

August 28, 2025

**AMEND BOARD REPORT 22-0622-PO2  
POLICY ON THE REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND  
INAPPROPRIATE RELATIONS BETWEEN ADULTS AND STUDENTS**

**THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:**

That the Chicago Board of Education (the Board) amend Board Report 22-0622-PO2 Policy on the Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Inappropriate Relations Between Adults and Students. The policy was posted for public comment from June 27, 2025 to July 28, 2025.

**PURPOSE:** The Board is committed to the safety and wellbeing of students and ensuring all employees and other Covered Individual Adults are informed of standards for professional behavior and the requirement of mandated reporters to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect by school personnel and others responsible for the welfare of children. This policy sets forth clear expectations that all ~~employees-mandated reporters~~ must protect students by reporting any interactions or behaviors which suggest that an adult has or had an inappropriately intimate relationship with a child or may be grooming a child, even if the employee does not have reasonable suspicion that sexual misconduct is occurring or has occurred; requires reporting of any suspicions or witnessing of abuse of a child and requires mandated reporters to immediately call the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Hotline when they have reasonable suspicion of any type of child abuse or neglect. Chicago Public Schools (CPS) employs dedicated and professional staff members who provide students with a safe and supportive learning environment. The District encourages healthy relationships between students and Covered Individual Adults, including school staff and administrators, to promote student achievement and success. This Policy defines appropriate and reasonable boundaries for staff members and other Covered Individual Adults to maintain with students to (1) protect students from sexual misconduct and abuse, and (2) to protect staff members and other Covered Individual Adults from misunderstandings and false accusations.

**POLICY TEXT:****I. DEFINITIONS**

A. An “abused child” means a child whose parent/guardian, immediate family member, parent’s paramour, any individual residing in the same home as the child, any employee, volunteer, vendor or contractor, or other Covered Individual Adult at the child’s school, or any other person responsible for the child’s welfare:

1. Inflicts, causes to be inflicted, allows to be inflicted, or creates a substantial risk of, physical injury by other than accidental means, which causes or would be likely to cause death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function;
2. Commits or allows to be committed a sex offense against the child;
3. Commits or allows to be committed an act of torture upon the child;
4. Inflicts excessive corporal punishment; or, in the case of a Covered Individual Adult, inflicts any act of corporal punishment upon a child with whom the person is working in the person’s professional capacity (NOTE: Board Rule 6-21 prohibits corporal punishment and abusive conduct);
5. Commits or allows to be committed the offense of involuntary servitude, involuntary sexual servitude or human trafficking upon a child;
6. Allows, encourages or requires a child to commit an act of sex trafficking; or
7. Commits the offense of grooming against the child.

B. A “neglected child” means any child who is not receiving the proper support, medical or remedial care

necessary for the child's well-being, including adequate food, clothing, or shelter, or a child who is abandoned without a proper plan of care by parents or other persons responsible for the child's welfare.

C. "Mandated reporters" include all Board employees (including administrators and both certificated and non-certificated school employees), educational advocates assigned to a child pursuant to the School Code, social workers, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, recreational program personnel, registered psychologists, psychiatrists, physicians, and others, who have reasonable cause to believe that a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be an abused or neglected child or that acts of suspected abuse committed by a Covered Individual Adult or boundary violations have occurred. Mandated Reporters also include vendors, contractors, ~~volunteers and adult~~ Local School Council members, and volunteers who are required to complete the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) training pursuant to the CPS Volunteer Policy (Section 801.2). As used in this Section, "a child known to them in their professional or official capacities" means: (A) the mandated reporter comes into contact with the child in the course of the reporter's employment or practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service; (B) the mandated reporter is affiliated with Chicago Public Schools; or (C) a person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse or child neglect, and the disclosure happens while the mandated reporter is engaged in his or her employment or practice of a profession, or in a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service.

