

# Williamson County Board of Education

**Adopted Date:**

2/19/01; Rev. 11/15/04;  
Editorial 6/23/14; Rev.  
10/23/17

6.409

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT  
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1 Any school employee who knows or reasonably suspects that a child's health or welfare has been or appears  
2 to have been harmed as a result of abuse or neglect must immediately report such abuse or neglect to the  
3 Tennessee Department of Children's Services and/or the Sheriff's Office in the county where the child  
4 resides, and the Principal of the school. The reporting person shall then make a written summary of this  
5 report. One copy shall be sent to the Superintendent of Schools, one copy shall be retained in the Principal's  
6 office, and one copy shall be kept by the person making the report. The report to the Department of  
7 Children's Services and/or the Sheriff's Office, and the summary thereof, should include only factual  
8 information and should not include speculation or opinions of the reporting party. If the parents or legal  
9 guardians are not the alleged abusers, they shall be verbally notified by the Principal within twenty-four (24)  
10 hours. The notice shall not be given to any parent or legal guardian if there is a reasonable cause to believe  
11 that the parent or legal guardian may be the perpetrator or in any way responsible for the abuse. If  
12 allegations of child abuse involve a school system employee, the Superintendent of Schools shall initiate an  
13 investigation into the allegations and shall thoroughly document the results of the investigation except that  
14 any such investigation shall occur after receiving authorization to proceed with the investigation from the  
15 Sheriff's Office and/or the Department of Children's Services.

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17 The Williamson County Board of Education shall provide children attending Williamson County Schools with  
18 an environment free of sexual advances, sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or  
19 communication constituting sexual harassment and/or abuse, as defined and otherwise prohibited by state  
20 and federal law.

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22 Child abuse (sexual abuse) shall be defined as follows:

23  
24 "Child", for the purposes of child abuse, is defined as a person under eighteen years of age who, prior to  
25 juvenile proceedings, has not been judicially emancipated or emancipated by marriage. "Abuse" means any  
26 one of the following acts which seriously endangers the physical, mental or emotional health of a child:

- 27  
28 (a) The infliction, attempted infliction, or as a result of inadequate supervision, the allowance of the  
29 infliction or attempted infliction of physical or mental injury upon a child by a parent or any other  
30 person.  
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32 (b) The exploitation or overwork of a child by a parent or any other person.  
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34 (c) The involvement of the child in any sexual act with a parent or any other person, or the aiding or  
35 toleration by the parent or caretaker, of the child's sexual involvement with any other person, or of the  
36 child's involvement in pornographic displays, or any other involvement of a child in sexual activity  
37 constituting a crime under the laws of this state.

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39 In cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect the law requires the school system to provide all school records  
40 to the Tennessee Department of Human Services. Parental permission is unnecessary. The Family  
41 Educational Rights and Privacy Act makes an exception for information that involves health or safety.  
42 However, the usual procedure for documenting that records have been viewed will be followed.

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44 Tennessee law states a person reporting harm shall be presumed to be acting in good faith and shall thereby  
45 be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed for such action.  
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1 Employees of the school district will be provided with information of this board policy, as well as with  
2 procedures for reporting suspected student abuse or neglect. This information, in addition to staff  
3 development training, will be provided through materials and training offered during a faculty meeting at each  
4 school during the first four weeks of the school term.  
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6 a. Informational materials, including applicable portions of the law and definitions of abuse and  
7 neglect, will be distributed to all employees.  
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9 b. Staff development training will occur including types of child abuse and neglect, recognizing child  
10 abuse and neglect, and procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect.  
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Legal Reference:

TCA 37-1-403

TCA 37-1-605