

JHG

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

If a staff member suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, a report will be made immediately to the school principal.

The attached procedure, JHG-R, will be followed in all instances of suspected child abuse.

Adopted by Bartlett School Board – June 7, 1983

REPORTING POLICY – CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

All school personnel are requested to make themselves familiar with the New Hampshire State Law RSA 169 37-45, part of which states “all school personnel such as administrators, teachers, school nurses, guidance counselors, etc., are required to report cases of suspected abuse/neglect.” The principal, school nurse, guidance counselor, school psychologist and homeroom teacher will meet to evaluate the case. This group will only meet when referrals are made or at the request of the principal. The principal and/or his /her delegate will contact the Welfare Office with the necessary information.

It should be noted that the law reads, “In no case will the teacher or other school personnel be relieved of the duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect. In all cases, the initiator of the report shall either see that a report is made following the appropriate administrative procedures of the school or make the report themselves.”

School personnel, who in good faith make a report of suspected abuse or neglect, have immunity from any liabilities, civil or criminal. The good faith of the reporter is presumed.

RSA 169:42 states: Anyone participating in good faith in the making of a report pursuant to this subdivision shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed. Any such participant shall have the same immunity with respect to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from such report.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

- (1) Staff member who observes a possible abuse/neglect case notifies building principal.
- (2) Principal calls meeting to evaluate case. This meeting should be attended by the principal, special education teacher (head of PEPT), school nurse, guidance counselor, school psychologist, and the reporting staff member.
- (3) If necessary, the principal, or his/her delegate, contacts Welfare Office. (Normally the school nurse serves as the principal's delegate in dealing with the Welfare Office.)

Under no circumstances should any school personnel contact the Welfare Office or any other outside agency without the express permission of the school principal. Any staff member who feels that a case of possible child abuse/neglect is not being handled in the child's best interests should contact the Assistant Superintendent. Building principals should explain the child abuse/neglect reporting policy to their staff members.