

News for Immediate Release

Feb. 14, 2019

Auditor General DePasquale: 1 in 5 School Districts Still Need to Create or Update Policies on Reporting Child Abuse

Because of department's efforts, 38 more schools updated or created policies to comply with law HARRISBURG – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today said 244,000 students across Pennsylvania attend school districts that lack updated policies on reporting child abuse, based on a review by his staff. One district — Susquenita in Perry County — remained without any policy as of Feb. 1, 2019.

“It is completely unacceptable for any district to have an outdated or missing policy dealing with suspected child abuse,” DePasquale said. “The fact that nearly a quarter-million Pennsylvania students attend school districts that lack updated policies is appalling.”

In response to the horrific Jerry Sandusky case, Pennsylvania took steps in 2014 to make sure that no one at the local level could sweep reports of suspected child abuse under the rug. School districts have had more than four years to update policies that outline the steps staff must take to report suspected child abuse and neglect, and about 79 percent of school districts have done so.

“That leaves 21 percent of districts without an updated policy that requires staff to report child abuse and neglect concerns directly to ChildLine, the state’s child-abuse hotline,” DePasquale said. “This is important because it means their teachers and support staff might not be properly trained to act as the first line of defense against abuse and neglect.”

Last fall, DePasquale began checking every school district to determine if updated policies were in place. As a result of his inquiry, 38 districts either implemented new policies or updated existing ones.

“While I am encouraged that many districts got my wake-up call, I am very troubled to find districts in this situation after having more than four years to get it done,” DePasquale said. “Did these school districts learn nothing from the Jerry Sandusky sex-abuse scandal?”

“No child should ever be mistreated,” DePasquale said. “Schools can provide an additional level of protection for kids, but only if personnel are properly trained on recognizing signs of abuse and reporting their concerns to the right place.”

Requirements for child-abuse reporting are contained in both the Public School Code and the Child Protective Services Law. The Public School Code requires that school personnel receive training that directs them to first call ChildLine to report any concern of abuse or neglect, then directs them to inform a designated school official. The number to reach ChildLine is 1-800-932-0313.

Prior to 2014, when all school personnel who have direct contact with children became mandated reporters, their only requirement was to report abuse or neglect concerns to a supervisor.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: Included below are the lists of school districts that updated or created child-abuse reporting policies once the Department of the Auditor General called them, as well as districts that continue to have outdated policy language.

Updated policy after AG call to include direct reporting language (as of Feb. 1, 2019)

ALLEGHENY COUNTY	MT. LEBANON
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	SOUTH FAYETTE TOWNSHIP
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	WEST MIFFLIN AREA
ARMSTRONG COUNTY	APOLLO-RIDGE
BERKS COUNTY	TULPEHOCKEN AREA
BUCKS COUNTY	CENTENNIAL
BUTLER COUNTY	BUTLER AREA
CAMBRIA COUNTY	NORTHERN CAMBRIA
CARBON COUNTY	LEHIGHTON AREA
CENTRE COUNTY	PENNS VALLEY AREA
CLARION COUNTY	KEYSTONE
CLARION COUNTY	UNION
CUMBERLAND COUNTY	CARLISLE AREA
CUMBERLAND COUNTY	WEST SHORE
FAYETTE COUNTY	BROWNSVILLE AREA
GREENE COUNTY	CENTRAL GREENE
GREENE COUNTY	SOUTHEASTERN GREENE
INDIANA COUNTY	HOMER CENTER
JEFFERSON COUNTY	PUNXSUTAWNEY AREA
LANCASTER COUNTY	MANHEIM TOWNSHIP
LANCASTER COUNTY	SOLANCO
LEHIGH COUNTY	NORTHERN LEHIGH
LUZERNE COUNTY	DALLAS
LUZERNE COUNTY	WILKES-BARRE AREA
MERCER COUNTY	WEST MIDDLESEX AREA
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	POTTSGROVE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	SPRING FORD AREA
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	WILSON AREA
NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY	SHIKELLAMY
POTTER COUNTY	GALETON AREA
SOMERSET COUNTY	NORTH STAR
VENANGO COUNTY	OIL CITY AREA
WASHINGTON COUNTY	MCGUFFEY
WASHINGTON COUNTY	RINGGOLD
WESTMORELAND COUNTY	PENN TRAFFORD
Didn't have a policy until AG call, now have one (as of Feb. 1, 2019)	
LYCOMING COUNTY	WILLIAMSPORT AREA
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	PEN ARGYL AREA
BEAVER COUNTY	SOUTH SIDE AREA

