

**Policy**

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EARLY DETECTION OF MISSING CHILDREN

The Paulsboro Board of Education is deeply concerned with early detection of any missing or abused children. Attendance at school can be a means of identifying such children. Accordingly, the chief school administrator shall implement procedures designed to provide for reporting to appropriate law enforcement and child welfare authorities when a potential missing or abused child is detected.

Furthermore, though limits are set on certain numbers of days for certain kinds of action, these limits are maximums, not minimums, and the principals are encouraged to take bolder steps and to act sooner than the limits established in every category. Additionally, it is recognized that a principal's daily procedures may demand more stringent accounting from parents and guardians than provided for herein; it is most appropriate that these practices should be continued and form a sound base for the implementation of this policy.

Attendance:

- A. Any child absent from our schools for five consecutive days without the administration being aware that the absence is for a known cause shall be considered "at risk" as a potentially abused or missing child.
- B. Any absent child for whom there are grounds for the reasonable suspicion of the potential for abuse or abduction shall be considered an "at risk" child.
- C. A student who never appears on the school's register because he/she has the status of a "did not enter" student shall be considered an "at risk" child and every effort shall be made to account for his/her welfare and safety, as indicated below.
- D. The schools shall attempt to contact home of each "at risk" child by phone on a daily basis or by mail. An attempt should also be made to locate the child through the emergency notification information which the parents/guardians have provided the school and any other information which is available to the school.
- E. If, after three days, there is no response affirming the safety of the child, the attendance officer shall make an on-site investigation at the child's home.
- F. If the attendance officer is unable to confirm the safety of the child the school shall consider the child to be missing and shall notify DYFS, the proper police authorities, and other appropriate agencies and organizations. The school shall provide these agencies all information from the school records which could help in search for the child.

Release from School:

During the school session, a child may be excused only into the custody of his/her proper guardians. The school may release a child into the care of another person with permission from the guardian. The persons who are listed on a properly completed emergency notification form may be treated by the school as in loco parentis.

EARLY DETECTION OF MISSING CHILDREN (continued)Students Transferring to Another School:

When issuing a transfer card, the school shall attempt to ascertain all possible information about the destination of the child's family, including the future address, job site, names of relatives of friends in the area, and the anticipated date of the student's arrival at the new school.

If the school has not received and confirmation of the student's arrival at the new district within one week of the anticipated date of arrival, the new school district should be called and attempts made to locate the child through school districts and the other information that the school has available. If these attempts prove to be fruitless, reports shall be made to DYFS and the appropriate police authorities indicating that the school is unable to confirm that the child has reached his/her destination. The proper police authorities, DYFS, and other appropriate agencies and organizations shall be provided any information from the school records which could help in a search for the child.

Students Transferring from Another School:

A. When a student transfers in from another school, the guardianship of the child will be verified from the transfer card, through contact with the previous district, by court records, the child's school records, or other appropriate means. If the child is residing with someone other than the apparent legal guardian, the school must report this discrepancy to DYFS, the proper police authorities, and other appropriate agencies and organizations. In the meantime, the school must verify the student's entitlement to a free public education in this school district in a reasonable amount of time, a week free public education in this school district in a reasonable amount of time, a week except in unusual circumstances, through all of the following means, as prescribed by law:

- a. A sworn statement by the person with whom the child resides that he/she;
  1. is domiciled in the district,
  2. is supporting the child gratis,
  3. will assume all personal obligations of the child relative to school requirements
  4. intends to keep and support the child gratuitously for a longer time than merely through the school term.
- b. A copy of the lease or the person with whom the child resides, if the person, if the person is tenant, or sworn statement of the landlord acknowledging that such person is residing as a tenant without a written lease.
- c. A sworn statement by the child's legal parent/guardian that he/she is not supporting the child.
- d. A satisfactory documentation as to the validity of the sworn statements.

B. Student Registration

- a. A child may be registered into school while documentation of guardianship is being resolved, provided, however, that proper health records have been verified and there is adequate information on which to make an educational placement.
- b. If the school is not able to verify the student's entitlement to a free public education in this district through the means listed above (section: Students Transferring to Another School) in a reasonable amount of time, the student shall be excluded from school.
- c. If the non-guardian with whom the child resides chooses to contest the school's decision before the Commissioner of Education, the school shall admit and register the child during the pendency of such proceedings.

EARLY DETECTION OF MISSING CHILDREN (continued)

C. Registered Students Not in the Custody of a Legal Guardian:

If a registered student should reside out of the custody of a legal guardian, all of the procedures of document custody and residence which are listed above (section: Students Transferring to Another School) shall be instituted, as if the child were transferring in from another school.

Adopted:	1994
NJSBA Review/Update:	December 2008
Readopted:	March 2009