



Book	St. Lucie County School Board Policy Manual
Section	Chapter 5: Students
Title	Reporting Crimes; Cooperation with Law Enforcement and Child Protection Agencies; Reporting Child Abuse
Number	5.37
Status	Active

(1) Criminal Law Violations by Students - Teachers and school personnel exercise control and direction over each student during the time he or she is on school property or en route to or from school; nonetheless, law enforcement officials have authority to investigate all criminal law violations, and therefore have jurisdiction in investigating such violations committed by a student during the time he or she is on school property or en route to or from school.

(2) Reporting Crimes to Principal and Law Enforcement Agency - Evidence of any crime or potential crime known to or discovered by a School Board employee shall be reported immediately to the school principal, who in turn shall report immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency. In particular, the school principal shall turn over to the appropriate law enforcement agency all information, reports, and evidence known about any crime or potential criminal activity on campus, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) Any assault in which the victim is injured and any continued pattern of recurring simple assaults;
- (b) Possession of knives, firearms, ammunition, blasting caps, or any other weapon or explosive in school;
- (c) Any alcoholic beverage or narcotics offense;
- (d) Any indecent assault or assault with intent to ravish;
- (e) Any act, including any act of sexual harassment of a student, that may involve harm, or the threat of harm, to the physical or mental health of the student and that therefore may constitute an act of child abuse or neglect; and
- (f) Gang rivalries or activities.

(3) Cooperation with Investigations - All School Board employees shall cooperate fully with any law enforcement official who is investigating any crime or potential criminal activity on campus. Information or evidence as to any crime or potential criminal activity being investigated by a law enforcement agency shall be turned over by the school principal to the agency upon official request from the agency. School authorities who are custodians of student records, as defined in Florida Statutes, shall release requested student records to an investigating law enforcement official upon presentation of a court order for a subpoena directing production of such records.

(4) Prosecution of Crimes - School authorities shall cooperate fully with the applicable law enforcement agency in the prosecution of any criminal case that, in the opinion of such agency, has prosecutorial merit.

(5) Interviewing Students Regarding Off-campus Incidents - When a law enforcement officer seeks to confer with or interview a student on campus during regular school hours regarding an incident or event that occurred off campus, the principal or designee should request that the official schedule the conference or interview at a time and place when the student is not under the jurisdiction of the school. If an off-campus conference or interview is impractical, the principal shall permit the officer to confer with or interview a student during school hours under the following conditions:

- (a) If the school is served by a School Resource Officer, the School Resource Officer is notified;
- (b) The officer provides proper identification and an explanation of the need to confer with or interview the student on campus;
- (c) The student is removed from the classroom in a non-disruptive manner that reasonably protects the dignity of

the student;

(d) A member of the school staff is present during the conference or interview, if desired or requested by the student, unless the matter involves allegations or improper or illegal acts by school personnel, provided, however, that any staff member present during such an interview shall not provide legal advice to the student and shall not attempt to exercise any privilege or other right on behalf of the student;

(e) The conference or interview takes place in a private room or office;

(f) The student is not removed from a regular academic class unless no other scheduling option is available; and

(g) Appropriate care is taken to prevent other students from becoming aware of the conference or interview.

School personnel should cooperate with any law enforcement officer who comes to a school seeking to confer with or interview a student under the conditions set forth above.

(6) Removing Students from Campus - A law enforcement officer shall be permitted to remove a student from the school campus under any one of the following circumstances:

(a) The officer presents a signed court order authorizing such officer to take the student into custody;

(b) The officer presents a warrant for the arrest of the student;

(c) The officer represents to the principal or designee, orally or in writing, that such officer has reason to believe that the student has committed a crime; or

(d) The officer presents a written consent, signed by the parent or guardian of the student, authorizing such officer to remove the student.

If a student is arrested or taken into custody at a school, the principal or designee should make every effort to notify the parents immediately.

(7) Serving Witness Subpoenas upon Students on Campus - When a law enforcement officer indicates an intention to serve a witness subpoena upon a student on campus during regular school hours, the principal or designee should notify the School Resource Officer or the District Safety and Security Office and request that the officer serve the subpoena at a time and place when the student is not under the jurisdiction of the school. If the officer nonetheless determines to serve the subpoena on campus, school personnel should take every reasonable measure, without interfering with the officer, to minimize loss of class time by the student and to maximize protection of the student.

(8) Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect

(a) All School Board employees who know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a student is an abused, abandoned, or neglected child shall report such knowledge or suspicion directly both (i) to the state-wide central abuse hotline established and maintained by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), and/or (ii) to the appropriate local law enforcement agency, either through the School Resource Officer or through the central dispatch center telephone number (911).

(b) Each school in the District shall post in a prominent place a notice containing the state-wide toll-free telephone number of the central abuse hotline and stating that, pursuant to Florida Statutes, all District employees:

(i) Have a duty to report to DCF all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect;

(ii) Are immune from any liability when such reports are made to DCF in good faith;

(iii) Have a duty to comply and cooperate with child protective investigations and all provisions of law relating to child abuse, abandonment, or neglect, and

(iv) Are subject to criminal prosecution if they knowingly and willfully fail to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to DCF, or if they knowingly or willfully prevent another person from doing so.

(c) No student shall abuse any other student. Any student or employee that has knowledge of any student abusing another student shall report the abuse to the principal and/or law enforcement. Any incident reported to the principal shall be handled as required by policy and law.

(9) Taking a Dependent Child into Protective Custody - A child alleged to be dependent may be taken into protective custody:

(a) Pursuant to an order of the Circuit Court issued pursuant to Florida Statutes;

(b) By a law enforcement officer or an authorized agent of DCF, if such officer or agent has reasonable grounds to believe that the student has been abandoned, abused, or neglected; is suffering from illness or injury; or is in immediate danger from his or her surroundings and that removal is necessary to protect the student; or

(c) By an authorized agent of DCF if such agent has reasonable grounds to believe the custodian of a student under protective supervision has violated in a material way a condition of the placement imposed by the court.

If the student is to be removed in accordance with subparagraph (a), the principal or designee should verify that the order has been certified by the Clerk of the Court, and shall obtain a photocopy of such order to place in the student's cumulative file. If the student is to be removed in accordance with subparagraph (b) or (c), the principal or designee shall have the removing officer or agent execute the student release form set forth in Appendix D of this Policy Manual. The principal or designee shall witness the completed document. The student release form must be maintained in a file separate from the student's record.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 1001.41, F.S.

LAWS IMPLEMENTED: 1001.42, 1001.51, 1002.25, 1003.31, 1003.32, 1006.09, 1006.10, F.S.

History:

Adopted: 03/30/2004

Revision Date(s): _____

Formerly: 5.07