D. "Sexual Misconduct" - A form of sex or gender-based discrimination or harassment that includes any conduct that is sex-based or of a sexual nature that is unwelcome or inappropriate. With respect to conduct between Covered Individual ~~a~~Adults and students, any sexual or romantic conduct constitutes Sexual Misconduct. (See ~~Final New Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct~~ and Retaliation Policy). Examples of Sexual Misconduct between Covered Individual ~~a~~Adults and students, include, but are not limited to, (1) a sexual or romantic invitation, (2) dating or soliciting a date, (3) engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog, (4) making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student, (5) self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature, or (6) a sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with a student.

E. "Grooming" - Behavior a person in a position of trust or authority uses to build an emotional connection with a child or young person, including a student who may be over 18 years of age, to gain their trust and break down their inhibitions for a sexual purpose.

1. The definition of grooming under this Policy includes but is not limited to the following:
  - a. A person commits grooming when they knowingly use a computer on-line service, internet service, local bulletin board service, or any other device capable of electronic data storage or transmission, performs an act in person or by conduct through a third party, or uses written communication to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, a child, a child's guardian, or another person believed by the person to be a child or a child's guardian, to commit any sex offense in Section 2 of the Sex Offender Registration Act, to distribute photographs depicting the sex organs of the child, or to otherwise engage in any unlawful sexual conduct with a child or with another person believed by the person to be a child.
2. A person may be "grooming" a child or engaging in inappropriate intimate behavior with a child when the person engages in behavior that includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Creating or engaging in isolated, one-on-one interactions with a child (e.g., transporting a child without the written authorization of the principal and the parent/guardian, texting or direct messaging the child);
  - b. giving or attempting to give gifts to a particular child (e.g., money, clothing); or
  - c. crossing physical boundaries (e.g., touching, giving prolonged frontal hugs, or making the child sit on their lap).

F. A "Boundary Violation" is an act, omission, or pattern of such behavior by ~~an employee a~~ Covered Individual Adult that does not have a legitimate educational purpose; and results in abuse of the ~~staff/student~~ professional relationship with a student or has the potential to cause harm to the student.

G. ~~"Staff" or "staff members" or "employees" as referred to in this Policy include all Board employees~~

~~(including and without limitation to teachers, coaches, counselors, administrators), volunteers, vendors, consultants and their employees, and other third parties who interact with students.~~ “Covered Individual Adults” - All Board employees, contractors, consultants, vendors, volunteers, visitors, applicants for employment, and adult members of the Board or a Local School Council are Covered Individual Adults and subject to this Policy. Covered Individual Adults must not engage in any abuse, sexual misconduct, corporal punishment, physical abuse, verbal abuse, or boundary violations while employed by, working for, or attending or participating in District programs or activities. NOTE: The CPS Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy details protections for Covered Individual Adults.

H. A “child” or “student” includes all individuals currently attending CPS schools, regardless of their age.

I. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX): “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

J. “Acts of suspected abuse committed by Covered Individual Adults” include seeing, hearing, witnessing, or being informed about any acts of corporal punishment, physical abuse, verbal abuse, or sexual misconduct, as defined by the Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy (Section 102.8A) and/or the OSP Procedure Manual.

## **II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ~~EMPLOYEES~~ MANDATED REPORTERS AND COVERED INDIVIDUAL ADULTS**

### **A. Training**

1. All ~~Board employees~~ mandated reporters as defined in Section I are required to complete the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) online training module, “Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters,” which created pursuant to 325 ILCS 5/4, which includes the following topics: recognizing child abuse and child neglect, the process for reporting suspected child abuse and child neglect to DCFS, responding to a child in a trauma-informed manner, and implicit bias. The DCFS online training module can be accessed on SafeSchools, the training website accessible to all CPS employees.

- a. All employees must complete the online training within one month of their date of hire by the Board and every year thereafter.

2. The Chief Executive Officer, or their designee, will create, disseminate and train all appropriate employees on Protecting Chicago’s Children annually. This training will include training on preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming behavior, including when grooming or abuse is committed by a member of the school community, with a discussion of the criminal statutes addressing sexual conduct between school personnel and students, professional conduct, and reporting requirements, including, but not limited to, training as outlined in Erin’s Law.

### **B. Illinois Educator Code of Ethics**

1. This Policy incorporates the Illinois Educator Code of Ethics. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed as circumventing the Illinois Educator Code of Ethics.

