

To: Dr. Charles Johns  
Board of Education  
From: Brad Swanson  
Date: February 13, 2023  
Re: 6700 Policy - Abused and Neglected Child Reporting

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended by the Superintendent's Policy Committee that the Board approve Policy 6700 - Abused and Neglected Child Reporting at the February 27, 2023, Board meeting.

Please review and discuss the following new Board of Education policy.

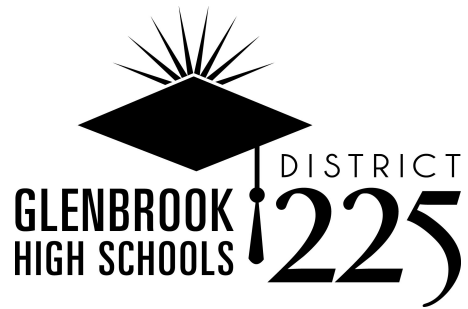
**6700 Policy - Abused and Neglected Child Reporting**

New Policy - This new policy places the district in compliance with Erin's Law (P.A. 097-1147). This policy confirms the mandated reporting responsibilities of all staff, required staff training on this topic, guidelines related to a possible investigation, and superintendent and board members' responsibilities. The language of this policy has been thoroughly reviewed by legal counsel.

**Background:**

The district has established a Policy and Procedures Review Process that leads to revisions of current or adoptions of new policies and procedures. Much of this work involves the Superintendent Policy Committee, which consists of two Board Members, the Superintendent, the Associate Superintendent, and the Executive Director of Human Resources. In addition, the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services facilitates it.

The review process is supported by two primary resources - ongoing discussions with legal counsel and the use of the Policy Reference Education Subscription Service (PRESS) as provided by the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB). The district's legal counsel is directly involved with reviewing recommended revisions and creating new policies. In addition, PRESS provides ongoing guidance on policy and procedure subjects, suggested language, and state and federal law updates. District policies and



procedures are identified for review based on legal counsel or PRESS recommendations, present district circumstances or discussions, or a three-year timeline.

The review process consists of but is not limited to, the following steps.

1. Superintendent identifies the prioritization of policies and procedures to be reviewed.
2. The Policy Committee and legal counsel conduct an initial read and review.
3. District stakeholders are identified to participate as an ad hoc committee as needed and conduct an initial read and review.
4. Suggested revisions are offered on working documents.
5. Legal educational sessions and additional reviews are conducted as needed.
6. Updates and reviews are facilitated with the leadership of the GEA, GESSA, and GESPA as appropriate.
7. Updates and reviews are facilitated with standing administrative committees or teams such as building Instructional Leadership Teams, the Building Administrative Teams, Instructional and Operational Councils, and Cabinet.
8. Feedback from all stakeholder reviews is communicated to the Policy Committee.
9. Review cycles and discussions are repeated as necessary to establish a comprehensive process that provides voice and understanding for all relevant stakeholders, association leadership, administration, and the Policy Committee.
10. The Policy Committee recommends revised policies and procedures to the Board of Education for a First Read.
11. Additional discussions or reviews may occur based on board member or community feedback.
12. The Policy Committee recommends revised policies and procedures to the Board of Education for a Second Read and Approval.

## **Abused and Neglected Child Reporting**

### **Section A - Introduction**

Any District employee who suspects or receives knowledge that a student may be an abused or neglected child or, for a student aged 18 through 22, an abused or neglected individual with a disability shall:

1. immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on its Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)(within Illinois); 1-217-524-2606 (outside of Illinois); or 1-800-358-5117 (TTY), and
2. follow directions given by DCFS concerning filing a written report within 48 hours with the nearest DCFS field office.

Any District employee who believes a student is in immediate danger of harm shall first call 911. The employee shall also promptly notify the Superintendent or Building Principal that a report has been made. The Superintendent or Building Principal shall immediately coordinate any necessary notifications to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) with DCFS, the applicable school resource officer (SRO), and/or local law enforcement.

Negligent failure to report occurs when a District employee personally observes an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect and reasonably believes, in his or her professional or official capacity, that the instance constitutes an act of child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) and he or she, without willful intent, fails to immediately report or cause a report to be made of the suspected abuse or neglect to DCFS.

Any District employee who discovers child pornography on electronic and information technology equipment shall immediately report it to:

1. local law enforcement,
2. the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or
3. online at [www.report.cybertip.org](http://www.report.cybertip.org) or [www.missingkids.org](http://www.missingkids.org).

The Superintendent or Building Principal shall also be promptly notified of the discovery and that a report has been made.

Any District employee who observes any act of hazing that does bodily harm to a student must promptly report that act to the Building Principal, Superintendent, or designee who will investigate and take appropriate action. If the hazing results in death or great bodily harm, the employee must first make the report to law enforcement and then to the Superintendent or Building Principal.

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed to or required of a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any group, organization, club, or athletic team whose members are or include other students.

### Section B - Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA), School Code, and Erin's Law Training

The Superintendent or designee shall provide staff development opportunities for District employees in the detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

All District employees shall:

1. Before beginning employment, sign the *Acknowledgment of Mandated Reporter Status* form provided by DCFS. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the signed forms are retained.
2. Complete mandated reporter training as required by law within three months of initial employment and at least every three years after that date.
3. Complete an annual evidence-informed training related to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and boundary violations as required by law and 6600 Policy - Staff Development Program.

### Section C - Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse; Investigations

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A, that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside school grounds or not during a school activity.

If a District employee reports an alleged incident of sexual abuse to DCFS and DCFS accepts the report for investigation, DCFS will refer the matter to the local Children's Advocacy Center (CAC). The Superintendent or designee will implement procedures to coordinate with the CAC.

DCFS and/or the appropriate law enforcement agency will inform the District when its investigation is complete or has been suspended, as well as the outcome of its investigation. The existence of a DCFS and/or law enforcement investigation will not preclude the District from conducting its own parallel investigation into the alleged incident of sexual abuse in accordance with 8470 Policy - Harassment of Students Prohibited.

### Section D - Special Superintendent Responsibilities

The Superintendent shall execute the requirements of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/4(d)), ( whenever another school district requests a reference concerning an applicant who is or was a District employee and was the subject of a report made by a District employee to DCFS.

When the Superintendent has reasonable cause to believe that a license holder committed an intentional act of abuse or neglect with the result of making a child an abused child or a neglected child under ANCRA, and that act resulted in the license holder's dismissal or resignation from the District, he or she shall notify the State Superintendent and the Regional Superintendent in writing, providing the Illinois Educator Identification Number as well as a brief description of the misconduct alleged. The Superintendent must make the report within 30 days of the dismissal or resignation and mail a copy of the notification to the license holder.

Section E - Special School Board Member Responsibilities

Each individual Board member must, if an allegation is raised to the member during an open or closed Board meeting that a student is an abused child as defined in ANCRA, direct or cause the Board to direct the Superintendent or other equivalent school administrator to comply with ANCRA's requirements concerning the reporting of child abuse.

If the Board determines that any District employee, other than an employee licensed under 105 ILCS 5/21B, has willfully or negligently failed to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by ANCRA, the Board may dismiss that employee immediately.

When the Board learns that a licensed teacher was convicted of any felony, it must promptly report it to the State agencies as required by 105 ILCS 5/21B-85.

Adopted: TBD