

## **MANDATED REPORTING OF CHILD NEGLECT OR PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE**

It is the policy of Fitzgerald Public Schools to fully comply with the State of Michigan: Child Protection Law §238.722 requiring school personnel to report suspected child neglect or physical or sexual abuse.

### **A. REPORTING**

- a. The Child Protection Law requires mandated reporters who have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect to make an immediate report to MDHHS – Centralized Intake (855-444-3911) or through the online system, followed by a written report within 72 hours. This reporting requirement applies to all employees and protects all children whether they are a student of the district or not.
- b. Within 72 hours of making the verbal report, mandated reporters must file a written report as required in the Child Protection Law. MDHHS encourages the use of the Report of Suspected or Actual Child Abuse or Neglect (DHS-3200) form, which includes all the information required under the law.
- c. The reporting person shall notify the Principal of the school of his or her finding and inform them that the report has been made, and shall make a copy of the written or electronic report available to the person in charge. A notification to the Principal in charge of the school does not relieve the member of the staff of the school of the obligation of reporting to the department as required by 722.623 Sec. 3. (1) (a)
- d. Information about a possible incident of neglect or abuse of a student should also be reported to the building mental health professionals to counsel the student and assist the staff member in making a report.

### **B. INVESTIGATIONS**

- a. Investigation by school personnel prior to submitting a report should not go beyond that necessary to determine whether there is a reasonable belief that a reportable problem exists.
- b. It is not the responsibility of principals or other school personnel to prove that the child has been abused or neglected, or to determine whether the child is in need of protection.
- c. School personnel will not contact the child's parents, relatives, friends, neighbors, or others for the purpose of discussing a report to MDHHS or to attempt to determine circumstances or causes of apparent neglect or abuse.
- d. School personnel are directed not to contact parents or otherwise give them notice of an investigation. Parent notification of an investigation is the responsibility of law enforcement or MDHHS.
- e. Parents who make inquiries to school personnel about a report or an investigation should be directed to MDHHS.