



Purpose

North Star Academy (the "School") takes seriously the legal responsibility of its personnel to protect the physical and psychological well-being of its students. We believe that the School's personnel have an important role to play in the elimination of child abuse because they are in a unique position to observe children over extended periods of time on a daily basis.

Utah law requires that whenever any person, including any school employee, contracted or temporary employee, or volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to incest, molestation, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, he/she shall immediately notify the nearest peace officer, law enforcement agency, or the Division of Child Family Service ("DCFS"). The law provides serious penalties for failure to fulfill one's duty to report.

This policy should help the School's personnel to understand and fulfill their legal responsibilities concerning child abuse.

Policy

1. If a School employee ***has reason to believe*** that a child may have been subjected to incest, molestation, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in such, the employee shall immediately make an oral report to the nearest peace officer, law enforcement agency or DCFS and to the School's Principal.
 - a. The oral report may be made with the Principal present, but the person making the report must be present.
 - b. The reporting employee must record the name of the individual and the agency contacted to make the required report.
 - c. The reporting employee must complete and provide a copy of the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Form to the Principal within twenty four (24) hours. The Principal will keep the form in a separate file, and it shall not be placed in the student's permanent file. The form should also be sent to the agency to which the oral report was given.

d. The Principal will preserve the anonymity of the person making the report and any others involved in any investigation.

2. To determine whether or not there is **reason to believe** that abuse or neglect has occurred, school employees may (but are not required to) gather information only to the extent necessary to determine whether a reportable circumstance exists.

a. Investigations by staff prior to submitting a report shall not go beyond what is minimally necessary to support a reasonable belief that a reportable problem exists.

b. It is not the responsibility of the Principal or any other school employees to prove who the abuser is or that the child has been abused or neglected, or to determine whether the child is in need of protection.

c. School employees shall not contact the parents, relatives, friends, neighbors, etc. for the purpose of determining the cause of the injury and/or apparent neglect.

d. School employees shall not conduct interviews with the child or contact the suspected abuser.

e. Notes of voluntary or spontaneous statements by the child shall be given to the investigational agency.

3. Investigations of reports of abuse for children seventeen (17) years of age and younger are the responsibility of DCFS.

a. School employees shall not contact the child's parents, relatives, friends, neighbors, etc. for the purpose of determining the cause of the injury and/or apparent neglect.

b. The Principal may provide the child's parents with a basic notification of the alleged incident and that a report has been made to DCFS/law enforcement. The parents should then be told that they will receive any/all additional information about the investigation from DCFS.

c. If school officials are contacted by parents about child abuse reports, school personnel shall not confirm or deny that a contact or investigation is taking place. A school employee should refer the caller to law enforcement or DCFS.

d. School officials shall cooperate with DCFS and law enforcement employees authorized to investigate reports of alleged child abuse and neglect.

4. If the suspected perpetrator of child abuse or neglect is a School employee, the Principal shall immediately report the allegation to the Utah State Office of Education.

Steps shall be taken to assure that further abuse or neglect is prevented by the suspected perpetrator.

5. Persons making reports or participating in good faith in an investigation of alleged child abuse or neglect are immune from any civil or criminal liability that otherwise might arise from those actions.

7. The Principal shall provide each School employee with annual training and/or the written Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy including a copy of the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Form. Newly hired staff will be provided with the same training and/or written policy at the beginning of their employment. The training and/or distribution of materials will be documented.

References

Utah Code Ann. §§ 53A-6-502; 62A-4a-402, et seq.
Utah Administrative Rules R277-401

Signature:

Trudy Sorenson, Board President

Date

CONFIDENTIAL

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Form

Oral report made to Principal: Date: _____ Time: _____

Child's Information:

Name: _____ Age: _____ Birth Date: _____ Sex: _____
Address: _____

Parent/Guardina Information:

Father Name: _____
Father Address: _____
Father Telephone: _____
Mother Name: _____
Mother Address: _____
Mother Telephone: _____
Guardian/Caretaker Name: _____
Guardian/Caretaker Address: _____
Guardian/Caretaker Telephone: _____

Circumstances leading to the suspicion that the child is a victim of abuse or neglect: _____

Time and date of observations: _____
Additional information: _____

Oral report made to:

Agency: _____
Individual's Name: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____

Written report sent to:

Agency: _____
Individual's Name: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____

Reporting Individual:

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Principal:

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Do not place this form in the student's file.