

<p style="text-align: center;">CASWELL COUNTY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>STUDENTS</u> Child Abuse and Neglect</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">485</p>
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North Carolina law makes it mandatory that everyone report suspected child abuse or neglect: “Any person or institution who has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused or neglected shall report the case of that juvenile to the director of the Department of Social Services in the county where the juvenile resides or is found” (North Carolina General Statute 7A-543). For purposes of the reporting requirement, a juvenile is any person under 18 who is not married, not emancipated (which can only be done by court order), and not a member of the armed services.

An abused juvenile, as defined in General Statute 7A-517(1), is a child whose parent or other person responsible for his care does any of the following:

1. Inflicts or allows to be inflicted on the child by other than accidental means a physical injury that causes or creates a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, impairment of physical health, or loss or impairment of function of any bodily organ; or
2. Creates or allows to be created by other than accidental means a substantial risk of physical injury to the child that would be likely to cause death, disfigurement, impairment of physical health, or loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ; or
3. Commits or allows the commission of any sexual act on a child in violation of law; or
4. Creates or allows to be created serious emotional damage to the child and refuses to permit, provide for, or participate in treatment (serious emotional damage is evidenced by a child’s severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or aggressive behavior toward himself or others); or
5. Encourages, directs, or approves of delinquent acts involving moral turpitude committed by the child.

A neglected child is one who:

1. Does not receive proper care, supervision, or discipline from his parent, guardian, custodian, or caretaker;
2. Has been abandoned;

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3. Is not provided necessary medical care or other remedial care recognized under the state law:
4. Lives in an environment injurious to his welfare;
5. Has been placed for care or adoption in violation of law.

The Caswell County Board of Education recognizes that children do not always receive appropriate care and protection from their parents or other persons acting in loco parentis.

School personnel (teachers, principals, counselors, or other employees of the system) who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child shall report the case to the appropriate county Director of Social Services, in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes.

Local school personnel will be apprised of their duty and responsibility regarding child abuse and neglect. In-service training for school personnel will be provided as arranged by the Superintendent or his designee.

The following procedures will be followed in reporting child abuse and neglect:

1. The principal in each school or his designee (possibly a student support team member) will serve as a resource person for school staff and will receive reports of suspected child abuse and neglect from staff members and act as liaison with the Department of Social Services. The obligation of the resource person is to report the suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Social Services.
2. Any report of suspected child abuse or neglect received by the principal or his designee should be transmitted immediately to the Department of Social Services. The reporter should request the name of the individual at Social Services who received the report. This may be needed for future reference. Local school personnel are not authorized or required to conduct an in-dept investigation of the situation or notify parents of the referral.
3. If a school staff member believes that a delay resulting from these procedures would be detrimental to the child he/she should report the suspected child abuse or neglect directly to the Department of Social Services and then inform the principal or his designee of the referral.

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4. A report of suspected child abuse and neglect may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing. It must include the following:
 - the name and address of the child,
 - the name and address of the child’s parents, guardian, or other caretakers,
 - the child’s age,
 - the present whereabouts of the child if not at the home address,
 - the nature and extent of the child’s injury or condition resulting from abuse or neglect,
 - any other information that the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries or the condition resulting from abuse or neglect.

5. If the report is made orally or by telephone, the person making the report shall give his name, address, and telephone number at least at work.

Both the local Department of Social Services and the local school should take appropriate precautions in accordance with applicable law and their own regulations to ensure the confidentiality of all information disclosed, discovered, or maintained as a result of the investigation. General Statute 7A-550 provides immunity from civil or criminal liability for anyone who in good faith makes a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, cooperates with Department of Social Services in an ensuing investigation, testifies in a juvenile court case, etc.

All child abuse or neglect reports shall be maintained by the principal or his designee separate and apart from the student’s cumulative folder, in one special child abuse and neglect folder for all cases.

When the resource person is notified by Social Services (within 5 days), information of their report will be provided to the person initiating the referral.