### **C. Identifying Students who are Abused or Neglected**

Based upon the training they have received, Board employees and other mandated reporters must use their best efforts to identify students who are abused or neglected. ~~Board employees~~ Mandated reporters must not, however, ask any student to remove any item of clothing, other than a coat, jacket or similar item of outerwear, to check for signs of child abuse or neglect.

When sexual abuse or sexual exploitation is suspected, principals are permitted to ask questions solely to gather the minimal information necessary to make a report to the Department of Children and Family

~~Services and request a formal investigation by district investigators make the appropriate notification to the Office of Student Protections and Title IX (OSP), or to ensure the safety of students.~~

#### **D. Reporting and Documenting Reasonable Suspicions of Child Abuse, Child Neglect, Sexual Misconduct, Grooming or Inappropriately Intimate Relationships**

1. A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the reporter in the reporter's official capacity may have been abused or neglected is required to immediately call the DCFS Hotline at 1-800-252-2873 (1-800-25-ABUSE). Mandated reporters must also report to DCFS any sexual misconduct by an adult against a student as well as any interactions or behaviors which suggest that an adult has or had an inappropriately intimate relationship with a child or may be grooming a child, even if the ~~employee-mandated reporter~~ does not have reasonable suspicion that sex abuse is occurring or has occurred. All mandated reporters covered under this Policy have an affirmative duty to report any acts of suspected abuse committed by Covered Individual Adults, as defined in Section I, including any acts of corporal punishment, physical abuse, verbal abuse, or sexual misconduct. NOTE: A mandated reporter's legal obligation is not satisfied by notifying the reporter's supervisor or principal of the reporter's suspicion.

2. After notifying the DCFS Hotline, a Mandated Reporter must inform the reporter's principal/supervisor of the report. If the alleged abuser is the mandated reporter's principal/supervisor, or the mandated reporter fears retaliation from their principal/supervisor, the mandated reporter must notify the Network Chief/Chief Officer of the report. An anonymous report to DCFS does not satisfy a mandated reporter's obligations under this policy.

~~3. When the mandated reporter notifies the principal/supervisor that the mandated reporter has called the Hotline to report suspected abuse or neglect, the principal/supervisor must complete an Incident Report form in the Board's electronic incident-reporting system. Upon notification of a report made to DCFS of child abuse, child neglect, sexual misconduct, grooming or inappropriate relationships defined in this Policy, the principal/supervisor or Network Chief/Chief Officer must notify the Office of Student Protections and Title IX (OSP) by completing an Incident Report in the Board's electronic incident-reporting system, and responding to the required questions. The Incident Report must include the name of the individual who made the report to DCFS and the information reported to DCFS which led to the Incident Report as well as any additional relevant information they possess.~~

~~4. Within 48 hours after making a DCFS Hotline call, the mandated reporter or the principal/supervisor must send written confirmation to the appropriate DCFS field office and upload a copy of the written confirmation into the Board's electronic incident-reporting system.~~

54. A mandated reporter must not notify a parent, guardian, family or household member of allegations or investigations of suspected child abuse or neglect by a parent, guardian, family or household member. Notification will be handled by DCFS or the police.

65. A mandated reporter must preserve confidentiality by discussing the reporter's suspicions only with the alleged victim to the degree necessary to make the report; the mandated reporter's supervisor; the school nurse or social worker; district investigators; any employee of DCFS, the Chicago Police Department or the State's Attorney's Office; and the child's court appointed attorney or guardian *ad litem*.

76. A mandated reporter shall cooperate fully with investigators from the DCFS Division of Child Protection (DCP). Any employee subpoenaed to testify in any court or administrative proceeding shall notify the employee's supervisor of the subpoena. The requirements for a paid court-attendance leave are specified in Board Rule 4-14. See also Section III.A, regarding employees' obligation to cooperate with District investigations.

#### **E. Providing Support to Students Who are Abused or Neglected**

1. If the principal or designee determines that the child needs medical assistance, the principal or

designee must call the Emergency Services at 9-1-1.

