

2132 SCHOOL DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

Strategic Plan – 2016-2021

Goals

- ❖ Strengthen deeper learning for all students
- ❖ Engage and develop stakeholders
- ❖ Foster a culture of health and wellness
- ❖ Provide strong and sustainable financial resources

Beliefs

We believe excellence in education includes:

- ❖ A curriculum that has the breadth and depth to challenge all learners;
- ❖ An acceptance and demonstration of core values of mutual respect, responsibility, caring and integrity;
- ❖ An emphasis on understanding and appreciating cultural differences and similarities.

We believe our students learn best when:

- ❖ They are in an environment where they feel physically, emotionally and intellectually secure;
- ❖ They are appropriately motivated to achieve their greatest potential as individuals;
- ❖ They are provided access to a wide variety of opportunities, supported by a partnership of family, school, peers and community.

We believe the role of parents is:

- ❖ To provide for the physical and emotional needs of their children so that they come to school ready to learn;
- ❖ To be effective partners with the school by advocating for their children when appropriate and guiding their children to be their own best advocates as they advance through the school system;
- ❖ To teach their children through example to conduct themselves with integrity, honor and respect for others while achieving their personal best.

We believe the role of staff is:

- ❖ To be knowledgeable in their content area and highly skilled in instructional methods which engage all learners;
- ❖ To provide a safe and respectful environment that values learning;
- ❖ To continually pursue professional development that enhances instruction.

We believe the role of the community is:

- ❖ To support and promote a positive social and emotional environment for its citizens;
- ❖ To provide a safe and welcoming place for students to congregate or participate in organized events after school and on weekends;
- ❖ To partner financially and through in-kind services to support the education of our students.

Approved: November 21, 2000
Revised: December 10, 2013
First Reading: November 15, 2016
Second Reading: January 5, 2017

2415.30 TITLE I - EDUCATIONAL STABILITY
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

The Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), initiated protections for children in foster care that further enhanced the requirements of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections Act). These provisions require school districts to work with child welfare agencies to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care. New Jersey statutes support and implement Federal legislation and require New Jersey's child welfare agencies and school districts to collaborate and to keep children placed in foster care in the same school when their living placements change if remaining in that school is in the child's best interest. The educational stability of children in foster care is the joint responsibility of both the educational and child welfare systems.

The Superintendent or designee shall be designated as the Board of Education's point of contact person for all matters related to the educational stability for children in foster care. The point of contact person for the school district shall not be the same person designated as the school district liaison for the education of homeless children.

For the purpose of this Policy, "child welfare agency" shall be the New Jersey Department of Children and Families.

For the purpose of this Policy, "foster care" means twenty-four hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes.

For the purpose of this Policy, "school of origin" is the school district in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care or the school district of residence as per N.J.S.A. 30:4C-26 and N.J.S.A. 18A:7B-12.

A child in foster care shall remain in his/her school of origin if it is determined to be in the best interest of the child for the duration of time in foster care.

If a pupil attending the school district in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1 et seq. is placed in foster care, the school district contact person will collaborate with child welfare agencies to determine whether it is in the child's best interest to remain in the school district taking into consideration all factors relating to the child's best interest. These factors shall include the

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appropriateness of the current educational setting and proximity of placement (ESEA Section 1111(g)(1)(E)(i)). These factors may include, but are not limited to:

1. Preferences of the child;
2. Preferences of the child's parent(s) or educational decision maker(s);
3. The child's attachment to the school, including meaningful relationships with staff and peers;
4. The proximity of the resource family home to the child's present school;
5. The age and grade level of the child as it relates to the other best-interest factors;
6. The needs of the child, including social adjustment and well-being;
7. The child's performance, continuity of education, and engagement in the school the child presently attends;
8. The child's special education programming if the child is classified;
9. The point of time in the school year;
10. The child's permanency goal and likelihood of reunification;
11. The anticipated duration of the placement;
12. Placement of the child's sibling(s);
13. Influence of the school climate on the child, including safety;
14. The availability and quality of the services in the school to meet the child's educational and socio-emotional needs;
15. History of school transfers and how they have impacted the child;
16. How the length of the commute would impact the child, based on the child's developmental stage;

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17. Whether the child is a pupil with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) who is receiving special education and related services or a pupil with a disability under Section 504 who is receiving special education or related aids and services and, if so, the availability of those required services in a school other than the school of origin; and
18. Whether the child is an English language learner (ELL) and is receiving language services, and, if so, the availability of those required services in a school other than the school of origin, consistent with Title VI and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA).

