

Series 5000

Policy 5005
Students

**CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT
POLICY AND REPORTING PROCEDURE**

The Norfolk Board of Education has adopted a uniform child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault response policy and reporting procedure in connection with the implementation of its sexual assault and abuse prevention and awareness program.

I. Procedures for Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault

- A. Parents (or guardians) of students may file a written report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault pertaining to any student enrolled in the Norfolk Public Schools. The written report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the suspected abuse and/or sexual assault, the number of incidents, the victim of the child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, and the names of potential witnesses or others with pertinent information. Such written reports may be filed with any building or central office administrator. All reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school in which the student is enrolled. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall cause such reports to be reviewed and actions taken consistent with this policy.
- B. Any adult affiliated with the school community may file a written report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault pertaining to any student enrolled in the Norfolk Public Schools. The written report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the suspected abuse and/or sexual assault, the number of incidents, the victim of the child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, and the names of potential witnesses or others with pertinent information. Such written reports may be filed with any building or central office administrator. All reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school in which the student is enrolled. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall cause such reports to be reviewed and actions taken consistent with this policy.
- C. Students may make written or verbal reports of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault to any school employee. All reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school in which the student is enrolled. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall cause such reports to be reviewed and actions taken consistent with this policy.

- D. Upon receipt of any report of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault from any source, a school employee shall report such suspicion to the appropriate authority in accordance with Board Policy #4005, pertaining to **REPORTS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF CHILDREN OR SEXUAL ASSAULT OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**.

II. Procedures for Review of Reports of Child Sexual Abuse and/or Assault

- A. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee for the school in which the student is enrolled shall be responsible for reviewing any reports of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault. In the event that the suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault has not yet been reported to the appropriate authority in accordance with Board Policy #4005, pertaining to **REPORTS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF CHILDREN OR SEXUAL ASSAULT OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall promptly cause such a report to be made.
- B. If/when such report alleges that an employee of the Board of Education or other individual under the control of the Board is the perpetrator of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall immediately notify the Superintendent of Schools, who shall cause such report to be investigated in accordance with Board Policy #4005, pertaining to **REPORTS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF CHILDREN OR SEXUAL ASSAULT OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**.
- C. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also promptly notify the parents or guardians of the student about whom a report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault has been made. The notification requirement shall not apply if a parent or guardian is the individual suspected of perpetrating the child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall offer to meet with the parents or guardians of the student about whom a report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault has been made, in order to discuss the district's review and support procedures, including but not limited to: 1) actions that child victims of sexual abuse and/or sexual assault and their families may take to obtain assistance, 2) intervention and counseling options for child victims of sexual abuse and/or assault, and 3) access to educational resources to enable child victims of sexual abuse and/or sexual assault to succeed in school. If either a Department of Children and Families ("DCF") investigation or a police investigation is pending pertaining to the report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall obtain the

permission of DCF and/or the police department conducting the investigation prior to informing the parents/guardians of the report.

- D. In the event that the report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault alleges that another student enrolled in the Norfolk Public Schools is the perpetrator of the sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also take appropriate action to investigate or cause such a report to be investigated, and appropriate remedial actions taken, in accordance with Board Policy #4005, pertaining to **REPORTS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF CHILDREN OR SEXUAL ASSAULT OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**, Board Policy #5003, pertaining to **Bullying Prevention and Intervention**, and Board Policy#5020, **Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment**.
- E. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall develop a student support plan for any who has been a victim of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault. The report of suspected sexual abuse and/or assault need not be verified prior to the implementation of a support plan. The elements of the support plan shall be determined in the discretion of the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee, and shall be designed to support the student victim's ability to access the school environment.

III. Support Strategies

- A. Child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault can take many forms and can vary dramatically in the nature of the offense and the impact the behavior may have on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault.
- B. The following sets forth possible interventions and supports which may be utilized to support individual student victims of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault:
 - 1. Referral to a school counselor, psychologist or other appropriate social or mental health service.
 - 2. Encouragement of the student victim to seek help when feeling overwhelmed or anxious in the school environment.
 - 3. Facilitated peer support groups.
 - 4. Designation of a specific adult in the school setting for the student victim to seek out for assistance.