2. If the principal or designee determines that it is not safe for the child to return home, the principal or designee must not allow the child to go home and must contact DCFS immediately.

3. If a notification is made to DCFS pursuant to II.E.2., the principal or designee must:

- a. Remain in contact with DCFS and follow the instructions received regarding dismissing the student when the school day has ended.
- b. If DCFS requests that the child be dismissed home and the principal or designee determines that it is not safe, request that DCFS take custody of the child and remove them from the school building within a reasonable amount of time after the school day has ended.
- c. Inform DCFS that district policy prohibits the principal or other ~~staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults from taking a student into their care, in the event DCFS requests that a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult engage in this practice following a report to DCFS. Nor shall a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult volunteer to take a child into their care or take the child to their residence.
- d. If DCFS has not arrived on the scene by the end of the school day, notify the Chicago Police Department at 9-1-1 to take protective custody.
- e. Notify the Student Safety Center at 773-553-3335 for guidance on the rare occasion that the principal has a child in their custody at a school building beyond the end of the school day.
- f. Assign a school mental health professional to support the student and contact the Crisis Management Team.
- g. Notify each of the child's teachers of the Hotline call and maintain in the child's school record a copy of the written confirmation and any police report (if available).

4. ~~The principal or designee shall also contact~~ After the principal/supervisor or Network Chief/Chief Officer makes the appropriate notification to the Office of Student Protections (OSP) described in Section II.D.3. who will the Office of Student Protections and Title IX OSP will coordinate with the school's Behavioral Health Team to ensure that the student has access to appropriate support services at the school and connect the student with third party counseling providers if appropriate.

5. The following resources can provide assistance to students that have been abused or neglected. When a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult reports suspected abuse, neglect, or grooming, the Office of Student Protections and Title IX will provide this list to the ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult and the impacted student(s).

Resources
<p>Important Phone Numbers:</p> <p><b>Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline</b> - 888-293-2080 Students age 13 and up, non-offending significant others, parents and guardians can contact the Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline 24/7. Support text and chat 9 a.m.-5 p.m.</p> <p><b>Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline</b> - 877-863-6338 (877-TO END DV) <b>Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS)</b> - 800-252-2873 (800-25ABUSE) <b>Office of Student Protections &amp; Title IX</b> - 773-535-4400.</p>

<p><b>Chicago Children's Advocacy Center</b></p>	<p>Chicago Children's Advocacy Center (ChicagoCAC) provides coordination and support, including case management, mental health services and referrals, to victims of child sexual abuse in Chicago when the case has been accepted by DCFS or law enforcement for an investigation. ChicagoCAC also provides treatment for children 12 and younger who exhibit problematic sexual behavior.</p>	<p>312-492-3700 http://www.chicagocac.org/</p>
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Additional resources are available at [www.cps.edu](http://www.cps.edu), in the OSP Procedure Manual (<https://cps.edu/ospmanual>), and in the Chicago Public Schools Student Rights & Responsibilities Booklet.

#### **F. Reporting and Documenting Boundary Violations (Other than Child Abuse, Neglect, Sexual Misconduct, or Grooming)**

1. If there is not reasonable cause to believe that a child is an abused child, but ~~an employee a mandated reporter~~ a staff member Covered Individual Adult has witnessed any interaction or receives information suggesting that a ~~staff member Covered Individual Adult~~ failed to maintain professional boundaries with a student (as defined in section G), the employee must report the information to a principal/supervisor or the Network Chief/Chief Officer as soon as possible. An anonymous report does not satisfy ~~an employee a mandated reporter's~~ a staff member Covered Individual Adult's obligations under this policy.

2. Upon receipt of such a report, the principal/supervisor or Network Chief/Chief Officer must notify the Office of Student Protections and Title IX (~~773-535-4400~~) and (OSP) by completing an Incident Report in the Board's electronic incident-reporting system detailing the alleged failure to maintain professional boundaries and responding to the required questions. The Incident Report must include the name of the individual who made the report and the information reported to the principal/supervisor or Network Chief/Chief Officer which led to the Incident Report as well as any additional relevant information they possess.

