

1 **R277. Education, Administration.**

2 **R277-401. Child Abuse-Neglect Reporting by Education Personnel.**

3 **R277-401-1. Authority and Purpose.**

4 (1) This rule is authorized by:

5 (a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and  
6 supervision over public education in the Board;

7 (b) Section 62A-4a-403, which requires individuals to report suspected child abuse  
8 or neglect to appropriate authorities; and

9 (c) Subsection 53E-3-401(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute the  
10 Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

11 (2) The purpose of this rule is to clarify:

12 (a) the Board's support for taking early protective measures towards allegations of  
13 child abuse by education personnel whose daily contact with children places them in a  
14 unique position to identify and refer suspected cases of abuse or neglect; and

15 (b) the role of all school employees in reporting and participating in investigations of  
16 suspected child abuse and neglect.

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18 **R277-401-2. Definitions.**

19 (1) "Abused child" has the same meaning as defined in Subsection 78A-6-105(2).

20 (2) "DCFS" means the Utah Division of Child and Family Services.

21 (3) "LEA" includes, for purposes of this rule, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the  
22 Blind.

23 (4) "Neglected child" has the same meaning as defined in Subsection 78A-6-  
24 105(36).

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26 **R277-401-3. Policies and Procedures.**

27 (1) Each LEA shall develop and adopt a child abuse-neglect policy, which shall  
28 include, at a minimum, the following provisions:

29 (a) an LEA employee shall cooperate with social service and law enforcement  
30 agency employees authorized to investigate charges of child abuse and neglect, including:

31 (i) allowing appropriate access to students;

32 (ii) allowing authorized agency employees to interview children consistent with  
33 DCFS and local law enforcement protocols;

34 (iii) making no contact with the parents or legal guardians of children being  
35 questioned by DCFs or law enforcement authorities; and

36 (iv) maintaining appropriate confidentiality;

37 (b) an LEA shall preserve the anonymity of those reporting or investigating child  
38 abuse or neglect; and

39 (c)(i) any school employee who knows or reasonably believes that a child has been  
40 neglected, or physically or sexually abused, shall immediately notify the nearest peace  
41 officer, law enforcement agency, or DCFS.

42 (ii) If a school employee reasonably suspects child abuse or neglect, it is not the  
43 responsibility of the school employee to prove that the child has been abused or neglected,  
44 or determine whether the child is in need of protection.

45 (iii) Investigation by education personnel prior to submitting a report should not go  
46 beyond that necessary to support a reason to believe that a reportable problem exists.

47 (2) An LEA policy may direct a school employee to notify a school official of  
48 suspected neglect or abuse, but any such requirement shall clarify that notifying a school  
49 official does not satisfy the employee's personal duty to report to law enforcement or DCFS.

50 (3) Persons making reports or participating in an investigation of alleged child abuse  
51 or neglect in good faith are immune from any civil or criminal liability that otherwise might  
52 arise from those actions, as provided by law.

53 (4) An LEA shall annually notify an employee of the employee's legal responsibility  
54 to report suspected child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities as described in Section  
55 62A-4a-403.

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57 **KEY: child abuse, employees, reporting, students**

58 **Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: September 21, 2017**

59 **Notice of Continuation: July 19, 2017**

60 **Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53E-3-401(4)**