



203.2AP Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

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LEGAL REFERENCE:

- *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act:*
Interpretation: Section (2), (2.1), (3)
Part One Intervention Service, Division One Preliminary Matters Section 4
- *Child First Act*

CROSS REFERENCE:

- [203.2AP Exhibit 1 Indicators of Neglect](#)
- [202.5AP Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies Admin Procedures](#)
- BTPS Threat Assessment Protocol
- [201.6AP Student Records Admin Procedures](#)

PROCEDURES:

1. Principals shall review this administrative procedure with their staff annually at a staff meeting early in the school year. All new school-based staff (instructional and non-instructional) will be made aware of these procedures as a part of their orientation at the school.
2. Principals of all schools shall make parents aware of such admin procedures.
3. The Director of Transportation Services shall ensure that all school bus operators are made aware of these procedures.
4. The Director of Facilities shall ensure that all contract custodians and their staff are made aware of these procedures.
5. This procedure will be reviewed by the Director of Inclusive Learning annually.
6. These guidelines in no way precludes the principal's responsibility to respond appropriately in emergency situations where immediate medical attention may be required, or where a student's personal safety is a risk and police assistance is needed.
7. The principal shall recognize that, beyond these procedures, the Intervention Services

Assessment Case Worker is familiar with the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* legislation, policies, practices, resources and is able to provide information, interpretation, advice, and assistance in matters of child abuse and neglect.

8. Obligation to Report
 - 8.1 All staff are obligated to report suspected incidents of abuse and neglect. Indicators of neglect, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse are attached as Exhibit "1" to this procedure.
 - 8.2 The *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, Part I Intervention Services Division I Preliminary Matters 4(1) outlines the legal obligation to report suspected neglect or abuse to the *Child, Youth, and Family Enhancement Act* director.
 - 8.3 Sanctions for those who fail to report suspected neglect or abuse are found in the *Child, Youth, and Family Enhancement Act*.
9. Buffalo Trail Public Schools' staff shall recognize the legal obligation and moral responsibility to work collaboratively with those involved in investigating alleged cases of child abuse or neglect. Child Services propose to use the principles of cooperation, collaboration, and coordination in their working relationships with the community. School staffs acknowledge that the safety and welfare of students is of paramount concern and will fulfill obligations by using those same principles.
10. The Board approves of the delivery of a child personal safety education program in its schools.
11. Reporting
 - 11.1 Any staff having reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a student has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who is concerned about abuse or neglect of a student must report the situation to the *Child, Youth, and Family Enhancement Act* director.
 - 11.2 The principal will be informed verbally by the staff member making the report, that a report is being made that involves one of the students in the school for which he is responsible. There is not an obligation on the part of the staff member to share any details. It is the expectation that the Principal may act in a support role if requested by the staff member.
 - 11.3 It is possible that allegations of child abuse may be made against teachers or other school personnel. In all such cases, a staff member must report the situation to the *Child, Youth, and Family Enhancement Act* director.
 - 11.4 The Superintendent of Schools will be informed verbally by the principal that a report is being made that involves one of the staff members in a school for which he is responsible.
 - 11.5 Knowledge of a suspected case of child abuse or neglect is confidential and should be restricted to the staff member initiating the report, and the principal /and or designate.
12. Access to Students
 - 12.1 The *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* mandates investigation of suspected child abuse or neglect and provide the authority for Intervention Services Assessment Case Workers and Peace Officers to enter schools in certain circumstances. Access to

students for investigative purposes may be required in certain emergency circumstances when the student is an alleged victim of abuse or neglect. In such special circumstances, investigators are expected to consider the convenience of school and student when negotiating a time for access.

- 12.2 The principal should ask the Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker or Peace Officer to present identification, and to state reasons for wanting to conduct the interview in the school.

13. Notification of Parents

- 13.1 The responsibility for notifying parents about an investigation is that of the Intervention Assessment Service Case Worker. While it is important for parents to learn promptly that an investigation is underway, a greater concern is that the child be protected from further abuse. Thus, in cases where intra-familial abuse may be suspected, parent notification by the Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker follows an initial contact with the child.

- 13.2 In cases of suspected intra-familial abuse, the principal should clarify with the Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker when contact with the parents will be made, particularly when an investigation commences near the end of a school day, as the child may have been apprehended or his return home delayed because the investigation is still incomplete. If the Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker has not yet contacted the parents and they call the principal indicating that the child has not yet returned home, the principal will provide the Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker name and telephone number, if known, or the telephone number of the nearest Child and Family Services Authority.

14. Threats

- 14.1 In the event that threats are made against school personnel or the child, the BTPS Threat Assessment Protocol will be implemented.

15. Presence of School Personnel during Investigating Interview

- 15.1 The principal's responsibility for the safety and welfare of students is discharged by cooperating and assisting with the Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker and Peace Officer investigations.

- 15.2 An effective initial interview with the victim of alleged abuse or neglect should be facilitated as this is essential to an accurate and comprehensive assessment of the situation. The interests of the student require that the Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker or Peace Officer interview should occur under circumstances that will encourage the student to speak freely and openly to the responsible investigators about sensitive and often threatening personal concerns, while also recognizing and preserving the family's reputation and right to privacy.

- 15.3 Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker and police officials advise that, in the interests of confidentiality and full and undistorted disclosure, it is appropriate for students and investigators to be alone.

- 15.4 While no student is required or pressured to make a statement or provide information

that the student is not prepared to reveal, occasionally a student may request or require the reassuring but nonparticipating presence of a familiar teacher or staff member.

- 15.5 Recognizing the principles outlined above there may be other instances where school personnel and investigators may agree that a school representative should be present during the interview.
16. Investigative Interview with School Staff
 - 16.1 Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker or peace authorities investigating a complaint of child abuse or neglect from whatever source may wish to interview teachers or other school personnel having regular contact with the student or having other specific information pertinent to the investigation. The principal will assist the investigators by identifying and facilitating these contacts.
 - 16.2 Potential informants should be advised that the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* provides explicit protection against legal actions “unless reporting is done maliciously or without reasonable and probable grounds for the belief” as per Part One Intervention Services, Division One Preliminary Matters 4(4) of the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*.
17. Information Feedback to Schools
 - 17.1 The *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* allow greater flexibility regarding the sharing of information. Therefore, Intervention Services Assessment Case Worker will be in a position to keep the principal apprised of significant developments regarding students who have status with the Authority. This information shall be kept confidential except on a “need to know” basis.
18. Use of System Personnel
 - 18.1 The resolution of the complex issues in any case of child abuse and neglect does not end with reporting the matter to *Child, Youth, and Family Enhancement Act* director. Effective case management plans may include provision for case-monitoring and follow-up in which schools and system personnel may be involved.
19. Child Personal Safety Education
 - 19.1 Principals shall implement an annual child personal safety education unit of instruction for each student in their school that includes, but is not limited to, digital citizenship, healthy relationships and setting of boundaries.
 - 19.2 Where outside services are not appropriate or available, the Superintendent and/or designate shall provide appropriate in-service training for teachers offering the program.
 - 19.3 The child and youth personal safety education unit of instruction will be covered through the Physical Education and Wellness curriculum k to 6 and throughout the Alberta Education Health and Wellness Curriculum from grades 7 – CALM.
 - 19.4 Teachers shall use only authorized materials in the program.