

## **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy**

Barrington Public Schools (BPS) is dedicated to the goals of protecting all students from child abuse and neglect and to responding effectively to incidents of child abuse and neglect. BPS recognizes that schools can play an important role in preventing child abuse and neglect because of the sustained contact that school personnel have with children on a consistent daily basis, and the ability of educators to promptly detect when a child is being abused or neglected. Creating an environment in which student safety, health and welfare are protected not only ensures the wellbeing of our students, but also helps in removing obstacles to their learning and achieving at high levels. Our schools will work cooperatively with all agencies with responsibility for addressing child abuse and neglect, most especially with the Division of Child Protective Services of Rhode Island's Department for Children, Youth and Families.

Rhode Island General Law [§40-11-3](#) requires that any person who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that any child has been abused or neglected by an employee, agent, contractor or volunteer of an educational program, a parent, relative, or another adult, or who has been a victim of sexual abuse by another child shall, within twenty-four hours (§40-11-2), transfer that information to the Department of Children, Youth and Families, or its agent, who or which shall immediately forward the report to the state police and local law enforcement, and shall initiate an investigation of the allegations of abuse. As a result of those reports and referrals, the Department shall refer those children to appropriate services and support systems in order to provide for their health and welfare. In the event the Department substantiates the allegations of abuse against an employee, agent, contractor, or volunteer of an educational program, the Department shall immediately notify the state police; local law-enforcement agency; the Department of Education; the educational program; the person who is the subject of the investigation; and the parent or parents, of the child who is alleged to be the victim of the abuse of the Department's findings. As a result of these reports and referrals, protective social services will be made available to those students in an effort to safeguard their welfare and provide a means to prevent further abuse or neglect.

In compliance with §16-21-26, duty to report, each public or private school in the state shall post a notice that contains the statewide, toll-free telephone number, established and implemented by the Department of Children, Youth and Families pursuant to [§ 40-11-3](#) for the receipt of reports concerning the suspicion of child abuse and neglect or that a child has been a victim of sexual abuse by another child, in a conspicuous, high-traffic area accessed and widely used by the students in each school.

Reports are made by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-RI-CHILD.

All District employees are mandated reporters. Employees who fail to report will be subject not only to the penalties provided by law, but also to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All employees of the district will be provided with annual training on the identification and mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect that provides information on the legal and psychological aspects of child sexual, physical abuse, and neglect, the impact such abuse has on children, and the appropriate response to a child who has made an allegation of abuse or neglect.

The Superintendent of Schools or his designee shall have the responsibility to ensure that this policy is implemented throughout the District, and that parents are made aware of how the District is addressing the issue of child abuse and neglect. In addition, he/she shall ensure that annual trainings are conducted, that every school is following the protocol for reporting, and that appropriate records of reports and follow up are maintained by the District. Building principals shall have the responsibility to disseminate the District policy and protocol on reporting child abuse and neglect to all school personnel at the beginning of every school year, and to ensure compliance with the District policy.

Approved 12/20/2012

Amended 1/19/2017