement Policy No. 8464 directing the identification and reporting of children missing from the educational system, whether by abduction by persons other than the child's primary caretaker or by parental neglect of the responsibility to insure the child's attendance at school.

- A. Notification of Pupil Absences and Transfers
 - 1. Parents or legal guardians are requested to notify the school office whenever a child will be absent from a school session, prior to the deadlines established by Regulation No. 5200, ¶B1 and ¶B2.
 - 2. A parent or legal guardian who anticipates a child's future absence or anticipates that an absence will be prolonged is requested to notify the school in accordance with Regulation No. 5200, ¶B3.
 - 3. A parent or legal guardian who intends to withdraw a child from school shall be asked to designate the school or school district to which the child will be transferred, in accordance with Regulation No. 5130, ¶B2.

- B. Identification of Potentially Missing Children
 - 1. Teachers shall record and report attendance in accordance with Regulation No. 5200, ¶H.
 - 2. Teaching staff members shall be alert to parental neglect of the responsibility for the enrollment and attendance of children of school age. A teaching staff member who believes that a child has been removed from school by his or her parent or primary caretaker, however recent the removal, shall promptly report that belief to the Principal.

- C. Children Possibly Lost or Abducted
 - 1. The Principal shall daily compile a list of absent pupils and compare that list to the pupils for whom parental notification of absence has been received.

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2. The Principal/designee shall attempt to reach by telephone the parent or legal guardian of an absent pupil for whom notification of absence has not been received. Telephone calls will be made to the pupil's home and to the parent or legal guardian's place of work as indicated on the emergency notification form submitted by the parent or legal guardian.
3. The Principal shall consider the pupil's age, maturity, attendance record, and disciplinary history, academic record, and medical history and, if there is reason to suspect that the pupil may be lost or abducted, shall immediately notify the Westfield Police Department.
4. In the event the Principal cannot reach the parent or legal guardian, he or she shall promptly inform the Superintendent that the pupil may be missing.

D. Children Missing by Parental Neglect

1. The Principal shall attempt to determine the reason for the absence of any pupil absent five consecutive school days or more.
2. The Principal shall report a pupil who has been unaccountably absent five consecutive school days to the Westfield Police Department.
3. When a child has been formally withdrawn from the school district but an official request for the child's records has not been received within ten school days of the withdrawal during the school year or within thirty calendar days of the withdrawal at the end of the school year, the Principal shall report the child to the Westfield Police Department.

E. Report to Law Enforcement Officials

1. The report to the Westfield Police Department of an unaccountably absent child or a withdrawn child who has not entered another school system may include:
 - a. The child's name, age, gender, and physical description,
 - b. The child and parent or legal guardian's last known home address, and
 - c. The parent or legal guardian's name and work place, if known.
2. The Superintendent shall record in the child's permanent record in this district the date on which a child was reported in accordance with this regulation and the information released to the Westfield Police Department.

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3. The Principal and teaching staff members having knowledge of the child shall cooperate fully with the police in their efforts to locate the child.
 4. In the event a child believed to be missing is located, the Superintendent shall notify the police immediately.
- F. Report by Law Enforcement Officials
1. Westfield Police Department pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:17B-9.8b, shall notify the Superintendent of the school district where a missing child is currently or was most recently enrolled, of the disappearance and provide the Superintendent with information concerning the identity of the missing child. The Westfield Police Department shall also notify the Superintendent if the child is located.
 2. When the Superintendent is notified of a missing child by the Westfield Police Department, the Superintendent shall mark the child's school record. The mark will be a clearly, identifiable denotation so in the event a copy or information regarding the record is requested, the school district will be aware the record is that of a missing child. Once the Westfield Police Department notifies the Superintendent that the child has been located, the Superintendent, or designee, will remove the mark from the child's school record.
 3. If a copy of a "marked" school record is requested, the Superintendent or designee will supply a copy of the record to the requestor, in accordance with Policy No. 8330 (Pupil Records), without alerting the requestor to the fact that the record has been "marked" in accordance with the provisions governing access to pupil records.
 4. After supplying a copy of or information regarding the "marked" record, the Superintendent will immediately report the inquiry or any knowledge as to the whereabouts of the missing child to the Westfield Police Department.

In Effect: February 19, 2013