Child Abuse Reporting Obligations

As educational professionals, we have a responsibility to provide the children we teach with the opportunity to obtain the best education possible. However, our responsibility does not end there. We also have a legal responsibility to report any information that we receive that leads us to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.

The State of Georgia requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school administrator report cases of suspected child abuse of children less than eighteen years of age. Georgia Law provides immunity for those reporting in good faith and provides a penalty for violation of the law.

Georgia law defines “abuse” as physical injury or death inflicted upon a child by a parent or caretaker by other than accidental means; neglect or exploitation of a child by a parent or caretaker; endangering a child; sexual abuse of a child; or sexual exploitation of a child. Any employee/volunteer/coach who has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that child abuse has occurred must report their concern **immediately** to the head of school. If you cannot contact the head of school, contact the associate head of school. The head of school or the associate head of school will then discuss the situation with you to ensure that the appropriate reports, if any, are completed. You can also report the situation directly to the state by contacting the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) in the county in which the child resides. If you make the report directly, immediately after making such report, please notify the head of school so the School can assist in investigations and/or ensure that appropriate personnel are watchful for signs of future potential abuse of the child(ren) in question. **Failure to report suspected abuse could constitute a crime under Georgia law and subject you to prosecution**.

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