

REPORTING KNOWN OR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

I. Purpose

To ensure that all teachers, administrators and other personnel employed by the Bristol-Warren Regional School District are aware of and comply with R.I. General Laws § 40-11 et. seq. and the District's protocol for reporting known or suspected child abuse and/or neglect (defined at the end of this policy).

II. Protocol

- A. As an employee of the Bristol Warren Regional School District, you must be familiar with the RI General Law 40-11 et. seq. and the protocols below for reporting known or suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect. If you witness or become aware of sexual assault, physical abuse or neglect of a child, you are a mandatory reporter and must take the following actions:

Step One: Immediately notify the Principal or his/her designee. You must have a conversation with a live person. An email or voicemail alone will not suffice. Please be sure to document your conversation with the Principal or his/her designee on the attached Report of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect Form (Exhibit A).

Step Two: Immediately after the Principal or his/her designee has been notified, he/she will contact the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) at 1(800) RI-CHILD, 1-800-742-4453; please note this is a 24-hour number. The Principal must have a conversation with a live person. An email or voicemail alone will not suffice. The **DCYF must be notified within 24 hours**. The Principal or his/her designee will document the conversation with the DCYF on the Report of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect Form (Exhibit A).

Step Three: After notifying the DCYF, the Principal or his/her designee will notify the Superintendent and forward the completed Report of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect Form (Exhibit A).

Step Four: The Superintendent or his/her designee will contact the Police Department in the town of your school, with the Bristol Police Department at 401-253-6900 or the Warren Police Department at 401-245-1311 for their awareness. The DCYF is formally responsible for forwarding the reported incident to state and local enforcement agencies. The DCYF will determine if the report meets the criteria for a child protective services investigation.

PLEASE NOTE: If the allegations involve a BWRSD staff person, the witness will immediately notify your principal or supervisor; who will then begin the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and Police notification process described above. The principal or supervisor

should then contact the Office of Human Resources. Our emergency protocols require immediate removal from the building of a staff person who is alleged to have abused a child.

B. ALL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES MUST COMPLETE AND RETAIN A COPY OF THE REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT FORM AND KEEP ACCURATE INFORMATION REGARDING:

1. THE PERSON OR PERSONS THAT YOU SPOKE WITH AT EACH OF THE AFOREMENTIONED AGENCIES AND OR OFFICES.
2. THE DATE AND TIME YOU SPOKE TO EACH PERSON.
3. A DESCRIPTION OF WHAT WAS SAID.
4. ANY GUIDANCE PROVIDED BY EACH OF THE RESPECTIVE INDIVIDUALS YOU CONTACTED.

All Building Administrators shall be responsible for submitting a formal report regarding any known or suspected child abuse which is reported to him/her within his/her building and promptly sending said report to the Office of the Superintendent. The report shall include all pertinent details of the incident reported, the Agencies and persons to whom the abuse was reported and the time and date of same, and a copy of the Report of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect Form (Exhibit A).

C. All District employees shall execute the following statement at the beginning of each school year.

I certify that I have received and understand the District's mandatory reporting protocols. I agree to comply with the mandatory reporting protocols and related policies and procedures applicable to my job and understand that compliance is expected as part of my continued employment with the Bristol Warren Regional School District. This acknowledgement is not an assurance of continued employment or association.

Definition (RI § 40-11-2)

Abused and/or neglected child- means a child whose physical or mental health or welfare is harmed, or threatened with harm, when his or her parent or other person responsible for his or her welfare:

- (i) Inflicts, or allows to be inflicted, upon the child physical or mental injury, including excessive corporal punishment; or
- (ii) Creates, or allows to be created, a substantial risk of physical or mental injury to the child, including excessive corporal punishment; or
- (iii) Commits, or allows to be committed, against the child, an act of sexual abuse; or
- (iv) Fails to supply child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care, though financially able to do so or offered financial or other reasonable means to do so; or

