

## Regulation 8464 MISSING CHILDREN

The following procedures implement Policy No. 8464 directing the identification and reporting of children missing from the educational system, whether by abduction by persons other than the child's primary caretaker or by parental neglect of the responsibility to insure the child's attendance at school.

A. In compliance with the Board of Education's policy the following guidelines and procedures shall apply:

1. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying school personnel on the first day of a student's absence. If this is not done, school personnel will attempt to contact the parent/guardian by telephone to ascertain the reason(s) for the absence.
2. Unexplained absences of students in excess of three consecutive days will prompt the school principal to attempt verification of the students' whereabouts through parent/guardian contact by telephone at home or place of employment. Failing this, verification will be attempted through home visitation by school personnel designated by the principal. If verification has not been substantial, or if such is subject to question, the school principal shall notify the Vineland Police Department indicating the school's concern. Concurrently, the principal shall notify the Assistant Superintendent for Education. School personnel are to cooperate with officers of the police department.
3. The parents/guardians of students who are present in the morning but found to be absent afterwards shall be contacted regarding the absence.
4. Students enrolled in work/study programs or who are away from school because of field trips or other school related matters shall not be considered as potentially missing.
5. Pupils who must leave school before the end of the school day must have previous permission of the parents/guardians in writing. Such shall designate the authorized parent/guardian or person to act on his/her behalf. The designated person is to meet the student in the school office and sign that he/she is authorized to take the student prior to the end of the school day. Identification of the designated person should be made before the student is released.
6. Students are not to be released on the basis of an unvalidated telephone call.
7. School personnel are not to send students on errands beyond school property.
8. Children of estranged parents may be released from school only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible and who is registered on the school record as being the legal parent/guardian of the child.

B. Identification of potentially missing children

1. Teachers shall record and report attendance in accordance with Regulation No. 5200, ¶H.

2. Teaching staff members shall be alert to parental neglect of the responsibility for the enrollment and attendance of children of school age. A teaching staff member who believes that a child has been removed from school by his or her parent or primary caretaker, however recent the removal, shall promptly report that belief to the principal.

C. Children possibly lost or abducted

1. The principal or designee shall daily compile a list of absent pupils and compare that list to the pupils for whom parental notification of absence has been received.

2. The principal or designee shall attempt to reach by telephone the parent of an absent pupil for whom notification of absence has not been received. Telephone calls will be made to the pupil's home and to the parent's place of work as indicated on the emergency notification form submitted by the parent.

3. If a parent cannot be reached by telephone, the principal or designee shall promptly take reasonable, appropriate steps to locate the absent pupil, including but not limited to,

a. Interviewing other pupils, staff members, and neighbors of the pupil and

b. Visiting the pupil's home.

4. In the event the principal's designee cannot reach the parent and cannot locate the pupil, he or she shall promptly inform the principal that the pupil may be missing.

5. The principal shall consider the pupil's age, maturity, attendance record, and disciplinary history, academic record, and medical history and, if there is reason to suspect that the pupil may be lost or abducted, shall immediately notify the Vineland Police Department.

D. Children missing by parental neglect

1. The principal or designee shall attempt to determine the reason for the absence of any pupil absent five consecutive days or more.

2. The principal shall report a pupil who has been unaccountably absent five consecutive school days to the Vineland Police Department.

3. When a child has been formally withdrawn from the school district but an official request for the child's records has not been received within a reasonable amount of time of the withdrawal during the school year or within within a reasonable amount of time of the withdrawal at the end of the school year, the principal shall report the child to the Vineland Police Department.

E. Report to law enforcement officials

1. The report to the Vineland Police Department of an unaccountably absent child or a withdrawn child who has not entered another school system may include
  - a. The child's name, age, gender, and physical description;
  - b. The child and parent's last known home address, and
  - c. The parent's name and work place, if known.
2. The Superintendent's designee shall record in the child's permanent record in this district the date on which a child was reported in accordance with this regulation and the information released to the Vineland Police Department.
3. The principal and teaching staff members having knowledge of the child shall cooperate fully with the police in their efforts to locate the child.
4. In the event a child believed to be missing is located, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the police immediately.

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