The school district's contact person will discuss these factors and will make every effort to gather meaningful input and participation from the relevant parties, including appropriate school personnel, in the best-interest determination.

Eligible pupils with disabilities retain their right to receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. When making a best-interest determination regarding the educational placement of a pupil with a disability under IDEA and Section 504, the Board must ensure that all required special education and related services are provided in the least restrictive placement where the child's unique needs, as described in the pupil's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan, can be met. The school district will identify and assess all potential ELL pupils and provide all ELL pupils, including ELL pupils in foster care, with a language assistance program that is educationally sound and proven successful. When a best-interest determination is made for an ELL pupil in foster care, the Board of Education will comply with its obligations under Title VI and the EEOA.

To the extent feasible, a child shall remain in his/her school of origin until a final best-interest determination is made. The child welfare agency will notify the school district of origin of the child's school placement after collaboration with the Board of Education's point of contact person and after the child's best-interest determination has been made. If a change of school is recommended by the child welfare agency, the new school shall immediately contact the school of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records of the foster care child. The financial responsibility for the payment of tuition for a foster care child placed outside the school district of origin and attending school outside the school district of origin shall be determined by the Commissioner of Education in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18:7B-12 – Determination of District of Residence.

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A foster care child who has been placed in this district and exits foster care during the school year may be permitted to continue in this school district for the remainder of the school year.

In the event there is a disagreement regarding school placement for a child in foster care, the school district will comply with the legal requirements for resolving the dispute. A parent can appeal a best-interest determination whenever the child changes schools.

Children placed in foster care outside the school district of origin, attending a school in that district, will be provided transportation to and from school in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:27-6.1 et seq. and the Transportation Policy of that district. The district of origin is financially responsible for transportation costs to and from school.

Children placed in foster care outside the school district of origin, but remaining in a school within the school district of origin, shall receive transportation to and from school on a “cost-efficient” manner and in accordance with Section 475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act for the duration of the time the child is in foster care. The district of origin is financially responsible for transportation costs to and from school.

The cost of transportation shall not be considered when determining the best interest of the child.

Section 475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act provides guidance on “cost-effective” transportation as it relates to the cost of reasonable travel for foster care children placed outside the school district of origin to their school of origin indicating: the child may be dropped off at a bus stop just within the school district of origin to be transported to a school in the district of origin; the school district may offer a public transportation option; the foster care parents or other families may be willing to drive the child to school in the school district of origin; the school district may utilize pre-existing bus routes or stops close to the out-of-district foster care placement that cross school district boundaries; or the foster care child may be eligible for transportation under other Federal or State requirements.

In the event there is a disagreement regarding transportation for a child in foster care, the school district will comply with the New Jersey Department of Education requirements for resolving the dispute. The Board of Education shall provide or arrange for adequate and appropriate transportation for foster care children while any disputes are being resolved.

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In all cases regarding pupil data and records, the Board of Education will comply with all statutory requirements to protect pupil privacy, including Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and all other privacy requirements under Federal laws, State statutes, and administrative codes.

N.J.S.A. 18A:7B-12

N.J.S.A. 30:4C-26

New Jersey Department of Education Memorandum dated October 4, 2016 –

Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care

United States Departments of Education and Health and Human Services – Non-

Regulatory Guidance - Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster

Care – June 23, 2016

First Reading: November 15, 2016

Second Reading: January 5, 2017

Adopted:

3125.2 SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

The Board of Education will employ substitutes in order to ensure continuity in the instructional program and will approve a list of substitutes on an annual basis and additional approved substitutes will be added to the approved list throughout the school year. Substitute teachers will be employed from the substitute list recommended by the Superintendent or designee and approved by the Board. The Board shall also approve the substitute rate of pay.

