

# **Update on the Implementation of Board of Education (Board) Policy JHC, Child Abuse and Neglect, for Fiscal Year 2024**

Policy Management Committee  
November 14, 2024

# Annual Update

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 CPS Reports
- MCPS Actions Based on Internal Follow-up Investigations
- FY25 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
- Enhanced training on sexual harassment and workplace bullying for all district administrators
- Additional site-specific 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 (NASDTEC) and House Bill 486, *Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Prevention*
- Utilize Rap Back (FBI) for ongoing status notifications of criminal history record information
- Required online volunteer/contractor Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Training module

# Collaboration

## County Partner Agencies and the Greater Community

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

# Screening of Volunteers/Contractors

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

FY24	FY23	FY22	FY21	FY20
15,812	18,579	16,021	3,320	16,946

# Total Number of Suspected Cases

- During Fiscal Year 2024, 3,758 suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect were reported by MCPS staff, volunteers, or contractors to Child Protective Services (CPS) or Adult Protective Services. This was 20-25% of the total reports filed county-wide with CPS.

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

FY24	FY23	FY22	FY21	FY20
3,758	3,972	3,750	1,784	2,720

Online reports filed: 3,758

Paper reports filed: 85



# 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
Employee	188	135	5	7	7	34
Substitute	33	26	1	0	0	6
Volunteer	3	1	1	0	0	1
Contractor	2	1	0	0	0	1

<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 14, 2024)
Employee	43	35	18	2	13	77
Substitute	7	1	3	0	9	13
Volunteers	0	0	0	0	2	1
Contractor	1	0	0	0	0	1

# FY 2025 Considerations

- Continue collaborative improvement efforts through monthly Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings.
- Facilitate next-level training on sexual harassment and workplace bullying of students and employees.
- Implement a year-long engagement plan with students on expectations, including the new Culture of Respect and Student Rights and Responsibilities modules this fall.
- Launch a districtwide campaign on Anti-Hate Bias and Bullying/Harassment.
- Provide schools with updates and resources from recent amendments to TITLE IX, including implications for investigations.
- Provide enhanced training for all designated student welfare liaisons and school-based critical staff.



# Discussion