

# **Update on the Implementation of Board of Education Policy JHC, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, for Fiscal Year 2023**

Montgomery County Board of Education  
Policy Management Committee  
October 16, 2023

# Annual Update

Board of Education (Board) Policy JHC, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, establishes the Board's expectations of, approach to, and desired outcomes for child abuse and neglect prevention efforts in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

- Be consistent with federal, state, and local law.
- Provide a safe, engaging, and supportive environment for all students.
- Utilize vigilant efforts to recognize, report, and prevent abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults.
- Collaborate efficiently and effectively with county partner agencies to investigate reports of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Support children who are the subject of reports of suspected abuse and/or neglect.

# Annual Update Agenda

- Staff training
- Screening of employees
- Screening of volunteers and contractors
- Collaboration with county partner agencies and the community
- Total number of suspected cases
- Outcomes of Child Protective Services (CPS) reports
- MCPS Actions based on internal follow-up investigations
- Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 considerations

# Staff Training

- Districtwide Mandatory Compliance Training including *Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect*
- Continuous improvement of modules based on multi-stakeholder feedback
- Mandated reporter expectations for recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect
- Updated information on reporting gang behavior, human trafficking, and the exploitation of children and youth
- Additional training for school administration, school counselors, and designated student welfare Liaisons

# Screening of Employees

- Conduct multipoint background checks, including fingerprinting for prospective employees
- Ensure qualified, ethical, responsible individuals who meet high expectations for professionalism
- Align to National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification Clearinghouse and House Bill 486, *Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Prevention*
- Utilize Rap Back Service (FBI) for ongoing status notifications of criminal history record information

## Screening of Volunteers/Contractors

- Required Online Volunteer/Contractor Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Training Module
- COVID-19 Vaccination Attestation Module\*
  - Fully vaccinated
  - Verified Certificate of COVID-19 Vaccination from the State of Maryland Department of Health
  - Clear expectations of masking and social distancing while in MCPS facilities

\*Attestation to COVID-19 was removed on May 1, 2023

# Screening of Volunteers/Contractors

## **Total Number of Parents/Guardians/Volunteers/Contractors who Completed the Volunteer Child Abuse and Neglect Module**

FY 2023	FY 2022	FY 2021	FY 2020	FY 2019
18,579	16,021	3,320	16,946	25,018

# Total Number of Suspected Cases

- During FY 2023, 3,972 suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect were reported by MCPS staff, volunteers, or contractors to CPS or Adult Protective Services. This was 20–25 percent of the total number of reports filed countywide with CPS.

**Total Number of Reports of Suspected Abuse and Neglect**

FY 2023	FY 2022	FY 2021	FY 2020	FY 2019
3,972	3,750	1,784	2,720	3,133

Online reports filed: 3,834

Paper reports filed: 138



# Collaboration

## **County Partner Agencies and the Greater Community**

- Regular collaboration continued with the Montgomery County Police Department's (MCPD) Special Victims Investigation Division, the State's Attorney's Office, CPS, and Adult Protective Services, through monthly Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings, including unscheduled updates and consults.
- The Emergency Communications Center, direct line, was established between MCPS and MCPD to provide more efficient and effective communication to best support our schools, students, and communities.

# Outcomes of CPS Reports involving MCPS Employees, Contractors, or Volunteers

Type	Number of Reports	CPS Outcomes <sup>2</sup>				
		Screened Out	Ruled Out	Unsubstantiated	Indicated	Ongoing
<b>Employee</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Volunteer</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Contractor</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>2</sup> The possible outcomes of a CPS report are defined as follows:

Screened out: There was insufficient evidence that abuse or neglect occurred.

Ruled out: A finding that abuse or neglect did not occur.

Unsubstantiated: A finding that there is insufficient evidence to support a finding of indicated or ruled out.

Indicated: A finding that there is credible evidence that has not been satisfactorily refuted that abuse or neglect occurred.

# MCPS Actions Based on Internal Follow-up Investigations

Type	No action warranted	Conference or memo for the record	Reprimand or other disciplinary letter	Suspension without pay	Removal from employment	Pending (as of October 6, 2023)
Employee	71	83	37	0	7	5
Volunteers	0	0	0	0	1	0
Contractor	4	0	0	0	3	0

# FY 2024 Considerations

- Continue collaborative improvement efforts through monthly Multi-disciplinary Team meetings.
- Revise the *Culture of Respect 2.0* student training module to elevate student awareness regarding signs of neglect, abuse, and harassment. (Antiracist System Audit; Observation 3.3)
- Continue to monitor online reporting process.
- Enhance the training plan for our student welfare liaisons and school-based critical staff.
- Monitor the implementation of revised personal body safety lessons at all levels, based on student feedback and input.

# Discussion