All substitute teachers must possess a substitute credential issued by the New Jersey State Board of Examiners in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-7.1 et seq. All substitute teachers are required to undergo a criminal history record check in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et seq. and New Jersey Department of Education regulations and procedures for criminal history record checks. In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1b., a substitute teacher who is rehired annually by the Board shall only be required to undergo a criminal history record check as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et seq. upon initial employment, provided the substitute continues in the employ of at least one of the districts at which the substitute was employed within one year of the approval of the criminal history record check.

A substitute teacher shall follow the daily lesson plan provided by the regular teacher and, when that plan is exhausted or unavailable, the instructions of the Principal or designee. A substitute teacher may not plan or direct an instructional program except as expressly permitted by the Superintendent or designee.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1.1b. and N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-7.4(c), a vacant teaching position may only be filled by one or more individuals employed as substitute teachers and holding an instructional certificate of eligibility (CE), certificate of eligibility with advanced standing (CEAS), or standard certificate issued by the New Jersey State Board of Examiners with an endorsement within the scope of the subject being taught for no more than sixty instructional days in the same classroom per year. The sixty day limit may be extended if the Executive County Superintendent is notified of an extension by the school district which shall demonstrate:

1. The school district was unable to hire an appropriately certified teacher for the vacant position;
2. The school district is filling the position subject to the limitations in a local contract or N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-7.1; and

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3. Holders of an instructional CE or CEAS with an endorsement within the scope of the subject being taught meet the following provisions:
 - a. CE or CEAS holders obtain a provisional certificate;
 - b. CE or CEAS holders are enrolled in a district mentoring program upon obtaining a provisional certificate;
 - c. CE holders are accepted into a CE educator program and will begin coursework in the program's next available cohort.

In the event that one individual employed pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1.1b. is employed in the same position for more than sixty days, he/she will be employed under contract in order to insure continuity of instructional services and will be compensated at the appropriate experience and education step of the salary guide from the first day of service in that position. Any such contract offered will clearly state that employment is as substitute for a regular teaching staff member, and include no benefits beyond salary.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1.1c. and N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-7.4(b), a vacant teaching position may only be filled by one or more individuals employed as substitute teachers and holding an instructional CE, or a CEAS, or a standard certificate issued by the New Jersey State Board of Examiners with an endorsement not within the scope of the subject being taught for no more than forty instructional days in the same classroom per year. The Executive County Superintendent of Schools shall be notified by the Superintendent or designee if a holder of an instructional CE or CEAS substitutes for more than twenty instructional days in the same classroom.

Holders of a career and technical education substitute credential pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-7.5 shall be permitted to substitute for no more than forty instructional days in the same classroom per year in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-7.4(b)2.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1.1a. and N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-7.4(a), a vacant teaching position may only be filled by one or more individuals holding a substitute credential or holding an administrative or educational services certificate without an instructional CE, CEAS, or standard certificate issued by the New Jersey State Board of Education pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-38 for no more than twenty instructional days in the same classroom per year. The

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Commissioner of Education may grant an extension of up to an additional twenty school days upon written application from the school district demonstrating the district's inability to hire an appropriately certified teacher for the vacant position within the original twenty-day time limit.

N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et seq.; 18A:16-1.1a.; 18A:16-1.1b.;
18A:16-1.1c.; 18A:16-1.1d.

N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-7.1; 6A:9B-7.2; 6A:9B-7.3; 6A:9B-7.4;
6A:9B-7.5

First Reading: November 12, 2002
Approved: December 3, 2002
First Reading: December 6, 2016
Second Reading: January 5, 2017

3126 DISTRICT MENTORING PROGRAM

The Board of Education recognizes that all newly prepared teachers are required to serve their first two years of employment under provisional certification and in a district induction program designed to train and guide new teachers and to identify those teachers who qualify for standard certification.

The Board will approve a district mentoring plan for the induction of new teaching staff members and submit the plan to the Department of Education when required.

The goals of the district mentoring program shall be to enhance teacher knowledge of, and strategies related to, the standards adopted by the State of New Jersey to facilitate student achievement and growth; identify exemplary teaching skills and educational practices necessary to acquire and maintain excellence in teaching; and assist novice teachers in performing their duties and adjusting to the challenges of teaching. The Board of Education shall determine how each nontenured teacher in his or her first two years of employment shall be provided with supports as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.1(c). The Board shall provide an individual mentor to work one-on-one with a novice provisional teacher in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.1(d). The Superintendent shall oversee the mentor selection process and ensure the individual mentor meets the minimum requirements required in N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.2(a).

