

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

In accordance with Oklahoma law, any person is required to report suspected cases of physical abuse or neglect involving students to the statewide toll free hotline of the Department of Human Services. The statewide DHS hotline number is 1-800-522-3511. The board of education fully supports that requirement and has established this policy to facilitate such reporting.

Every teacher, support person, or other employee of this school district shall report any suspected physical, mental, or sexual abuse or neglect of any school student to the Department of Human Services by telephone. The employee shall also inform the building principal who will advise the superintendent that the report was made.

The reporting obligations under this section are individual, and no employer, supervisor or administrator of a person required to provide information pursuant to this section shall discharge, or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against, any such person who in good faith provides such child abuse reports or information, testifies, or is about to testify in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect; provided, that such person did not perpetrate or inflict such abuse or neglect. Any such employer, supervisor, or administrator who discharges, discriminates, or retaliates against such person shall be liable for damages, costs, and attorney fees. Any person who knowingly and willfully fails to promptly report any incident of child abuse may be reported to local law enforcement for criminal investigation and, upon conviction thereof, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Any person who knowingly and willfully makes a false report, or makes a report that the person knows lacks factual foundation may be reported by the Department of Human Services to local law enforcement for criminal investigation and, upon conviction thereof, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Any person participating in good faith and exercising due care in the making of a report or any person who, in good faith and exercising due care, allows access to a child by persons authorized to investigate a report concerning the child shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed. Any such participant shall have the same immunity from any liability with respect to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from such report.

The school district shall post, in a clearly visible location in a public area of the school that is readily accessible to all students, a sign in English and Spanish that contains the toll-free number operated by the Department of Human Services.

REFERENCE: 10A O.S. § 1-2-101
10A O.S. § 1-2-104
63 O.S. §1-120 (G)
70 O.S. §1210.162
Atty. Gen. Op. No. 78-202 (Dec. 28, 1978)