

# DANBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Danbury, Connecticut

## POLICY

***CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT REPORTING***

Adopted: 5/10/2000

Policy No. 7-234\*

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The Danbury Board of Education recognizes its legal and ethical obligation in the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. Connecticut General Statutes 17a-101 requires that any professional or paraprofessional employee in the school system who has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of eighteen years has been abused or neglected, or is in danger of being abused, is mandated to report his or her suspicions to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Reports of suspicions that a child is in danger of being abused are not required by state law. However, such reports are required by the Danbury Board of Education. Procedures will be developed to guide the referral process.

The Board believes that the school employees not legally mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect (e.g. secretaries, custodians, food service workers) are nonetheless ethically obligated to protect children. Thus, these employees must report suspicions to the building principal, his or her designee or other professional staff, who must then proceed in accordance with the law, Board policy, and administrative regulations.

Should school staff have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected by a school employee, the same process of reporting to DCF must be followed. Additionally the reporter shall immediately notify the building principal who will in turn inform the child's parent/guardian and the Superintendent of Schools that a report has been made. The Superintendent shall in turn, in the case of a certified staff member, notify the Commissioner of Education.

Similarly, the Board of Education directs its staff to report to the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities when they have reason to suspect and believe that someone eighteen years of age or older has been abused or neglected.

The Board believes not only in prompt, effective reaction to suspected abuse or neglect, but also in a proactive, preventative approach. Toward that end, annual orientation and review on the subject of abuse and neglect shall be provided for all school staff. This training shall include effective recognition of and response to suspected child abuse and neglect, and may be designed and delivered in cooperation with DCF.

This policy and associated administrative regulations shall be reviewed annually by an advisory committee of school and community representatives under the direction of the Pupil Services Coordinator or his or her designee.