The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall develop the district mentoring plan in accordance with the requirements outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.3 as part of the school district's professional development plan (PDP) pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-4.4. The district mentoring plan shall include logistics for its implementation and describe the school district's responsibilities pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.1 et seq.

The Board of Education shall budget State funds appropriated for the novice teacher mentoring program in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.1(f). The Board shall ensure that State funds appropriated for this program shall supplement, and not supplant, any Federal, State or local funds already devoted to planning and implementing a novice teacher mentor program. The Board of Education shall ensure that State funds shall be used for one or more of the following: stipends for mentor teachers; the costs associated with release time; substitutes for mentor teachers and novice teachers; and professional development and training activities related to the program.

Evaluations for a provisional teacher shall be completed in accordance with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8.6.

N.J.S.A. 18A:26-2; 18A:26-2a
N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8.4; 6A:9B-8.5; 6A:9B-8.6;
6A:9C-5.1

First Reading: January 28, 2003
Approved: February 25, 2003
First Reading: December 6, 2016
Second Reading: January 5, 2017

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The Board of Education is authorized to employ a holder of a certificate of eligibility (CE) or certificate of eligibility with advanced standing (CEAS) after its mentoring plan has been approved pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.1.

A. Definitions (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-2.1)

1. “Certificate of Eligibility or CE” means a certificate with lifetime validity issued to persons who have completed degree, academic study, and applicable test requirements for certification. The CE permits the applicant to seek and accept employment in corresponding positions requiring certification.
2. “Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing or CEAS” means a certificate with a lifetime validity issued to persons who have completed degree, academic study, applicable test requirements, and CEAS educator preparation programs for certification. The CEAS permits the applicant to seek and accept employment in positions requiring certification.
3. “District mentoring program” means a program of induction and support for non-tenured teachers, including novice provisional teachers and experienced teachers new to a school district, designed to develop them into effective professionals within the school district.
4. “Endorsement” means an authorization allowing a certificate holder to teach one or more specific subject area(s) or to serve in one or more specific teaching staff role(s).
5. “Mentor teacher” means an experienced, certified New Jersey teacher who is assigned to provide support and guidance to a novice teacher. The mentor teacher must have ‘effective’ or ‘highly effective’ status.
6. “Novice teacher” means any teacher serving full- or part-time under a provisional certificate who has not yet been issued a standard instructional certificate in any endorsement area.

7. “Professional Standards for Teachers” means the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that all teachers must acquire to practice as teachers in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.3.
8. “Provisional teaching period” means a minimum of two years of full-time teaching under a provisional certificate required of all novice teachers before they are eligible to be recommended for a standard certificate.

B. Requirements for District Mentoring Program

1. The district shall develop a mentoring program to provide non-tenured teachers, including novice provisional teachers who hold a CE or CEAS, with an induction to the teaching profession and to the school district community through differentiated supports based on the teachers’ individual needs and to help them become effective professionals.
2. The goals of the district mentoring program shall be to enhance teacher knowledge of, and strategies related to, the standards adopted by the State of New Jersey to facilitate student achievement and growth; identify exemplary teaching skills and educational practices necessary to acquire and maintain excellence in teaching; and assist novice teachers in performing their duties and adjusting to the challenges of teaching.
3. The Board of Education shall determine how each non-tenured teacher in his or her first two years of employment shall be provided with the following supports:
 - a. Comprehensive induction to school district policies and procedures including, but not limited to, introduction to school district curricula, student assessment policies, and training on the school district’s evaluation rubric, including setting and assessing student learning through student growth objectives;

