
Administrative Regulation:

#637.1

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

PRINCIPALS' CRISIS TEAMS

The Superintendent of Schools has the responsibility to ensure that the Maynard's Child Abuse and Neglect Policy and Reporting Procedures is enforced within the school system. The organizational structure for this implementation will be through the establishment and support of Principal's Crisis Teams (PCT).

A school-based Principal's Crisis Team will be established in each school building. This team will consist minimally of the principal/assistant principal, the school adjustment counselor/guidance counselor/social worker, and the school nurse. The names of the members of the school-based team will be made known to all employees working in the building.

Each PCT will:

- Meet at the beginning of each school year to review Maynard's Child Abuse and Neglect Policy and Reporting Procedures.
- Insure a child abuse and neglect information/training workshop for the all school employees in the first month of each school year.

Representatives of the PCTs will meet yearly to review the past year's reports and make appropriate recommendations to their Principal/PCT.

The Superintendent or designee will be responsible for maintaining data that result from reports to the Department of Children and Families.

The district PCT will:

- Provide consultation and support to individual team members and to the school-based teams.
- Monitor cases reported to the Department of Children and Families.
- Review and evaluate annually the continued efficacy the Maynard Public Schools Child Abuse and Neglect Policy and Reporting Procedures, and develop, curriculum for the child abuse and neglect information/training presentation for all school-system employees. This curriculum will be developed with input from each of the building-based PCT's and with the advice of experts in the field of child abuse and neglect in consultation with the Middlesex District Attorney's Office.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

1. A member of the staff with a concern regarding potential child abuse or neglect will immediately notify the principal/assistant principal/counselor/social worker of the school in which the child is enrolled.
2. The staff member will be asked to fill out a preliminary report for the PCT
3. If the severity of the abuse, or the possibility of further abuse which could involve serious injury exists, then the principal/assistant principal/counselor will immediately contact the Department of Children and Families and other agencies as necessary (Police, DMH, etc.).
4. In the absence of emergency circumstances, the PCT will meet not later than the school day following the preliminary report.
- 5a. If, after discussion with the staff member and review of the preliminary report, the consensus of the team is that there is reasonable cause to believe that the child in question may be suffering from abuse or neglect as defined by the law, the principal/assistant principal/counselor/social worker will immediately notify the Department of Children and Families. If Department of Children and Families agrees that the report is one which should be filed, then the appropriate written report will -be forwarded by the Principal/assistant principal/counselor/social worker to Department of Children and Families within forty-eight hours.
- 5b. If the team does not concur with the staff member as to reasonable cause, the staff member will immediately be informed. In that case the function of the Student Assistance Team will end and the staff member, if he or she wishes, *may pursue the matter directly with the Department of Children and Families..*
- 5c. Follow-up
When the Department of Children and Families informs the Maynard Public Schools principal/assistant principal/counselor of their findings. these findings will be shared with team members and the member of the staff who initiated the report.

TRAINING

New Employees

Within the first six months of employment, every new employee will be required to attend a presentation on mandated reporting requirements pursuant M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A

Current Employees

Every employee will be required on an annual basis to attend presentation on mandated reporting requirements pursuant to M.G.L c. 119, § 51A.

Every employee will be required on an annual basis to attend a presentation that includes information on the legal and psychological aspects of child sexual and physical abuse, the impact such abuse has on children, and the appropriate response to a child who has made an allegation of abuse.

DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING

The Superintendent of Schools will:

- Develop a procedure for building-based and system-wide documentation and record keeping of concerns of child abuse and neglect relating to the conduct of school personnel and students.
- In cases involving school personnel, develop a procedure for communicating in writing to the complainants of the status and disposition of the case, to the extent possible, without compromising the investigation or confidentiality rights of involved persons. Notwithstanding the disposition of any complaint, all complaints relating the conduct of school personnel and students will be kept in the central office.
- Notify school administrators on an annual basis of their obligation to advise and inform the superintendent of allegations and complaints that involve suspected criminal activity as it relates to issues of child abuse and neglect.
- * Monitor whether the appropriate social service and law enforcement agencies have been notified and ensure ongoing cooperation.

Complaints

A person who believes the policy and/or procedures have not been correctly observed should contact either of the following administrators:

Director of Special Needs
Maynard Public Schools

Or:

Superintendent of Schools
Maynard Public Schools

PENALTIES

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A, mandated reporters are immune from civil or criminal liability when they file a report pursuant to their duties. Mandated reporters cannot be discharged, discriminated against or retaliated against by their employers if they, in good faith, make a report or testify in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect. If any of these things happen, the employer shall be liable.

Any person who is legally required to report suspected child abuse, i.e., as a mandated reporter, who fails to do so, is subject to a criminal fine. In addition, school employees will be subject to disciplinary action by the school department up to and including dismissal for failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the principal/SAT.

Date Approved: 9/2/09

Earlier Version: 2/15/01

Legal Reference: MGL CH119:51A
