

AP 3304: Child Abuse and Neglect

Background

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to support a comprehensive, coordinated, and collaborative approach for responding to child abuse and neglect by:

- Providing child abuse and neglect prevention programs to students;
- Providing employees and other persons working in schools with direction and training on their legal obligation to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the following:
 - A child welfare worker under the [Child, Family and Community Service Act](#), when they have reason to believe that a child may be abused, neglected and/or in need of protection for any reason;
 - The police, when the child is in immediate danger; and,
 - School District Employees.
- Requiring school officials to investigate and/or report to the police any allegations of child abuse and neglect involving current and former District employees, volunteers or contract service providers;
- Establishing a child abuse and neglect reporting and investigation protocol with other responsible agencies in order to identify the roles and responsibilities of school officials and personnel from other agencies in responding to allegations of child abuse and neglect; and,
- Providing assistance to survivors of child abuse and neglect through counselling services and referrals to other agencies, as appropriate.

Procedures

1. Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect

- 1.1. The descriptions of physical abuse, emotional abuse, emotional harm, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and neglect contained in the [Child, Family and Community Service Act](#) are to be applied for the purposes of this administrative procedure. Child abuse and neglect can take the form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse; sexual exploitation; and/or parental neglect.

2. Reporting an Investigation

- 2.1. The District acknowledges that responses to reports of child abuse and neglect may involve District employees, child welfare agencies and law enforcement agencies. Reports shall be made through the Ministry of Children and Family Development Centralized Screening toll-free number 1-800-663-9122.

- 2.2. The District supports a coordinated and collaborative response to reports of child abuse and neglect between the District, Police, the Ministry of Children and Family Development and delegated Aboriginal agencies in BC. All District employees must understand and respect their legal obligation to report child abuse and neglect to a child welfare worker where they have reason to believe that a child is in need of **protection** as defined in the [Child, Family and Community Service Act](#). They also need to comply with their reporting obligations, as identified in the aforementioned interagency protocol.
 - 2.3. School leaders and employees in positions of trust must also understand their role in coordinating with responsible agencies and in investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect against employees.
3. Respecting the Rights of Accused Individuals
 - 3.1. The District acknowledges that individuals under investigation regarding allegations of child abuse and neglect may have contractual or other legal rights during the investigative process. District investigations will be conducted in a manner that is respectful of these rights.
4. Training and Education Programs
 - 4.1. Annually, supervisors shall review the District procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect with all school and district employees. This includes how to recognize signs of child abuse and neglect, how to respond to reports of child abuse and neglect and duty of care.
 - 4.2. The Superintendent will ensure that child abuse prevention programs are provided to students, in accordance with the Ministry of Education and Child Care's curriculum.