

## School District of Rib Lake

454 Rule

### REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Reports of suspected or threatened child abuse or neglect shall be made immediately by phone or personally to the Taylor County Social/Human Services Department – Child Protective Services 715-748-3332. If a report to that department is not possible, or if the person making the report suspects that the health or safety of a child is in immediate danger and wishes to request an immediate investigation, the school employee should make the child abuse or neglect report to the Taylor County Sheriff's Department 715-748-2200 or the Rib Lake Police Department 715-427-5633.

School employees may consult with student services staff prior to making a report but may not delay the report beyond the time the student leaves the supervision of school staff on the day that the suspicion of abuse or neglect or threatened abuse or neglect arises. It is not the responsibility of school personnel to obtain definitive proof that abuse or neglect has occurred, and school personnel shall not further investigate a child abuse or neglect situation following the making of a report, except in cases where an administrator has a responsibility to conduct an independent internal investigation into alleged misconduct by a student, school employee, agent of the District, etc. For example, school personnel shall not contact for investigative purposes a caregiver, or other person in the community, who is suspected of or who potentially may be responsible for the suspected abuse or neglect.

When making a child abuse or neglect report, the reporter should be prepared to provide as much of the following information as possible:

- a. The employee's name, phone number, relationship to the child, and school phone number.
- b. The name, home address, and age of the child suspected of or threatened with being abused or neglected.
- c. The name, home address(es) and workplace(s) of the child's parent(s) or guardian.
- d. The names and ages of the child's siblings, if relevant to the report.
- e. A description of why he/she believes the child has been abused or neglected or has been threatened with abuse or neglect, statements allegedly made by the child to others, and any relevant circumstances or conditions in the home or elsewhere of which the reporter is aware.

If the child abuse/neglect report involves a child who is a participant in the state's address confidentiality program (the Safe at Home program), the reporter should keep in mind the confidentiality requirements for that program and inform social/human services or law enforcement officials that the child is a Safe at Home participant and that he/she is prohibited from releasing any actual address information related to the child. Social/human services can ask law enforcement officials to request a release of participant information directly from the Safe at Home program.

3. In all cases, the building principal or his/her designee shall be informed that a child abuse or neglect report has been or will be filed. The building principal or designee shall support the employee in their action(s) and shall not attempt to delay, modify or prevent any report of suspected child abuse or neglect. Informing the principal or designee of any suspected or threatened abuse or neglect does not eliminate a school employee's independent responsibility to make a report to county child protective services or the appropriate law enforcement agency.
4. The county agency charged with responsibility for investigating child abuse or neglect reports may generally contact, observe or interview a child at any location, including school, to determine if the child is in need of protection or services. School personnel may not require parent notification before allowing such interviews to take place at school when the department or agency is exercising its investigative authority under state law. County child protective services or law enforcement personnel may request the cooperation of a school teacher, counselor or other person whose presence would aid in the interview process. They may also, in the exercise of professional judgment and in accordance with department standards, exclude school personnel from the interview.
5. School personnel shall keep in mind state and federal laws and school district procedures regarding the confidentiality of student records when disclosing information from a student's school records to child protective services or law enforcement personnel. Student records may be disclosed under state and federal laws to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other individuals. School personnel should take into consideration the totality of the circumstances pertaining to the threat to health or safety. When student record information is disclosed in this situation, school personnel shall record: (1) the threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals that formed the basis for the decision; and (2) the parties to whom the student record information was disclosed.
6. To provide for compliance with state law requirements, school personnel should keep child abuse and neglect reports and any information obtained from child protective services or law enforcement personnel regarding a child abuse or neglect report in a confidential file that is separate from the student's regular school records file(s). Such information can only be disclosed to the persons and for the purposes specified by law.

First Reading: 12/9/2021

Adopted: 1/13/2022