

Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program

The Bethany Public School District ensures that the school sustains healthy, positive, and safe learning environments for all students. This requires the efforts of the entire staff.

Therefore, the Bethany Public School District shall develop a comprehensive child abuse program with the goal of informing students and staff about child sexual abuse and assault awareness.

The program shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Adopting a child sexual abuse and assault awareness curriculum to provide age-appropriate information to teach students between appropriate and inappropriate conduct in situations where child sexual abuse or assault could occur, and to identify actions a child may take to prevent and report sexual abuse or sexual assault;
2. Providing students with resources and referrals to handle these potentially dangerous situations;
3. Providing students access to available counseling and educational support;
4. Providing mandatory training to all District staff to ensure they are fully informed on:
 - a. the warning signs of sexual abuse and sexual misconduct involving a child,
 - b. mandatory reporting requirements,
 - c. school District policies, and
 - d. establishing and maintaining professional relationships with students, available resources for children affected by sexual abuse, sexual assault or misconduct.
5. Methods for increasing teacher, student, and parent awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children; and
6. Permitting students to opt out from participating in classroom instruction regarding sexual abuse and sexual assault upon receipt by the Principal or his/her designee of a written request from the student's parent/guardian. Such request shall be sufficient to exempt the student from such program in its entirety or from portions of it so specified by the parent/guardian.

Students, parent/guardian, teachers, and school staff and school volunteers shall be provided information, at a minimum on an annual basis, on the District's policy against sexual abuse and assault. The information shall include evidence-based methods of preventing sexual abuse and assault, as well as how to effectively identify and respond to sexual abuse and incidents within the scope of the school.

STUDENTS

5145.511(b)

The District shall utilize existing resources, including but not limited to, student support services staff (e.g. school psychologists and school counselors) to assist in providing sexual abuse and assault intervention and prevention training.

Reporting Child Sexual Abuse and Assault

Connecticut General Statutes § 17a-101 et seq. requires school employees who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected, or placed at imminent risk of serious harm to report such suspicions to the appropriate authority. In furtherance of this statute and its purpose, it is the policy of the Board of Education to require ALL EMPLOYEES of the Board of Education to report suspected abuse and/or neglect, or imminent risk of serious harm, in accordance with Policy and Regulation #5141.4.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes P.A. 14-196

Policy adopted: November 18, 2015

Policy reviewed: April 11, 2018