- (v) Fails to provide the child with a minimum degree of care or proper supervision or guardianship because of his or her unwillingness or inability to do so by situations or conditions such as, but not limited to: social problems, mental incompetency, or the use of a drug, drugs, or alcohol to the extent that the parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare loses his or her ability or is unwilling to properly care for the child; or
- (vi) Abandons or deserts the child; or
- (vii) Sexually exploits child in that person allows, permits, or encourages the child to engage in prostitution as defined by provisions in § 11-34.1-1 et seq., entitled "Commercial Sexual Activity"; or
- (viii) Sexually exploits the child in that the person allows, permits, encourages, or engages in the obscene or pornographic photographing, filming, or depiction of the child in a setting that, taken as a whole, suggests to the average person that the child is about to engage in, or has engaged in, any sexual act, or that depicts any such child under eighteen (18) years of age performing sodomy, oral copulation, sexual intercourse, masturbation, or bestiality; or
- (ix) Commits, or allows to be committed, any sexual offense against the child as such sexual offenses are defined by the provisions of chapter 37 of title 11, entitled "Sexual Assault", as amended; or
- (x) Commits, or allows to be committed, against any child an act involving sexual penetration or sexual contact if the child is under fifteen (15) years of age; or if the child is fifteen (15) years or older, and (1) force or coercion is used by the perpetrator, or (2) the perpetrator knows, or has reason to know, that the victim is a severely impaired person as defined by the provisions of § 11-5-11, or physically helpless as defined by the provisions of § 11-37-1(6).

Reasonable cause to know or suspect- means that it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain a suspicion, based upon facts that could cause a reasonable person in a like position, drawing, when appropriate, on their training and experience, to suspect child abuse.

"Reasonable cause to know or suspect" does not require certainty that child sexual abuse has occurred nor does it require a specific medical indication of child sexual abuse; any "reasonable cause to know or suspect" is sufficient.

LEGAL REFS:

R.I. General Law § 40-11 Abused and Neglected Children et. seq
 RI General Law § 40-11-2 Abused and Neglected Children Definition
 RI General Law § 11-34.1-1 et seq Commercial Sexual Activity
 RI General Law § 11-5-11 Assault on Persons with Severe Impairments
 RI General Law § 11-37-1(6) Sexual Assault Definitions (Physically Helpless)

ADOPTED:

December 10, 2018

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BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

Part I

Name of Person Filing Report: _____ Position: _____

School: _____ Grade: ___ Child's Homeroom Teacher: _____

Date Reported: _____ Report Made to: _____ Principal/Supervisor

Child Information

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Sex: M F

Child's Address: _____

Other Children in Home (if Known):

Parent Information

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address if Different From Child: _____

Circumstances leading to the suspicion that child is victim of abuse/neglect including the nature of injury(ies), if any:

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Others who have direct knowledge of this allegation:

Name _____

Phone _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Person(s) suspected as responsible (if known):

DCYF Contact Information (The principal or his/her designee must contact DCYF within 24 hours)
1-800-RI-CHILD 1-800-742-4453

Date of Call Made to DCYF: _____ Time of Call: _____

DCYF Telephone Contact Person: _____

Signature of Reporting Person _____ Date _____

Signature of Principal (or Designee) _____ Date _____

Date report sent to Superintendent _____

This form should be kept in a confidential location and NOT a part of the student's cumulative and/or other permanent records.

Part II

District Investigation Information (to be completed by district)

Police Contact Information (Police will be notified by Superintendent or his/her designee)
Bristol Police 401-253-6900, Warren Police 401-245-1311

Date of Call Made to Local Police: _____ Time of Call: _____

Police Telephone Contact Person: _____

Name of Investigator: _____

Investigator to School Site: Date: _____ Time: _____

Investigator Interviewed Student: Date: _____ Time: _____

Investigator Talked to Counselor: Date: _____ Time: _____

Investigator Talked to Referring Person Date: _____ Time: _____