5. Periodic follow-up by the Safe School Climate Specialist and/or Title IX Coordinator with the victim of sexual abuse and assault.
- C. The following sets forth possible interventions and supports which may be utilized systemically as prevention and intervention strategies pertaining to child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault:
1. School rules prohibiting sexual assault and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts.
 2. School-wide training related to prevention and identification of, and response to, child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault.
 3. Age-appropriate educational materials designed for children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, regarding child sexual abuse and sexual assault awareness and prevention that will include information pertaining to, and support for, disclosures of sexual abuse and sexual assault, including but not limited to:
 - (a) the skills to recognize child sexual abuse and sexual assault, boundary violations and unwanted forms of touching and contact, and the ways offenders groom or desensitize victims; and
 - (b) strategies to promote disclosure, reduce self-blame and mobilize bystanders.
 4. Promotion of parent involvement in child sexual abuse and sexual assault prevention and awareness through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions.
 5. Respectful and supportive responses to disclosures of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault by students.
 6. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities.
 7. Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of students, school employees and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies.

IV. Safe School Climate Specialists

The Safe School Climate Specialists for the Norfolk Public Schools are:

Sarah St. Pierre

Norfolk School
860-542-5286

V. Community Resources

The Board of Education recognizes that prevention of child sexual abuse and sexual assault requires a community approach. Supports for victims and families will include both school and community sources. The national, state and local resources below may be accessed by families at any time, without the need to involve school personnel.

A. National Resources:

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children Resource Center
<http://www.missingkids.com/Publications>
699 Prince Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3175
24-hour call center: 1-800-843-5678

- Online resource center contains publications on child safety and abuse prevention, child sexual exploitation, and missing children.

National Children's Advocacy Center
www.nationalcac.org
210 Pratt Ave., Huntsville, Alabama 35801
Telephone: (256) 533-5437

National Child Traumatic Stress Network
www.nctsn.org
General information on childhood trauma, including information on child sexual abuse.

- NCCTS — Duke University
1121 West Chapel Hill Street Suite 201
Durham, NC 27701
Telephone: (919) 682-1552

National Sexual Violence Resource Center (Includes Multilingual Access)
<http://www.nsvrc.org/projects/multilingual-access/multilingual-access>
123 North Enola Drive
Enola, PA 17025
Toll Free Telephone: 877-739-3895

Darkness to Light
<http://www.d2l.org>
Grassroots national non-profit organization to educate adults to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.
1064 Gardner Road, Suite 210
Charleston, SC 29407

National Helpline: (866) FOR-LIGHT
Administrative Office: (843) 965-5444

B. Statewide Resources:

Department of Children and Families

<http://www.ct.gov/dcf/site/default.asp>

Connecticut agency responsible for protecting children who are abused or neglected
505 Hudson Street

Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Child Abuse and Neglect Careline: 1-800-842-2288

Telephone, Central Office: (860) 550-6300

- FAQs About Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect:
<http://www.ct.gov/dcf/cwp/view.asp?a=2534&Q=314388&dcfNav=>

The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence

<http://EndSexualViolenceCT.org/>

Telephone: (860) 282-9881

Statewide coalition of community-based sexual assault crisis service programs working to end sexual violence through victim assistance, public policy advocacy, and prevention education training. Each member center provides free and confidential 24/7 hotline services in English and Spanish, individual crisis counseling, support groups, accompaniment and support in hospitals, police stations, and courts, referral information, and other services to anyone in need.

- *To find a Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence member program please visit: <http://endsexualviolencect.org/who-we-are/our-members/>*

Connecticut Children's Alliance

www.ctchildrensalliance.org

75 Charter Oak Ave Suite 1-309

Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Phone: (860) 610-6041

CCA is a statewide coalition of Child Advocacy Centers and Multidisciplinary Teams.

Connecticut Network of Care

<http://connecticut.networkofcare.org>

Connecticut Network of Care is an online information portal listing programs and support groups for sexual assault and abuse in Connecticut.

Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat s. 17a-101q, Statewide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program

ADOPTED: October 3, 2023