~~3. Students and parents/guardians should notify the Office of Student Protections and Title IX (773-535-4400) if they believe a staff member may be engaging in conduct that violates Section G.~~

~~43. Staff Covered Individual Adults~~ shall immediately notify the Equal Opportunity Compliance Office (773-553-1013) or at [www.cps.edu/eoco](http://www.cps.edu/eoco) if they believe that they are receiving inappropriate attention from a student, or if they have been subject to sexual advances, comments or communications by a student. Any complaints/notifications must be logged as an incident report by the principal or assistant principal immediately. The failure of a staff member to timely report conduct that violates this Policy can result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

#### **G. Maintaining Professional ~~Staff/Student~~ Boundaries with Students**

1. For ~~staff members Covered Individual Adults~~ whose children are students of CPS or who have family members who attend a CPS school, Subsection G does not apply to the usual parent/child or familial relationship.

2. As used in Subsection II.G, "student" includes a recent graduate, meaning a former CPS student up until one year after the student has graduated.

a-

3. All ~~employees~~ Covered Individual Adults must follow the following general standards that apply to all ~~staff and student interactions~~ interactions with students:

i-

a. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must always be appropriate to the circumstances, non-sexual and unambiguous in meaning.

ii-

b. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults shall maintain a strictly professional relationship with students, whether on or off school property and during or outside of school hours.

iii-

c. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults are responsible for maintaining professional and appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with students at all times.

iv-

d. Interactions between ~~staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults and students should be based on mutual respect and trust.

v-

e. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults are responsible for treating all students consistently and in line with the educational mission of the District.

b-

4. The following behaviors by Covered Individual Adults towards or involving students are unacceptable, cross a professional boundary and are prohibited by this Policy:

i-

a. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not target a particular student or students for the purpose of developing a friendship or personal relationship. Gossiping with or about other students or ~~staff~~ Covered Individual Adults and confiding in students beyond the normal ~~staff member-student~~ professional relationship is prohibited.

ii-

b. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not ask a student to keep a secret, promise to keep a student's secret or coerce a student to confide their personal or family problems. This example does not apply when Covered Individual Adults who are counseling staff are meeting with students. If a student initiates a discussion of their personal or family problems, ~~staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults are expected to be supportive and to refer the student to the counseling staff member, if appropriate.

iii-

c. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not engage in sexual, racial, religious, or any biased based speech or actions, including jokes or innuendoes, with students. Discriminatory speech that marginalizes a student or groups of students is strictly prohibited. This applies to one's actual or perceived membership in one or more of the Protected Categories as defined by the ~~Final New~~ Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, ~~Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct~~ and Retaliation Policy (Section 102.8A).

iv-

d. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not show inappropriate images, including pornography or child sexual abuse material, violence or explicit language to students.

v-

e. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not engage in, discuss or plan future romantic or sexual relationships with students.

vi-

f. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not make sexual advances towards students or flirt with students.

vii-

g. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not engage with a student's flirting or sexual overtures. Any incidents of a student flirting with a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult or making sexual overtures towards a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult must be reported pursuant to Section II F-43.

viii-

~~h. Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not provide or offer to provide alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or paraphernalia to students.

~~ix.~~

~~i. Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not single out any one student and provide the student with gift(s) or accept expensive or numerous gifts from students. Nominal gifts to multiple students or the whole classroom are permissible. Nominal gifts to teachers as a form of appreciation are acceptable.

~~x.~~

~~j. Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not address students with unique pet names or personalized terms of endearment that suggest a unique and overly familiar relationship. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not allow students to address them by their first name alone, nickname, pet names or personalized terms of endearment that suggest an overly familiar relationship.

~~xi.~~

~~k. Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not comment on a student's physical appearance.

~~xii.~~

~~l. Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not engage in any type of inappropriate physical contact with students or any other conduct that might be considered harassment, discrimination, or retaliation under the ~~Chicago Board of Education's (Board) Final New Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy (Section 102.8A).~~

~~xiii.~~

~~m. Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not ~~engage in or~~ use corporal punishment or engage in any disciplinary action with the intention of producing physical or emotional pain (such as humiliation, embarrassment, threats, ~~using physical activity as punishment~~, or other punitive or demoralizing actions toward a student), this includes conduct towards the children of ~~staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults enrolled in CPS.

~~xiv.~~

~~n. Staff~~ Covered Individual Adults must not take or possess a photograph or video of a student for personal use. Photos or videos for educational purposes must be expressly approved by the student's parent or guardian or with a District media consent release form signed by the student's parent or guardian. This includes posts of photographs or videos of students to social media.

~~e.~~

5. ~~Staff~~ Covered Individual Adults should avoid activities with students that present opportunities for inappropriate relationships or that create the appearance that the ~~staff~~ Covered Individual Adult and student are in an inappropriate relationship.

~~i-a.~~ In certain situations, the following activities may be within professional ~~staff/student~~ boundaries (for example, if a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult's child is friends with another student). However, in these situations, a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult must never be alone with a student and the ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult's supervisor must be made aware of the ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult's activities and receive prior approval. In general, the following activities must be avoided and could result in a violation of this Policy. These include:

~~a-i.~~ Being alone with an individual student out of the view of others, unless required in connection with providing educational services in accordance with your employment (e.g., health screening, counseling, therapy, nursing, personal care and other services required by individualized education plans, 504 plans or other medical condition action plans).

~~b-ii.~~ Inviting or allowing individual students to visit the ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult's home.

~~c-iii.~~ Visiting a student's home or meeting the student at another location outside of school for non-educational purposes.

~~d-iv.~~ Transporting a student in a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult's private vehicle without written permission of the principal and the parent/guardian, and in line with Section II.G.37.

## 2-6. Electronic Communication

- a. When communicating with students via electronic means, ~~staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must abide by the Board's Staff Acceptable Use Policy (Section 604.1). ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults communicating with students via electronic means must do so using the CPS network and for educational purposes only.
- b. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not engage in any unacceptable behavior with students via electronic means. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults should also avoid any appearances of impropriety with students via electronic means.
- c. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not communicate with students via a student's mobile device, whether phone, text or instant message, except when permitted by an exception outlined in the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.
- d. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not communicate with students via a student's personal email account, except when permitted by an exception outlined in the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.
- e. ~~Staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults must not accept or initiate connections with ~~current~~ students on non-CPS-related social networking sites, except when permitted by an exception outlined in the Staff Acceptable Use Policy (see provisions addressing "Personal Social Media").
- f. If a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult has a CPS-approved social networking site for educational purposes, the ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult must obtain permission from the principal and parents to engage with students via this site ensure the social media presence and interactions comply with the CPS Social Media Guidelines established by the Chief Communications Officer as outlined in the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

## 3-7. Travel/Transportation

- i. a. Consistent with the Board's Student Travel Policy (Section 604.3), ~~staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults are strongly discouraged from transporting a student in the ~~staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults' private vehicle(s) under any circumstances. However, ~~staff members~~ Covered Individual Adults may transport a student with the written consent of both the principal and parent/guardian of the student. Written consent from the parent/guardian must be given in advance of the trip on the Private Vehicle Permission Slip available on the employee intranet site for Student Travel. If the principal gives consent to a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult to transport a student in a private vehicle, the principal must maintain a copy of the ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult's driver's license and insurance documentation.
- ii. b. If a ~~staff member~~ Covered Individual Adult transports a student with permission from the parent/guardian and the principal, efforts should be made for an additional adult to be in the car such that ~~the staff member a~~ Covered Individual Adult is not alone with a student outside the view of others.

## **H. Unfounded DCFS Hotline Reports**

1. A mandated reporter is entitled to receive information about findings made and actions taken by DCFS as a result of the reporter's DCFS Hotline report, including any steps taken to protect the child.
2. Within 10 days of receipt of notice that DCFS has "unfounded" the reporter's Hotline report, a mandated reporter, who believes the determination was inaccurate, may request a review by a Multi-Disciplinary Review Committee within DCFS by submitting a written request to the Administrator of

~~the State Central Registrar. If the mandated reporter believes that a student continues to be abused, neglected, or is in danger, the mandated reporter must contact the Office of Student Protections and Title IX as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours after receiving notice that the Hotline report was unfounded to request a review of the DCFS investigation. If the case involves grooming or sexual misconduct, OSP will forward the matter to the Office of the Inspector General.~~

### **I. Cooperating with DCFS Investigation**

1. **Student Interviews.** If a DCFS investigator requests to interview a student who is the subject of a child abuse or neglect report, or a student who is a witness to abuse or neglect, the principal or designee must follow the Procedure for Interviewing Students in Chicago Public Schools, ~~Board Report 08-0723-PO4 Policy (Section 705.6).~~

2. ~~GPS Employee~~ **Covered Individual Adult Interviews.** When a DCFS investigator requests to speak with an accused staff member or other Covered Individual Adult, ask the investigator to question the ~~staff member~~ any Covered Individual Adults, to the extent possible, in a manner that would minimize disruption of the school day.

3. **Protective Custody.** If a DCFS investigator or police officer takes protective custody of a student at school, the principal or designee shall:

- a. Ask the DCFS investigator/police officer for a contact name and telephone number;
- b. Attempt to notify the parent/guardian that protective custody has been taken and provide contact information to the parent/guardian; and
- c. Document the action taken in the Board's incident reporting system and in the student's temporary student record.

### **J. Requests for School Records, Subpoenas and Court Orders in Relation to Reports of Abuse or Neglect**

1. **School Records.** A DCFS investigator may review a document from the student's school records in only two circumstances:

- a. When DCFS has been appointed as temporary custodian or guardian of the student; or
- b. In an emergency, when the principal determines that review of a particular school record is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student. Within three working days of the emergency release of a school record, the student's parent/guardian will be notified in writing that the record was released, the date of release, and the name and title of the person to whom it was released.

2. **Subpoena to Testify.** Any supervisor whose supervisee receives a subpoena to testify in juvenile court or in a DCFS administrative hearing must grant the employee a court attendance leave in accordance with Board Rule 4-14.

3. **Subpoena/Court Order for Records.** When the school receives a subpoena or court order for records, the principal or designee shall promptly provide a copy of the subpoena or court order to the Law Department. The principal or designee shall collect all documents that are responsive to the subpoena or court order and shall provide these documents to the Law Department. The Law Department will respond to the subpoena or court order.

### **K. Upon Notification of the Result of the DCFS Investigation**

1. If the school receives written notice that a Hotline report about a student was "indicated" by DCFS,

meaning DCFS determined that there was credible evidence of abuse and/or neglect, the principal shall direct the school clerk to place the notice in the student's temporary school record.

2. If the school receives written notice that a Hotline report about a student was "unfounded" by DCFS, the principal shall direct the school clerk to remove any documentation of the report from the student's school record and return that documentation to DCFS.

### **III. INTERNAL REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIONS OF EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS COVERED INDIVIDUAL ADULTS SUSPECTED OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS**

#### **A. District Investigators**

1. Investigators from the Law Department, Office of Student Protections and Title IX (~~OSP~~), or Office of the Inspector General (OIG) ("authorized investigators") may investigate allegations of child abuse ~~or neglect, sexual misconduct, corporal punishment, physical abuse, verbal abuse, and boundary violations~~ by Covered Individual Adults, including employees of the Board, employees of a private vendor or contractor, or volunteers.

2. Principals, supervisors, vendors, or contractors must cooperate with authorized investigators by making their employees and volunteers available for interviews, participating in requested interviews and providing requested information and documentation.

3. Employees, volunteers, vendors, and contractors must cooperate fully with authorized investigators. Employees who fail to cooperate are subject to appropriate discipline.

#### **B. Removing Employees, Volunteers, Vendors, and Contractors Covered Individual Adults from Contact with Students Pending an Investigation**

1. When ~~an employee, volunteer, vendor, or contractor~~ a Covered Individual Adult is alleged to have abused or neglected a student, the Office of Inspector General (OIG), the Office of Student Protections and Title IX (~~OSP~~), the Law Investigations Unit, or Talent Office ~~will~~ may request removal of the respondent pending the outcome of the investigation to the Title IX Officer, or their designee.

2. When ~~an employee, volunteer, vendor, or contractor~~ a Covered Individual Adult is removed pending the outcome of the investigation appropriate notice will be sent to the ~~employee, volunteer, vendor or contractor~~ Covered Individual Adult.

#### **C. District Monitoring**

1. The District collects data on reports made to the Office of Student Protections and Title IX (OSP) pursuant to this Policy.

2. The District will review data on reports made to OSP pursuant to this Policy at least annually, including for the purpose of reporting to the Board and updating the OSP training under Section II.A, the OSP Procedure Manual, and related OSP resources.

### **IV. STUDENT CURRICULUM**

A. CPS shall provide an age appropriate and evidence-informed curriculum for pre-K through 12th grade students addressing sexual abuse of children.

### **V. STUDENT OR PARENT/GUARDIAN REPORTING OF ACTS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE COMMITTED BY COVERED INDIVIDUAL ADULTS AND BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS**

A. If a student or parent/guardian believes a Covered Individual Adult may be committing abuse or engaging in conduct that violates the Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy (Section 102.8A), or standards for professional boundaries under Section I.G, students and parents/guardians should:

1. Notify a trusted school staff member, such as a principal, teacher, or counselor; or
2. If a student or parent/guardian experiences barriers to notifying a trusted school staff member, the student or parent/guardian should directly notify the Office of Student Protections and Title IX by filing an online complaint form at [www.cps.edu/osp](http://www.cps.edu/osp), calling (773) 535-4400, or emailing [osp@cps.edu](mailto:osp@cps.edu); and
3. Provide any relevant information regarding the suspected abuse or professional boundary violation to the trusted school staff member or OSP.

## **VI. PENALTIES**

A. Mandated reporters who fail to report suspected child abuse, neglect, grooming, sexual misconduct, or any other inappropriately intimate interactions or behaviors between an adult and child, or boundary violations as outlined in this Policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal. The Board reserves the right to discipline employees for incidents of child abuse or neglect which are substantiated by District investigations, even if the reports about those incidents are determined to be “unfounded” by DCFS.

B. Any Principal or other Supervisor who discourages a mandated reporter from reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to DCFS, or who asks a mandated reporter to modify the reporter’s report, shall be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

C. The State Superintendent of Education may suspend for up to five years or revoke the license of any educator who willfully fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

D. Any mandated reporter who willfully fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor for a first violation and a Class 4 felony for a second or subsequent violation.

## **VII. DELEGATION**


The Board delegates to the Chief Executive Officer or ~~his/her~~ their designee authority to create guidelines as necessary to implement and enforce this policy.

**Amends/Rescinds:** ~~Rescinds 18-0627-PO3~~ Amends 22-0622-PO2


**Cross References:** ~~05-0126-PO3; 04-0728-PO4; 00-0823-PO4; 97-0723-PO1; 88-0511-ED2; 87-0624-CR5; 20-0923-PO2~~ 25-0424-PO2; 24-0829-PO7; 22-0622-PO2; 21-0922-PO2; 19-0828-PO3; 08-0723-PO1

**Legal References:** 105 ILCS 5/21B-75, 105 ILCS 10/6; 325 ILCS 5/3, 5/4.02, 5/7.4; 705 ILCS 405/2-3; 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13; 730 ILCS 150/2;23 Ill. Adm. Code 375.60


**Approved for Consideration:**

DocuSigned by:  
  
5B6390BC4FA34EE...  
**Elizabeth Mendoza Browne**  
Chief Title IX Officer



**Approved for Consideration:**

Signed by:  
  
C10AEFB2AB0749F...  
**Nicole Milberg**  
Chief Teaching & Learning Officer

**Respectfully Submitted:**

Signed by:  
  
B0E10BAC8D764AF...  
**Macqueline King, Ed.D**  
Interim Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer

**Approved as to Legal Form:**

  
Signed by:  
  
974F0DEB7385497...  
**Elizabeth K. Barton**  
Acting General Counsel