

CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION PREVENTION

Child abuse, neglect and exploitation are violations of children's human rights and an obstacle to their educational development. The board directs that staff shall be alert for any evidence of such abuse, neglect or exploitation. For purposes of this policy, "child abuse, neglect or exploitation" shall mean:

- A. Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing death, disfigurement, skin bruising, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function.
- B. Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning.
- C. Committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child as defined in the criminal code, or intentionally touching, either directly or through the clothing, the genitals, anus or breasts of a child for other than hygiene, child care or health care purposes.
- D. Committing acts which are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain or mental suffering.
- E. Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child as defined by the criminal code.
- F. Failing to provide food, shelter, clothing, supervision or health care necessary to a child's health or safety.
- G. Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury to, or creating a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child.
- H. Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of the preceding actions.

Child abuse can include abuse by another minor and so may be included in incidents of student misconduct.

When feasible, the district will provide community education programs for prospective parents, foster parents and adoptive parents on parenting skills and on the problems of child abuse and methods to avoid child abuse situations. The district shall also encourage staff to participate in in-service programs that deal with the issues surrounding child abuse.

The superintendent shall develop reporting procedures, including sample indicators of abuse and neglect, and shall disseminate the procedures to all staff. The purpose is to identify and report as soon as possible to the proper authorities all evidence of child abuse or neglect.

Professional staff are legally responsible for reporting all suspected cases of child abuse and neglect, and all staff are required to by the district. Under state law staff are free from liability for reporting instances of abuse or neglect and professional staff are criminally liable for failure to do so.

Staff need not verify that a child has in fact been abused or neglected. Any conditions or information that may reasonably be related to abuse or neglect should be reported. Legal authorities have the responsibility for investigating each case and taking such action as is appropriate under the circumstances.

Cross References: Board Policy 4310

Relations with the Law Enforcement and
Child Protective Agencies

Legal References: RCW 13.34.300

Failure to cause juvenile to attend school
as evidence under neglect petition

26.44.020

Child abuse — Definitions

26.44.030

Reports — Duty and authority to make
— Duty of receiving agency

28A.620.010

Community education provisions —
Purposes

28A.620.020

Community education provisions —
Restrictions

43.43.830(6)

Background checks — Access to
children or vulnerable persons

WAC 388-15-130(3)

Definition of child abuse, neglect or
exploitation

AGO 1987, No. 9

Children — Child Abuse — Reporting
by School Officials — Alleged
Abuse by Student

Management Resources:

Policy News, June 1999

23% of districts out-of-compliance on
child abuse policies

Adoption Date: July 2005
Starbuck School District #35