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- b. Individualized supports and activities, which shall be assigned at the school district's discretion and shall be aligned with the Professional Standards for Teachers at N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.3, the Standards for Professional Learning at N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3.3, and the school district's Commissioner-approved teaching practice instrument. The supports and activities shall be guided by:
 - (1) The non-tenured teacher's degree of preparation and experience;
 - (2) The non-tenured teacher's individual professional development plan (PDP) developed within thirty instructional days of the beginning of the teaching assignment pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-4.4(f);
 - (3) Areas of focus within the district mentoring plan; and
 - (4) Goals of the school and school district plans for professional development as described in N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-4.2.
4. The district shall provide an individual mentor to work one-to-one with a novice provisional teacher and ensure:
 - a. Each novice provisional teacher is assigned an individual mentor at the beginning of the contracted teaching assignment;
 - b. The mentor teacher provides observation and feedback, opportunities for the novice teacher to observe effective practice, and confidential guidance and support in accordance with the Professional Standards for Teachers, and guides the teacher in a self-assessment on the school district's Commissioner-approved teaching practice instrument;
 - c. The one-to-one mentoring includes planned, in-person contact time between the mentor teacher and the novice provisional teacher holding a CE or CEAS over the course of the academic year, or proportionally longer if the novice provisional teacher holds a part-time teaching assignment;
 - d. The mentor teacher and the novice provisional teacher holding a CEAS meet at least once per week for the first four weeks of the teaching assignment;

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- e. The mentor teacher and the novice provisional teacher holding a CE meet at least once per week for the first eight weeks of the teaching assignment:
 - (1) The one-to-one mentoring shall support the novice provisional teacher in achieving the curricular objectives of the formal instructional program in which the novice provisional teacher holding a CE is enrolled.
 - f. All contact time between the mentor teacher and the novice provisional teacher shall be recorded in a log, developed as part of the district mentoring plan, submitted to the Superintendent or designee, and maintained within the school district.
5. All novice provisional teachers whose positions require possession of instructional certificates pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:26-2 and N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-5.1 shall comply with the district mentoring program requirements.
6. The district shall budget State funds appropriated for the novice teacher mentoring program.
- a. Subject to the availability of funds, the Department of Education shall appropriate State funds based on the number of novice teachers employed each year by the Board of Education.
 - b. The Board of Education shall ensure State funds appropriated for this program supplement, and not supplant, Federal, State, or local funds already devoted to planning and implementing a novice teacher mentor program.
 - c. The Board of Education shall ensure State funds are used for one or more of the following:
 - (1) Stipends for mentor teachers;
 - (2) The costs associated with release time;

- (3) Substitutes for mentor and novice teachers; and
 - (4) Professional development and training activities related to the program.
- d. If no State funds are available to pay the costs of mentoring fees, candidates who are required to complete a provisional period of teaching to obtain standard certification shall be responsible for payment of mentoring fees during the first provisional year. The Board may, at its discretion, pay all or part of the mentoring fees.
7. The school district's administrative office shall oversee the payment of mentors. Payment shall not be conferred directly from provisional novice teacher to mentor.

C. Mentor requirements

- 1. The Superintendent shall oversee the mentor selection process and ensure the individual mentor of a novice provisional teacher meets the following minimum requirements:
 - a. Holds an instructional certificate and, when possible, is certified in the subject area in which the novice provisional teacher is working;
 - b. Has at least three years of experience and has taught full-time for at least two years within the last five years;
 - c. Does not serve as the mentee's direct supervisor nor conduct evaluations of teachers;
 - d. Demonstrates a record of success in the classroom with a summative rating of 'effective' or 'highly effective', pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:10
 - e. Understands the social and workplace norms of the school district and the community it serves;

- f. Understands the resources and opportunities available in the school district and is able to act as a referral source to the novice provisional teacher; and
- g. Completes a comprehensive mentor training program with a curriculum that includes, at a minimum, training on the school district's teaching evaluation rubric and practice instrument, Professional Standards for Teachers, standards adopted by the State of New Jersey, classroom observation skills, facilitating adult learning, and leading reflective conversations about teaching practice.

D. District Mentoring Plan

- 1. The Superintendent or designee shall develop a district mentoring plan as part of the school district's PDP pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-4.4. The district mentoring plan shall include logistics for its implementation and describe the school district's responsibilities pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.
 - a. The Superintendent shall submit the district mentoring plan to the Board of Education for review of its fiscal impact.
 - b. The Superintendent or designee shall share the district mentoring plan with each school improvement panel, which shall oversee the school-level implementation of the district mentoring plan and shall communicate the plan to all non-tenured teachers and their mentors.
 - c. The Superintendent or designee annually shall review the plan and revise it, as necessary, based on feedback from mentor logs, each school improvement panel, and data on teacher and student performance.

