

POLICY

Board of Education Bernards Township

**File Code: M 8464
MISSING CHILDREN**

The Board of Education directs the establishment and implementation of a program for the identification and reporting of children missing from the educational system and a program providing warning to parents and police of potentially missing pupils.

Used in this policy, "parent" means the natural parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the pupil. Where parents are separated or divorced, "parent" means the person or agency who has legal custody of the child as well as the natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated by a court of appropriate jurisdiction.

CHILDREN MISSING FROM THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The Superintendent shall develop and implement procedures which will attempt to identify children who have been withdrawn from this District without enrollment in another school or school district or pupils who have been willfully or neglectfully removed from school for protracted absences. Children so identified shall be reported promptly to the local police department and D.Y.F.S. when the administration has reason to believe that the child is missing.

The Board authorizes the release of the child's name, age, gender, last known home address and physical description and the parent's name and work place, if known, to the local police department and D.Y.F.S.

Reasonable attempts shall be made to determine the cause of a child's unauthorized absence. The Superintendent shall report semi-annually to the Board the results of the program for the identification of children missing from the educational program.

The local police department, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:17B-9.8b, must notify the Superintendent of a missing child who is currently or was most recently enrolled in our District. The local police department must also notify the Superintendent if the child is located.

If the Superintendent or designee is notified of a missing child by the local police department, the Superintendent shall mark the child's school record. The mark will be a clearly, identifiable and removable marking so in the event a copy or information regarding the record is requested, our District will be aware the record is that of a missing child. Once the local police department notifies the Superintendent or designee that the child has been located, the Superintendent, or designee, will remove the mark from the child's school record. If a copy of a school record is requested that has been 'marked' in accordance with this policy, the Superintendent, or designee, will remove the marking from only the copy of the school record to be provided to the requestor in accordance with Board Policy 8330, and without alerting the requestor to the fact that the record has been 'marked'. After supplying a copy of or information regarding the 'marked' record, the Superintendent will immediately report the inquiry or any knowledge as to the whereabouts of the missing child to the local police department.

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EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

The Superintendent shall develop and implement a program to alert parents promptly of the absence of children who may be missing from school. The program shall require the notification of parents when children are unaccountably absent from school on any given school day. Parents shall be informed of the program and shall be requested to assist by submitting an emergency notification card, notifying the school of a pupil's absence and approving the release to the appropriate law enforcement agency of a pupil's name, address, telephone number, and physical description. No adverse consequences will result to any school employee from a parent's refusal or neglect to consent, to participate, or to assist in the program.

The Superintendent shall implement procedures to insure that students are dismissed from school on the basis of valid requests to assure that the release is proper and into proper custodial care.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-24; 18A:36-25
N.J.S.A. 52A:17B-9.8b

APPROVED: March 9, 1998
REVIEWED: July 29, 2009