



Child Abuse-Neglect Reporting Policy

I. Board Policy

The Summit Academy Board of Trustees has established general guidelines and standards for the reporting of child abuse-neglect against students of Summit Academy.

II. Purpose

The purpose of the Child Abuse-Neglect Reporting Policy is to ensure timely reporting of child abuse and child neglect to appropriate agencies.

III. Guidelines

When an employee suspects child abuse or neglect the employee shall immediately inform the principal of the respective school and the principal shall report the incident to the Department of Child and Family Services.

IV. Definitions

- 1) Child abuse is defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as any recent act or failure to act that results in a child's serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, exploitation or death. An act that presents a risk of serious harm to a child is considered to be child abuse.
- 2) Each state provides its own definitions of child abuse within civil and criminal statutes, but they are informed by the following definitions of various forms of child abuse:
 - a. Physical. A non-accidental physical injury as a result of punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting, burning or otherwise harming a child, that is inflicted by a parent, caregiver or other person who has responsibility for the child. Such injury is considered abuse regardless of whether the caregiver intended to hurt the child.
 - b. Sexual. A form of child abuse that includes any sexual act performed with a child by an adult or older child, with or without force or threat of force. It may start as seemingly innocent touching and progress to more serious acts, including verbal seduction or abuse, anal or vaginal intercourse, oral sex, sodomy, manual stimulation, direct threats, implied threats or other forms of abuse.
 - c. Emotional. A pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth. This form of abuse is almost always present when other forms of abuse are identified. It may include constant criticism, threats or rejection, as well as withholding love, support or guidance. Emotional abuse is often difficult to prove and, therefore, Child Protective services may not be able to intervene without clear evidence of harm to the child.
 - d. Psychological. This is a pattern of behavior that affects a child's sense of worth by communicating to the child that he or she is not worthy, loved or important. Psychological abuse may include harsh demands, constant criticism, threats and yelling. Witnessing other violent incidents such as, domestic violence or school



violence is also a form of psychological abuse due to the intense fear it produces and the indirect threat to a child's safety.

- e. Neglect. Child neglect is the leading form of child abuse in the United States and occurs when a caretaker fails to provide for a child's basic needs, which include adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, supervision, medical care or safekeeping. As a result of such treatment, the child's physical, mental, or emotional development can be impaired.