In Effect: February 25, 2003

Revised:

3310 ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Recognizing that respect for facts and an impartial search for truth is inherent in a democracy, it is the policy of the Westfield Public Schools to encourage unbiased and professionally directed study of controversial issues when such issues arise and relate directly to the course curriculum.

It is recognized that the application of the principle of academic freedom in the Westfield School System involves considerations which are not equally present in college or university. The teachers should take into account the age of their pupils and the need for guidance and help in studying the issues and arriving at balanced views. Additionally, the teachers must always respect the curriculum, students, administration and community.

First Reading: January 28, 2003
Approved: February 25, 2003
First Reading: December 6, 2016
Second Reading: January 5, 2017

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8462 CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

The Board of Education is concerned with the physical and mental well-being of the children of this district and recognizes the importance of early identification in halting child abuse and/or neglect. The Board will cooperate with state government and child welfare authorities in the identification and reporting of cases of child abuse and/or neglect in accordance with law.

School personnel, compensated and uncompensated (volunteer) having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse and/or neglect or acts of child abuse and/or neglect shall immediately notify child welfare authorities. School personnel reporting such abuse and/or neglect shall inform the school Principal or his/her designee of the report after the child welfare authorities' referral has been made. However, notice to the Principal or designee need not be given when the person believes that such notice would likely endanger the referrer or child(ren) involved or when the person believes that such disclosure would likely result in retaliation against the child or in discrimination against the referrer with respect to his/her employment.

The Superintendent or designee will notify local law enforcement officials of a potential missing or abused or neglected student in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-25 and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1(a)3. The Superintendent or designee will be the primary contact person between the school district and law enforcement authorities, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.29(b)1, consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)13.

The Board of Education and administration assure all school personnel there will be no employment discrimination in regards to compensation, hire, tenure or terms, conditions or privileges of employment upon making a good faith report or causing such report.

The Superintendent shall establish a child welfare authorities' liaison to facilitate communications and cooperation. The Superintendent or designee will provide for the annual delivery of information and in-service training of school personnel regarding child abuse and/or neglect occurrences. The Board and administration will cooperate with child welfare authorities to investigate reports and provide staff to comfort and support the child(ren) during interviews and investigations with child welfare authorities. The Superintendent or designee will ensure that information regarding child abuse and/or neglect and its prevention is incorporated into the district's health education program in accordance with the consultation procedures set forth in Policy No. 2422. The Board and administration will permit child welfare authorities to remove pupils from school during the course of the day to protect the child(ren) and cooperate to relocate child(ren) to another school if necessary.

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The Superintendent or designee will release, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-19, all pupil records of the child(ren) under investigation that are deemed to be relevant to the assessment or treatment of child abuse and/or neglect. School district records of child abuse and/or neglect shall be kept confidential and disclosed only as prescribed by law.

Any employee's act of unbecoming conduct in the treatment of children, including alleged acts of child abuse and/or neglect reported to child welfare authorities, shall be promptly reported to the Principal who shall immediately inform the Superintendent and institute an investigation. The Superintendent may temporarily reassign or, with the concurrence of the Board President, suspend the employee without loss of pay pending investigation.

Information regarding allegations of child abuse and/or neglect reported to, investigated and reported upon by child welfare authorities about a school employee shall be confidential and may be disclosed only as required in order to cooperate with child welfare authorities' investigations or by court order. These records shall be maintained in a secure place and be accessible to the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

The Board will provide due process rights to school personnel who have been reassigned or suspended in accordance with statutes. Temporary reassignment or suspension of school personnel alleged to have committed an act of child abuse and/or neglect shall occur if there is reasonable cause to believe the life or health of the alleged victim or other children is in imminent danger due to continued contact between the personnel and the child(ren). All records shall be removed from the school staff's personnel file if the school district receives official notice from child welfare authorities that the allegation was unfounded. An unfounded allegation shall not be used against the employee for any purpose relating to employment.

School personnel, compensated and uncompensated (volunteer) with reasonable cause to suspect or believe a student has attempted or completed suicide shall report the information to the Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, in a form and manner prescribed by the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services pursuant to N.J.S.A 30:9A-24.a.

