

## 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 will be alert for any evidence of such abuse, neglect or exploitation. For purposes of this policy, "child abuse, neglect or exploitation" will 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; or
- I. Any other instances of similar harmfulness toward children.

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

The superintendent will develop child abuse reporting procedures and a schedule for the training of staff. The reporting procedures will include sample indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and will be disseminated to staff. The purpose is to identify and report as soon as possible to the proper authorities all evidence of such misconduct.

Staff who have knowledge or reasonable cause to believe that a student has been a victim of child abuse, neglect or exploitation by any person, adult or another child, must report such misconduct, or cause a report to be made, within 48 hours of the suspicion to CPS and/or the police.

- If immediate action is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student, staff should make a report to both CPS and 911.
- If immediate action is not necessary to protect the health or safety of the student, staff should make a report to CPS but not 911.

Under state law, staff are free from liability for good-faith reporting of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation, and may be criminally liable for failure to report where there is reasonable cause to believe that such misconduct has occurred.

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

In conducting an investigation of alleged child abuse, neglect or exploitation, CPS and/or law enforcement authorities may interview children on school premises, consistent with the constraints of

law and District procedures, and shall have access to all relevant records of the child maintained by the District except as may be limited by the requirements of federal privacy law.

The superintendent will establish procedures governing interviews of students at school by CPS and/or law enforcement authorities.

Cross References:	Board Policy 4310	Relations with the Law Enforcement, Child Protective Agencies, and the County Health Department
Legal References:	RCW 13.34.300	Relevance of failure to cause juvenile to attend school as evidence to neglect petition
	26.44.020	Child abuse — Definitions
	26.44.030	Reports — Duty and authority to make — Duty of receiving agency — Duty to notify — Case planning and consultation — Penalty for unauthorized exchange of information — Filing dependency petitions — Investigations — Interviews of children — Records — Risk assessment process
	28A.320.160	Alleged sexual misconduct by school employee — Parental notification — Information on public records act
	28A.400.317	Physical abuse or sexual misconduct by school employees — Duty to Report — Training
	28A.620.010	Community education provisions — Purposes
	28A.620.020	Community education provisions — Restrictions Classes on parenting skills and child abuse prevention encouraged
	43.43.830	Background checks — Access to children or vulnerable persons
	WAC 388-15-009	What is child abuse or neglect?
	AGO 1987, No. 9	Children — Child Abuse — Reporting by School Officials — Alleged Abuse by Student

Management Resources:

<i>Policy News</i> , April 2010	Child Abuse Interviews at Schools
<i>Policy News</i> , February 2007	Physical Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Notice Requirements
<i>Policy News</i> , June 1999	23% of districts out-of-compliance on child abuse policies

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**Bellevue School District**  
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