

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

0126
Policy No.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

BASIC COMMITMENTS

Student Safety and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse is among the most heinous of offenses. No one wants any of our students to be preyed upon by offenders, whether on our school grounds or in the community.

The Board of Education is committed to providing a quality education to all students in a safe and secure environment. Our goal is to promote a culture where administrators, teachers, staff, and community members recognize and report any and all suspicious or improper behavior; where students and staff are not afraid to speak up and bring to the attention of responsible adults matters of concerns; and where individuals are held accountable for ensuring the safety of students in our care.

Everyone in the school system has a shared responsibility to ensure the safety of our children and instill confidence in our parents and our community that we all have the well-being of their children foremost in our minds. This legal and moral obligation extends from the Board Member entrusted with the governance of the school district, to the teacher in the classroom, the bus driver who delivers our students to their school, the custodian in the building, the cafeteria worker serving meals and the many other employees assigned throughout the school system who work on behalf of our students.

Administrative Procedures

Consistent with the laws of the State of Maryland, and our commitment to safeguard the students of our school system, the Chief Executive Officer is directed to develop or update the appropriate administrative procedures, protocols and curriculum to specifically require the following:

1. Enhanced training of newly-hired employees to address, among other matters:
 - a. comprehensive review of child sexual abuse (reflective of a “universal precautions” approach including identification of “red flags”);
 - b. reporting of suspected abuse and neglect; and
 - c. criminal history checks and fingerprinting, to include a check of Child Protective Services records.
2. Comprehensive inter-disciplinary training of all staff, on an annual basis, using both face-to-face and on-line modalities, as to child sexual abuse, procedures, reporting obligation, and consequences for failure to do so.
3. Volunteers

A robust volunteer procedure that addresses, among other matters, how volunteers are:

 - a. Screened and qualified to serve;
 - b. Trained on appropriate boundaries with students, including contact and communication;
 - c. Trained regarding reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect;
 - d. Utilized, supervised and granted access in the school building; and
 - e. Provided access to non-confidential records.
4. Procedures on Enhancing School Safety
 - a. An administrative procedure on reporting of child abuse and neglect.
 - b. An administrative procedure on inappropriate relationships between employees, volunteers, contractors and students.
 - c. An administrative procedure on background checks and fingerprinting of employees, volunteers, and contractors.
 - d. An administrative procedure on use of social media for interaction among students, volunteers, and employees.
 - e. An administrative procedure on school visitors.
5. Curriculum

An updating, and regular review, of the curricular content focused on preventing child sexual abuse taught in pre-school through grade 12, which is developmentally-appropriate, engaging of parents, families and community partners, delivered by well-trained teachers and counselors, and meets evidence-based criteria for effectiveness in mitigating instances of child sexual abuse.

6. Facilities

Safety surveys of school buildings to mitigate against opportunities for abuse and criminal conduct to occur due to the physical properties of the building or by installation of cameras or other technologies to include an annual review thereof.

7. Visitors

Individual school safety assessments conducted by building principals, the results of which will be used to develop and implement strategies for their respective facility.

Annual Report

The Chief Executive Officer shall report to the Board publically each year on system-wide efforts related to student safety.

See also: Administrative Procedure 0500; Administrative Procedure 4126; Administrative Procedure 4215; Administrative Procedure 4216.6; Administrative Procedure 5180

Policy Adopted
07/19/16