

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

BOARD OF REGENTS POLICY MANUAL – REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 6 – SECOND READING

Action Requested: Consider approval, as a second reading, of §6.29 – Abuse Policies at the Special Schools – of the Board of Regents Policy Manual.

Executive Summary: The proposed policy includes the following changes – (1) combine the existing separate abuse policies for the special schools §6.30 and §6.31; (2) define reporting requirements of abuse to the Board Office; (3) define training requirements for mandatory reporters and other appropriate individuals; and (4) define the abuse policy and procedures requirements for employee handbooks at the special schools. The process for substantive revisions involves initial review and comment by the Board (“first reading”) which occurred at the September 2007 Board of Regents meeting and final Board approval (“second reading”) for publication at a subsequent Board meeting. The proposed policy resulted from an in-depth review and discussion with the Attorney General's office. This request addresses the Board of Regents' Strategic Plan strategy (4.1.1) to “pursue opportunities to realize greater efficiency in operations, consistent with best practices in the delivery of education and other services.”

VI. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PROPOSED ADDITIONS ARE UNDERLINED; PROPOSED DELETIONS HAVE STRIKEOVERS.

~~6.30~~ ~~Abuse Policy and procedure at the Iowa School for the Deaf~~

~~A. Policy Philosophy and Legal Foundations~~

~~The Iowa School for the Deaf believes child and dependent adult abuse to be inconsistent with the educational and philosophical aims of the school, and will take all reasonable measures to prevent such actions. It is always incumbent upon each employee to treat all students fairly, and with compassion and understanding.~~

~~It is the policy of the school that all cases in which there is reasonable suspicion that a child or dependent adult who is a student at the Iowa School for the Deaf has been the victim of abuse shall be reported according to 281 IAC 102 and Iowa Code §232.68.~~

~~B. Policy for Identifying, Reporting and Investigating Allegations of Abuse of Students by School Employees~~

~~It is the policy of the Iowa School for the Deaf that school employees (anyone who works for pay) or volunteers, not commit acts of physical or sexual abuse, including inappropriate and intentional sexual behavior, toward students. Any school employee who commits such acts is subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including discharge. Any employee (or volunteer) of the Iowa School for the Deaf who receives a report that a student or dependent adult (who is a student) has been abused physically or sexually by a school employee (or volunteer) shall report that abuse pursuant to this policy, and according to 281 IAC 102.~~

~~6.31~~ ~~Reporting Child Abuse and Dependent Adult Abuse, and Policies and Procedures for Charging and Investigating Allegations of Abuse of Students by Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School Employees~~

~~A. Policy and Procedures for Reporting Child and Dependent Adult Abuse~~

~~Mandatory Reporters~~

~~It is the policy of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School that Any licensed employee who has a reasonable belief that a child under the age of 18, or a dependent adult, has been abused by a person responsible for the care of the child, as defined by law, shall report the suspected abuse verbally to the Department of Human Services (DHS) within twenty-four hours, and follow the verbal report with a written report within forty-eight hours on appropriate forms. Persons responsible for the care of a child include the child's parent or guardian.~~

~~It is also the policy of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School that Any licensed employee who has a reasonable belief that a child under the age of 18 or a dependent adult has been sexually abused by anyone, shall report the suspected sexual abuse verbally to the Department of Human Services (DHS) within twenty-four hours, and follow the verbal report with a written report within forty-eight hours on appropriate forms.~~

~~Mandatory Reporters are defined according to Iowa Code §§ 232.69 and 235B.3(2). In all cases in which there is reasonable suspicion that a child or dependent adult who is a student at Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School has been the victim of abuse shall be reported according to 281 IAC 102 and Iowa Code § 232.68.~~

~~All procedures established by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, will be followed.~~

6.29 Abuse Policy at the Special Schools

A. Philosophy and Legal Foundations

Child and dependent adult abuse is inconsistent with the educational and philosophical aims of the special schools, and the schools shall take all reasonable measures to prevent such actions. All cases where there is reasonable suspicion that a child or dependent adult who is a student at the Iowa School for the Deaf or the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School has been the victim of abuse shall be reported according to 281 IAC 102 and/or Iowa Code §232.68-70.

B. Identifying, Reporting and Investigating Allegations of Abuse of Students by School Employees or Volunteers

School employees (anyone who works for pay) or volunteers, shall not commit acts of physical or sexual abuse, including inappropriate and intentional sexual behavior, toward students. Any school employee who commits such acts is subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including discharge. Any employee (or volunteer) who has a reasonable suspicion or who receives a report that a student or dependent adult (who is a student) has been abused physically or sexually by a school employee (or volunteer) shall report that abuse pursuant to this policy, and according to 281 IAC 102 and/or Iowa Code §232.68-70.

Mandatory and permissive reporters are defined according to Iowa Code 232.69 and 235B.3(2). Any employee who has reasonable belief that a child under the age of 18 or a dependent adult has been abused by a person responsible for the care of the child, as defined by law, shall report the suspected abuse verbally to the Department of Human Services (DHS) within 24 hours and follow the verbal report with a written report with 48 hours on appropriate forms.

C. Child Abuse Reporting to the Board Office

Allegations of abuse of students at the special schools shall be reported to the Executive Director on a timely basis. The Executive Director shall be kept informed during the investigation of allegations of abuse of students at the special schools. The Executive Director shall be informed of the disposition of the investigation. The Executive Director shall keep the Board of Regents informed as appropriate.

D. Child Abuse Identification and Reporting Training

All special school employees and volunteers shall be provided with training regarding their responsibilities.

E. Child Abuse Identification and Reporting Requirements for Employee Handbook

Employee handbooks at the special schools shall include information about identifying, reporting, and investigating allegations of abuse of students at the special schools.