The Superintendent shall develop regulations for the reporting of child abuse and/or neglect and for cooperation with child welfare authorities in child abuse and/or neglect investigations.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-24; 18A36-25 et seq.
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1.

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R 8462 Child Abuse and/or Neglect

A. Definition

“Child abuse” means the infliction of harm, physical, mental, or emotional, on a child under the age of eighteen by a person who has control over the child, even temporarily, and an opportunity to repeat the abusive acts. Neglect includes negligence and the failure to respond to a child’s basic needs as well as deliberate, willfully abusive acts N.J.S.A. 18A:36-24 and 18A:36-25. An abused and/or neglected child as defined by law is a child under the age of eighteen years whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s), or other person having his/her custody or control:

1. Inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon such child physical injury by other than accidental means which causes or creates a substantial risk of death, or serious or protracted disfigurement, or protracted impairment of physical or emotional health or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ;
2. Creates or allows to be created a substantial or ongoing risk of physical injury to the child by other than accidental means which would be likely to cause death or serious protracted disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ; or
3. Commits or allows to be committed an act of sexual abuse against the child;
4. Or a child whose physical, mental, or emotional condition has been impaired or is in imminent danger of becoming impaired as the result of the failure of his parent/legal guardian, or such other person having his custody and control, to exercise a minimum degree of care (1) in supplying the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, medical or surgical care though financially able to do so or though offered financial or other reasonable means to do so or (2) in providing the child the proper supervision or guardianship, by unreasonably inflicting or allowing to be inflicted harm, or substantial risk thereof, including the infliction of excessive corporal punishment or using excessive physical restraint under circumstances which do not indicate that the child’s behavior is harmful to himself, others or property; or by any other act of similarly serious nature requiring the aid of the court;
5. Or a child who has been willfully abandoned by his parent/legal guardian, or such other person having his/her custody and control.

B. Indications of Child Abuse and/or Neglect

1. All school district compensated and uncompensated (volunteer) personnel, including teaching staff members, support staff members, and unpaid volunteers, are charged by law with the responsibility for reporting suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. The suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect may be based on the complaints of the child or on the direct observations of the employee. A person should suspect child abuse and/or neglect when certain conditions appear to be present. The conditions may be, but are not limited to, whenever:
 - a. There is evidence of physical injury to a pupil not likely to have been caused by an accident, regardless of the pupil's explanation of the injury;
 - b. A pupil complains of having been injured or having been sexually molested, with or without external signs of physical injury;
 - c. A pupil appears to be malnourished;
 - d. A pupil's general condition indicates a persistent want of care, such as clothing inadequate for the weather, inadequate hygiene, lack of sleep, decayed and broken teeth, and the like;
 - e. A pupil complains of or indicates by other means that he/she has been subjected to threats or emotional abuse;
 - f. A pupil is excessively apprehensive, fearful, withdrawn, or aggressive;
 - g. A pupil is afraid to go home after school or arrives to school unreasonably early;
 - h. A parent or the caretaker of a child admits having abused the child;
 - i. The removal from school by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), or other person having custody and control of the child that may be an indicator of additional grievous abuses; or
 - j. School district personnel have any other reason to believe that a child has been subject to child abuse and/or neglect, to include but not limited to, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, educational abuse, and educational neglect.

2. The employee should not wait to assemble corroborating evidence of child abuse and/or neglect. The observations and/or complaints of the pupil that gave rise to the reasonable belief that child abuse and/or neglect may have occurred are sufficient to warrant reporting the incident or incidents to child welfare authorities for investigation and remediation by that agency.

C. Reporting Child Abuse and/or Neglect

1. Whenever an employee has reason to believe that a pupil of this district has been subjected to child abuse and/or neglect or acts of child abuse and/or neglect, regardless of the identity of the suspected abuser, the employee shall immediately report that information to the New Jersey State Central Registry at (1-877-NJABUSE (652-2873) or to any other telephone number designed by the appropriate child welfare authorities. If the child is in immediate danger the employee shall call 911.

