

STUDENTS

Reporting Student Abuse

Policy 2710

The Board believes that school staff members are in a unique position to assist children, families, and the community in dealing with the issue of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse is defined as any physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means. Neglect is defined as the failure to provide the proper or necessary support, education, nutrition or medical, surgical or other care necessary for the child's well-being. Employees making reports of allegations of abuse or neglect of a student will be provided immediate unrestricted use of communication technology and will be temporarily released from their work duties to make an immediate report.

An oral report shall be made immediately, but in no event more than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused to the Children's Division of the Department of Family Services or to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Thereafter, the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee, will investigate the allegation for the purpose of making decisions about the accused person's employment, if the accused is an employee of GCCS. Depending upon the specific facts, GCCS may place the alleged abuser on paid leave of absence; place the employee in a non-student contact position; initiate dismissal proceedings, or continue the employee in their present position pending outcome of the investigation.

Any GCCS employee, acting in good faith, who reports alleged abuse or neglect on the part of a GCCS employee will not be disciplined or discriminated against because of such reporting.

GCCS will annually provide employee training, which will include but not be limited to current information concerning identification of the signs of abuse or neglect in children as well as the identification of the danger signals of potentially abusive relationships between children and adults. This training will emphasize the importance of mandatory child abuse reporting, including the obligation to report suspected abuse by mandated reporters. Employees will receive training on the need for and methods to create an atmosphere of trust so that students believe their school and GCCS employees are available to discuss matters concerning abusive behavior.