

**CODIFICATION REFERENCE NUMBER: M 8464**

**DATE:** July 30, 2009

**MISSING CHILDREN**

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Teaching staff members shall be alert to the failure of children to be enrolled or to attend school. A teaching staff member who believes that a child has been inappropriately removed from school by his or her parent or primary caretaker shall report that belief to the school principal, who may report the child to the local police or D.Y.F.S.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. A parent who withdraws a child from school shall be asked to designate the name and location of the school or school district in which he or she intends to enroll the child. In the event that an official request for the child's records is not received within fifteen (15) days of a withdrawal during the school year or within sixty (60) days of a withdrawal at the end of the school year, the principal shall report the child to the local police and D.Y.F.S.
2. The principal shall attempt to determine the reason for the absence of each pupil absent ten (10) consecutive days. The principal shall report a pupil who has been unaccountably absent ten (10) consecutive school days to the local police and D.Y.F.S.
3. The report to D.Y.F.S and the local law enforcement agency of a child who may be missing from the educational system may include the child's name, age, gender, last known home address, physical description and the parent's name and work place, if known.
4. The principal and teaching staff members having knowledge of the child shall cooperate fully with the police in their efforts to locate him or her. In the event a child believed to be missing is located, the principal shall notify the police immediately.
5. The principal shall notify the superintendent of all actions taken regarding children missing from the educational system.
6. When students are dismissed from school during the school day, it will only be by valid requests approved by the principal or his/her designee.
7. The pupil shall be released into proper custodial care.

## **WARNING PROCEDURE**

**RESPONSIBILITY:** It will be the prime responsibility of the parent and school nurse to implement a "Warning System" on potentially missing children.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. School principals will encourage parents to call the school nurse by 10:00 a.m. on each day when their son or daughter is absent from school.
2. If the nurse has not heard from the parent by 10:00 a.m., the nurse will attempt to contact the parent to confirm the student's absence.
3. If the parent cannot be reached at home or at work, the nurse will confirm the absence with the parent's emergency designee listed on an updated file in the nurse's office.
4. If the absence cannot be verified, the nurse will review this fact with the building principal.
5. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that the student is missing under unauthorized circumstances, after considering the pupil's age, maturity, attendance record, disciplinary history, academic record and medical history, the building principal will immediately call the local police (908-766-1122) and the Division of Youth and Family Services.
  - A. Somerset County 908-722-2224
  - B. Before 9:00 a.m., after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends, call 1-800-792-8610.
6. The building principal will notify the Superintendent of schools and the Director of Special Services regarding the above referral.
7. The school principal or designee will inform the parent of the referral as soon as it is feasible.
8. The disposition of the case following the police and D.Y.F.S. intervention will be reported to the building principal and the Director of Special Services.
9. The disposition of the missing student referral will be reviewed with the school Superintendent by the school principal and/or Director of Special Services.