

Lakeland School System			
Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: Child Abuse and Neglect	Descriptor Code: 6.409	Issued Date:
		Rescinds:	Issued:

1 **REPORTING**

2 All personnel shall be alert for any evidence of child abuse or neglect.¹

3 Child abuse is defined as any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition which
 4 reasonably indicates that it has been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect. Staff members having
 5 knowledge or suspicion of any child who is suffering from abuse or neglect shall report such harm
 6 immediately.^{1,2} The report shall be made to the judge having juvenile jurisdiction or to the county
 7 office of the Department of Children's Services or to the office of the chief law-enforcement official
 8 where the child resides.³

9 The report shall include:⁴

- 10 1. The name, address and age of the child;
- 11 2. The name and address of the parents or persons having custody of the child;
- 12 3. The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect; and
- 13 4. Any evidence to the cause or any other information that may relate to the cause or extent of the
- 14 abuse or neglect.

15 The identity of the person reporting shall remain confidential except when the juvenile court
 16 determines otherwise.⁵

17 The Superintendent/designee shall develop reporting procedures, including sample indicators of abuse
 18 and neglect, and shall disseminate the procedures to all school personnel.⁶

19 **INVESTIGATIONS**

20 School administrators and employees have a duty to cooperate, provide assistance and information in
 21 child abuse investigations⁵ including permitting child abuse review teams to conduct interviews while
 22 the child is at school; the principal may control the time, place and circumstances of the interview, but
 23 may not insist that a school employee be present even if the suspected abuser is a school employee or
 24 another student. The principal is not in violation of any laws by failing to inform parents that the child
 25 is to be interviewed even if the suspected abuser is not a member of the child's household.⁷

Legal References

1. TCA 37-1-412
2. TCA 37-1-403(a)(1)
3. TCA 37-1-403(a)(2)
4. TCA 37-1-403(b)
5. TCA 37-1-409(a)(1)
6. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.08(2)(e)
7. TCA 37-1-611(b)
8. Tenn. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 87-101 (June 9, 1987).

Cross References