

POLICY 1.21
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Adopted: 2011-03-07

Reviewed:

Revised:

The Board of School District No. 20 (Kootenay-Columbia) is dedicated to the protection of children and the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

The Board affirms that appropriate actions will be taken in any situation where a child may be at risk.

The Board expects every person interacting with children to take seriously comments made by children that may indicate abuse or neglect.

Each person is required by law to report concerns promptly to a Ministry of Children & Family Development (MCFD) social worker.

The Board will collaborate and cooperate with external agencies and ministries to prevent abuse and neglect against any child within its jurisdiction and to ensure adherence to this policy and regulation.

REGULATION 1.21.1-R
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Adopted: 2011-04-04

Reviewed:

Revised:

1. Procedures

- 1.1 As per the *BC Child, Family & Community Services Act (CFCSA)* the district shall develop, and maintain current on an annual basis, the district comprehensive child protection protocol, *Protocol A.09: Child Abuse & Neglect*, which must include:
- a) Statement of Purpose
 - b) Guiding Principles
 - c) Definitions
 - d) Legislation
 - e) A Trilateral Protocol Agreement
 - f) School District Guidelines
 - Recognizing child abuse and neglect
 - Responding to child abuse and neglect issues
 - Reporting child abuse and neglect
 - Annual training and review
- 1.2 All school district employees, contractors, and volunteers are required to follow *Protocol A.09: Child Abuse & Neglect, Policy and Regulation 1.21: Child Abuse and Neglect* and the *BC Child, Family & Community Services Act (CFCSA)* in matters pertaining to child abuse or neglect.
- 1.3 In addition, all district employees, contractors and volunteers must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with *Policy and Regulation 4.8: Expectations of Adults Interacting with Students*.

2. Legal Duty to Report

- 2.1 Any person, contractor or volunteer who has reason to believe that a child is, has been, or is likely to be physically harmed, emotionally abused, sexually exploited, or needs protection as outlined in the *Child, Family and Community Services Act*

(CFCSA), are legally responsible to report the matter promptly to a Ministry of Children & Family Development (MCFD) social worker.

- 2.2 Persons who fail to report commit an offence under Section 14(6) of the *B.C. Child, Family and Community Services Act*.
- 2.3 The duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect supersedes the BCTF Code of Ethics. Teachers are required to report directly to an MCFD social worker.
- 2.4 Section 15 of the CFCSA provides protection from liability in that no action or damage may be brought against a person for reporting child abuse or neglect concerns unless the person knowingly reports false information.
- 2.5 All employees, contractors and volunteers must be informed by their supervisors on an annual basis of duties, responsibilities and procedures to be followed regarding child abuse and neglect as per *Protocol A.09: Child Abuse & Neglect*.
- 2.6 All district employees can reference, at their work site or on the district web site, the Ministry resources: *BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect* and *Responding to Child Welfare Concerns: Your Role in Knowing When and What to Report*.

3. Reporting Abuse or Neglect

- 3.1 The person reports promptly and directly to MCFD Centralized Screening at 1-800-663-9122. If the child is in immediate danger call 911 or the local Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The report of child abuse or neglect should contain as much of the following as possible:
 - 3.1.1 the reporter's full name, date of birth, address, telephone contact numbers (home, work, cell) and school;
 - 3.1.2 the child's full name, date of birth, grade, parents' or guardians' full names (and names of school attending, if known); home address(es) and telephone contact number(s); office telephone number(s) of parents or guardians;
 - 3.1.3 the full name, date of birth, address and telephone contact numbers (home, work, cell) of the alleged abuser, and any other information which might help locate or identify the offender;
 - 3.1.4 a verbatim detailed, accurate account of the suspected abuse or neglect, including when and where it took place;
 - 3.1.5 any immediate concerns about the child's safety;
 - 3.1.6 the hours of operation of the school;
 - 3.1.7 the child's bus schedule; and
 - 3.1.8 any special concerns about the child.
- 3.2 If the alleged abuser is an employee, the person reports to the principal, designate, or supervisor immediately after reporting to MCFD; writes down as much information as possible regarding the incident, concern or disclosure; and reports to no one else as per the tenets of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (1992)*.
 - 3.2.1 The principal, designate or supervisor informs the Superintendent of Schools or designate.
- 3.3 The responsibility for investigating child abuse or neglect reports rests with the MCFD social workers, or the RCMP.