

Dickson County Board of Education

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect	Descriptor Code: 6.409	Issued Date: 09/24/20
		Rescinds: 6.409	Issued: 02/28/13

1 *General*

2 The Director of Schools shall:¹

- 3 1. Designate one employee as the Child Abuse Coordinator (the Coordinator) and an additional
4 employee to serve as the Alternate Child Abuse Coordinator (the Alternate) for each school;
5
- 6 2. Require that the Coordinator and the Alternate receive appropriate training;
7
- 8 3. Supply the Coordinator with all necessary resources;
9
- 10 4. Ensure that all school personnel annually complete the child abuse training program required
11 by state law.²

12 The Coordinator shall assist any employee with appropriately reporting and responding to instances of
13 child abuse or child sexual abuse.

14 **REPORTING**

15 All personnel shall be alert for any evidence of child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect.³ Child abuse is
16 defined as any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition which is of such nature as to
17 reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect or which in the basis of
18 available information reasonably appears to have been caused by such. Staff members having
19 knowledge of suspicion of any child who is suffering from abuse or neglect shall report such harm
20 immediately

21 If personnel know or have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, a report
22 shall be filed immediately with the Coordinator, the Department of Children's Services (DCS), and law
23 enforcement.⁴

24 The report shall include, to the extent known by the reporter:⁵

- 25 1. The name, address, telephone number, and age of the child;
26
- 27 2. The name, telephone number, and address of the parents or persons having custody of the child;
28
- 29 3. The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect; and
30
- 31 4. Any evidence to the cause or any other information that may relate to the cause or extent of the
32 abuse or neglect.

1 The person reporting shall be immune from liability⁶ and the identity of the reporter shall remain
2 confidential except when the juvenile court determines otherwise⁷.

3 The Director of Schools/designee shall develop reporting procedures, including sample indicators of
4 abuse and neglect, and shall disseminate the procedures to all school personnel. These reporting
5 procedures shall include the appropriate notification to the parents of the child pursuant to state law in
6 the event that the suspected abuse occurs on school property or while the child was under the
7 supervision or care of the school. However, nothing in the reporting procedures shall eliminate the
8 staff member's legal responsibility to directly make a report to the authorities stated above.

9 **CONFIDENTIALITY**

10 District employees shall keep all information regarding any child abuse confidential in accordance
11 with state law.

12 **INVESTIGATIONS**

13 School administrators and employees have a duty to cooperate, provide assistance, and information in
14 child abuse investigations⁸ including permitting DCS teams to conduct interviews while the child is at
15 school. The principal may control the time, place, and circumstances of the interview but may not
16 insist that a school employee be present even if the suspected abuser is a school employee or another
17 student. The principal is not in violation of any laws by failing to inform parent(s)/guardian(s) that the
18 child is to be interviewed even if the suspected abuser is not a member of the child's household.⁹¹

Legal References

1. H.B. 2461, 111th Tenn. Gen. Assembly (2020)
2. TCA 37-1-408
3. TCA 37-1-403(a)(1); TCA 37-1-412; TCA 37-1-602; TCA 37-1-605(a)(4)
4. TCA 37-1-403(a)(2); H.B. 2461, 111th Tenn. Gen. Assembly (2020)
5. TCA 37-1-403(b)
6. TCA 37-1-409
7. TCA 37-1-408
8. TCA 37-1-611(b)
9. Tenn. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 87-101 (June 9, 1987)

Cross References

- Recommendations and File Transfers 5.203
- Staff-Student Relations 5.610
- Interrogations and Searches 6.303
- Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Intimidation 6.304
- Title IX & Sexual Harassment 6.3041