Whenever referring a case to child welfare authorities, the school referrer shall provide, whenever possible, the following information:

- a. The child's name, age, grade, and gender;
 - b. The name and address of the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or other person having custody and control (such as a foster parent);
 - c. A description of the child's condition, including any available information concerning current or previous injuries, abuse, or maltreatment and including evidence of previous injuries;
 - d. The nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse, or maltreatment; and
 - e. Any other pertinent information that the employee believes may be relevant with respect to the child abuse and/or neglect and to the identity of the alleged perpetrator.
2. The person who has reported a case of possible child abuse and/or neglect to child welfare authorities shall promptly inform the Principal of the school in which the child is enrolled, unless the employee has reason to believe that such disclosure to the Principal would be likely to:
 - a. Endanger the employee or the child;
 - b. Result in retaliation against the child; or
 - c. Result in discrimination against the referrer with respect to his/her employment.
 3. A pupil whose injuries or physical condition require immediate medical attention shall be reported promptly to the school nurse, in accordance with Policy No. 8441(Care of Injured and Ill Persons).

D. Notification to Law Enforcement

1. The Principal or other designated school official(s) 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.
2. Notification procedures to child welfare authorities and law enforcement authorities regarding alleged incidents of missing, abused, or neglected children shall be consistent with the Memorandum of Agreement between education and law enforcement authorities.

E. Cooperation with the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) and Law Enforcement Authorities

1. The Board of Education and all district personnel will fully cooperate with agents of child welfare authorities and law enforcement authorities in an investigation of child abuse and/or neglect that has occurred at any time outside or within the confines of the school or during school-related functions.
2. The child welfare authorities and law enforcement investigators will be permitted to interview the child in the presence of the Principal or a person designated by the Principal. If the child is intimidated by the Principal or his/her designee, the child may be accompanied during the interview by a staff member whom he/she feels will be supportive. The accompanying staff member will give comfort to the child but will not participate in the investigation.
3. School administrators will cooperate with child welfare authorities and law enforcement in scheduling interviews with school personnel who may have information relevant to the investigation.
4. The custodian of school records shall release, in accordance with law, all pupil records of the child(ren) under investigation that are deemed to be relevant to the assessment or treatment of child abuse and/or neglect.
5. The Superintendent or designee shall maintain, secure, and release all confidential information about child abuse and/or neglect only cases in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-19.
 - a. Information regarding child abuse and/or neglect reported to, investigated and reported upon by child welfare authorities about a school employee shall be considered confidential and may be disclosed only as required in order to cooperate with child welfare authorities' investigations or by court order.

- b. Records pertaining to such information shall be maintained in a secure location separate from other employee personnel records and accessible only to the district chief school administrator or his/her designee.
6. School employees shall regard as confidential all information about a child abuse and/or neglect investigation remediation.
7. School Principals will permit agents of child welfare authorities to remove pupils from school during the school day when removal is necessary to protect the child or to take the child to a service provider, on presentation of appropriate authorization.
8. School Principals will cooperate with child welfare authorities when that agency deems that it is necessary to remove the child from his/her home for proper care and protection and when such removal results in the transfer of the child to a school other than the one in which he/she was enrolled.
9. The Superintendent will provide for a district liaison with child welfare authorities who will facilitate communication and cooperation between the district and child welfare authorities and act as primary contact person between the schools and child welfare authorities with regard to general information sharing and development of mutual training and other cooperative efforts. The district liaison will assist the administration in developing employee orientation programs and annual in-service programs to all school staff concerning child abuse and/or neglect. The district liaison will receive child welfare authorities' findings at each stage of the investigation and will recommend to the Superintendent such action that may be necessary and appropriate.
10. The Superintendent or designee will provide due process rights to school personnel who have been reassigned or suspended in accordance with law. Temporary reassignment or suspension of school personnel alleged to have committed an act of child abuse and/or neglect shall occur if there is reasonable cause to believe that the life or the health of the alleged victim or other children is in imminent danger due to continued contact between the school personnel and a child.

The Superintendent or designee will remove from the employee's personnel records all references to a report to child welfare authorities and/or official notice from child welfare authorities of child abuse and/or neglect regarding a school district employee, immediately following the receipt of notice from child welfare authorities that the allegation was unfounded. Such unfounded report by child welfare authorities shall not be used against the employee for any purpose relating to their employment.