

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

I. Board Philosophy

The Board of Education advocates children as their top priority and therefore condemns child abuse and neglect.

Maryland law requires that every health practitioner, educator, human services worker, or police officer who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect shall immediately report to the local department of social services or appropriate law enforcement agency. The report, in both oral and written form, shall be made as soon as reasonably possible, but in any case, the written report must be made within 48 hours of the suspicion of possible abuse to the local department of social services and the local State's Attorney. Maryland law also requires that every health practitioner, educator, human services worker, or police officer who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to neglect shall immediately report to the local department of social services. The report, in both oral and written form, shall be made within 48 hours of the suspicion of possible neglect to the local department of social services.

Further, any person other than a health practitioner, educator, social worker, or police officer, including any other employee of the local school system, volunteers, student teachers, and interns in the local school system who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, shall immediately report to the local department of social services or the appropriate law enforcement agency as prescribed in the above paragraph.

II. The Board directs the Superintendent to develop regulations to ensure:

- A. All employees, volunteers, student teachers and interns in the school system are informed of the statutory requirement to report suspected child physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, and to inform employees and volunteers of their immunity from civil liability or criminal penalty for reporting.
- B. Procedures are established to be used by all employees and volunteers of the school system in making oral and written reports to the local department of social services/law enforcement agency for suspected cases of child physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect.