

*This is intended as a general guide to protect students, the school, and you. When in doubt, ask for assistance from an administrator or counselor*



## *What to do when...*

### *You're concerned about potential abuse or neglect:*

1. Always err on the side of caution! Never keep it to yourself!
2. Alert the School Counselor ASAP in person or by phone. **DO NOT EMAIL SPECIFICS OF YOUR CONCERN.** It is acceptable to leave a detailed voicemail or to send an email with the student's name indicating that you need to discuss an urgent concern
3. Don't attempt to interview the student about the concern yourself
4. The School Counselor will facilitate any necessary reports to DCYF
5. If the concern was witnessed by or disclosed directly to you and it is determined that a DCYF report is to be made, the School Counselor will assist you with sharing your account directly to DCYF
6. Document in PLP that you "alerted the School Counselor about a serious concern" (for confidentiality's sake, no other specifics should be included). The School Counselor will attend to any other necessary documentation
7. Beyond alerting the School Counselor and participating in any mandatory reporting, always maintain the student's confidentiality

### *There is a concern about a student having suicidal thoughts or intentions:*

1. Take it seriously and err on the side of caution
2. Immediately alert the School Counselor ASAP in person or by phone. **DO NOT EMAIL SPECIFICS OF YOUR CONCERN**
3. If possible, accompany the student to the Guidance Office or enlist the assistance of the Safety Team. Do not leave the student unaccompanied
4. Don't attempt to interview the student about the concern yourself
5. Document in PLP that you "alerted School Counselor regarding a safety concern" (for confidentiality's sake, no other specifics should be included)
6. The School Counselor will make any necessary calls home, arrange for follow-ups, take care of additional documenting, etc.

### *A student has harmed themselves:*

1. Take it seriously and err on the side of caution
2. Alert the School Counselor ASAP in person or by phone. **DO NOT EMAIL SPECIFICS OF YOUR CONCERN**
3. Accompany the student to the Guidance Office or enlist the assistance of the Safety Team

4. The School Counselor will: refer the student to the nurse to have any injuries medically evaluated, make any necessary calls home, arrange for follow-ups, and attend to any additional documenting, etc.
5. Document in PLP that you “alerted School Counselor regarding a safety concern” (for confidentiality’s sake, no other specifics should be included)

***A student discloses being mistreated, picked on, harassed or bullied by a peer – even out of school:***

1. Alert the appropriate Assistant Principal ASAP
2. If possible, accompany student to AP office to fill out a harassment form or enlist the assistance of the Safety Team
3. If there is a concern of imminent harm or danger, also immediately alert the school resource officer
4. If the situation warrants it, refer the student to the Guidance Office additional emotional support
5. Document your efforts in PLP (but do not include the names of other involved student in the contact log)

***A student is having an emotional crisis in your class***

1. If the student is in legitimate crisis and clearly cannot get through the class, issue the student a pass to the Guidance Office where the situation will be appropriately triaged
2. If you are concerned about a student getting safely to the Guidance Office, request assistance from the Safety Team to have the student escorted
3. DO NOT send the student directly to the Spec. Ed. Counselor, Social Worker, or LADC

***A student wants to meet with/make an appointment with the Spec. Ed. Counselor, Social Worker, or LADC***

1. Students should not leave class to meet with the Spec. Ed. Counselor, Social Worker, or LADC unless they can produce a written/electronic appointment pass
2. Students may make appointments in person before/after school, in between classes or on the way to lunch. If a student will be late to your class as a result of following this procedure, a pass will be provided
3. Students may request an appointment themselves by email. A return email can serve as a pass
4. If you wish, you can send an email the Spec. Ed. Counselor, Social Worker, or LADC about a student looking to make an appointment and that counselor will arrange it and a pass will be issued to the student

***You think a student needs in-school counseling (from the Spec. Ed. Counselor, Social Worker, or LADC):***

1. Share your concerns with the School Counselor who will look into/arrange for an in-house referral as warranted
2. If you are aware that the student has an IEP, it is appropriate to also share your concern with the Special Education Case Monitor

***You think a student needs other counseling (i.e. Community Partners):***

1. Share your concerns with the School Counselor who will look into/arrange for a referral as warranted
2. Do not attempt to facilitate a referral yourself – there are strict confidentiality guidelines and procedures involved. Only a School Counselor can facilitate such a referral
3. \*\*\*Refrain from making unsolicited suggestions about counseling\*\*\*
4. \*\*\*NEVER ask about or recommend medication\*\*\*
5. \*\*\*NEVER suggest a diagnosis of any kind\*\*\*

***You are informed of or have a concern about student substance misuse:***

1. \*\*\*If a student appears impaired, follow the building procedure and alert the Assistant Principal and nurse right away!\*\*\*
2. Call for assistance from the Safety Team to help manage a situation where a student appears actively impaired in your class
3. If it is a more general concern, share that information with the School Counselor who will determine how best to proceed and what referrals should be made
4. If a student discloses substance misuse concerns, it is acceptable to inform them of resources available in the school. Alert the School Counselor that you have done so in order to ensure proper follow-up
5. Allow the School Counselor to determine if a substance misuse concern is reportable
6. Always document in PLP that you made someone else aware of a concern (no confidential specifics)

***A student under age 16 reports having sexual intercourse***

1. By state law a child under age 16 having sex – even when consensual and with another child close in age – is considered “sexual abuse” by statute and is subject to mandatory report
2. Alert the School Counselor ASAP in person or by phone. DO NOT EMAIL SPECIFICS OF YOUR CONCERN. It is acceptable to leave a detailed voicemail or to send an email with the student’s name indicating that you need to discuss an urgent concern. The School Counselor will follow all the proper procedures
3. Document that you “alerted School Counselor of a serious concern” in PLP

***A student under age 16 reports having sex with someone over age 18***

1. This is reportable! Alert the School Counselor ASAP in person or by phone. DO NOT EMAIL SPECIFICS OF YOUR CONCERN. It is acceptable to leave a detailed voicemail or to send an email with the student’s name indicating that you need to discuss an urgent concern. The School Counselor will follow all the proper procedures
2. Document that you “alerted School Counselor of a serious concern” in PLP

***A student discloses that they are pregnant:***

1. Pregnancy is confidential information! You cannot disclose it without consent! Even to parents/guardians!
2. Encourage the student to consult with the school nurse or School Counselor (who will keep it confidential) for assistance
3. \*\*\*NEVER engage a student in a conversation about contraception, abortion, etc.. If a student initiates the conversation and has questions about those things, refer them to the school nurse\*\*\*
4. \*\*\*NEVER document anything about pregnancy in IC\*\*\*

***A student becomes homeless/in transition:***

1. Homelessness/being in transition includes: a student/family losing (or in jeopardy of losing) housing, a student/family moving in with others, a student leaving home (by choice or force), a student “couch surfing,” etc.
2. Alert the School Counselor ASAP in person or by phone. DO NOT EMAIL SPECIFICS OF YOUR CONCERN. It is acceptable to leave a detailed voicemail or to send an email with the student’s name indicating that you need to discuss an urgent concern
3. The School Counselor will: notify the Families in Transition Coordinator and attend to any additional support needs

4. \*\*\*DO NOT DISCLOSE INFORMATION REGARDING HOMELESSNESS TO ANY OTHER PARTIES\*\*\*
5. Please note that homelessness in and of itself is not considered abuse/neglect but is reportable if there is imminent harm or basic needs going unmet. Let the School Counselor make that determination

*You are concerned that a student is going hungry:*

1. Alert the School Counselor who will: rule out if it is reportable and refer the student to the appropriate resources as warranted
2. Do not access the Raider Pantry on your own
3. \*\*\*Do NOT ask the student if they are on free or reduced lunch! That is confidential and we cannot ask! The School Counselor can give the student an application for free/reduced lunch if the student would like it
4. Be sensitive to the fact that for pride (and other) reasons, some students/parents might object to you trying to help even if your intentions are honorable

**Please Note:**

- ***SAFETY TRUMPS ALL.*** *If you are aware of a safety concern, take immediate steps to get it addressed. When necessary, call for a Safety Team Member to assist you. Always document the steps you've taken to respond to a safety concern in PLP (without confidential/sensitive information)*
- *Documentation in PLP is intended to serve as a means of recording the actions you took in delicate situations. It covers you and the school by creating a record of interventions. Since PLP is not confidential, what you document should not include specifics about the concern itself or any other sensitive information. You may opt to also keep your own private notes (in a confidential, secure location), keeping in mind that such notes can be subpoenaed if a matter goes to court*
- ***DO NOT EMAIL CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION*** *unless you intend for it to be part of the student record. By law, all emails about students are to be printed and filed. Detailed voicemails left for School Counselors are always appropriate and are confidential*
- ***Violating a student's confidentiality, failing to take steps to protect them from harm, or violating any other rights (even inadvertently) not only subjects the school district to litigation and liability for damages, it subjects YOU to INDIVIDUAL litigation and liability for damages! Never operate outside the purview of your job title, even if you hold other certifications***
- *Always, always, always err on the side of caution! Never keep a concerning situation to yourself. If you are experiencing ANY "red flags" or you have any doubts, trust your instincts and confer with someone else about how best to proceed!*