Have policy, but outdated direct reporting language (as of Feb. 1, 2019)

County	School District	Enrollment*
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	CARLYNTON	1,351
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	DUQUESNE CITY	328
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	EAST ALLEGHENY	1,557
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	GATEWAY	3,286
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	KEYSTONE OAKS	1,867
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	NORTH HILLS	4,371
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	QUAKER VALLEY	1,923
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	SOUTH ALLEGHENY	1,537
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	STO ROX	1,224
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	WEST ALLEGHENY	3,348
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	WOODLAND HILLS	3,529
BEAVER COUNTY	BLACKHAWK	2,364
BEAVER COUNTY	CENTRAL VALLEY	2,357
BEDFORD COUNTY	CHESTNUT RIDGE	1,437
BERKS COUNTY	EXETER TOWNSHIP	3,933
BERKS COUNTY	KUTZTOWN AREA	1,303
BERKS COUNTY	SCHUYLKILL VALLEY	2,063
BERKS COUNTY	TWIN VALLEY	3,257
BLAIR COUNTY	WILLIAMSBURG COMMUNITY	494
BRADFORD COUNTY	ATHENS AREA	2,044
BRADFORD COUNTY	TOWANDA AREA	1,554
BUCKS COUNTY	BRISTOL BOROUGH	1,263
BUCKS COUNTY	MORRISVILLE BOROUGH	846
CAMBRIA COUNTY	CONEMAUGH VALLEY	744
CAMBRIA COUNTY	WESTMONT HILLTOP	1,421
CARBON COUNTY	JIM THORPE AREA	2,078
CARBON COUNTY	PALMERTON AREA	1,715
CENTRE COUNTY	BALD EAGLE AREA	1,613
CENTRE COUNTY	BELLEFONTE AREA	2,693
CHESTER COUNTY	KENNETT CONSOLIDATED	4,177
CHESTER COUNTY	OCTORARA AREA	2,326
CHESTER COUNTY	OXFORD AREA	3,757
CLARION COUNTY	CLARION AREA	791
CLARION COUNTY	CLARION-LIMESTONE AREA	874
CLARION COUNTY	REDBANK VALLEY	1,085
CLEARFIELD COUNTY	CLEARFIELD AREA	2,219

CLEARFIELD COUNTY	GLENDALE	780
COLUMBIA COUNTY	BERWICK AREA	2,816
CRAWFORD COUNTY	CONNEAUT	1,989
DAUPHIN COUNTY	HARRISBURG CITY	6,528
DAUPHIN COUNTY	STEELTON-HIGHSPIRE	1,328
DELAWARE COUNTY	CHICHESTER	3,197
DELAWARE COUNTY	GARNET VALLEY	4,774
DELAWARE COUNTY	SOUTHEAST DELCO	4,283
DELAWARE COUNTY	SPRINGFIELD	4,062
ERIE COUNTY	CORRY AREA	2,047
ERIE COUNTY	NORTH EAST	1,660
ERIE COUNTY	UNION CITY AREA	1,126
FAYETTE COUNTY	ALBERT GALLATIN AREA	3,298
FAYETTE COUNTY	FRAZIER	1,134
GREENE COUNTY	JEFFERSON MORGAN	769
INDIANA COUNTY	BLAIRSVILLE SALTSBURG	1,558
INDIANA COUNTY	PURCHASE LINE	854
LACKAWANNA COUNTY	ABINGTON HEIGHTS	3,388
LACKAWANNA COUNTY	CARBONDALE AREA	1,588
LACKAWANNA COUNTY	LAKELAND	1,488
LACKAWANNA COUNTY	NORTH POCONO	3,007
LACKAWANNA COUNTY	OLD FORGE	936
LACKAWANNA COUNTY	RIVERSIDE	1,516
LACKAWANNA COUNTY	VALLEY VIEW	2,409
LANCASTER COUNTY	LAMPETER STRASBURG	3,094
LANCASTER COUNTY	PEQUEA VALLEY	1,524
LAWRENCE COUNTY	MOHAWK AREA	1,468
LAWRENCE COUNTY	NESHANNOCK TOWNSHIP	1,205
LAWRENCE COUNTY	WILMINGTON AREA	1,127
LUZERNE COUNTY	GREATER NANTICOKE AREA	2,343
LUZERNE COUNTY	HAZLETON AREA	11,405
LUZERNE COUNTY	NORTHWEST AREA	1,026
LUZERNE COUNTY	WYOMING AREA	2,280
LUZERNE COUNTY	WYOMING VALLEY WEST	4,511
MERCER COUNTY	FARRELL AREA	706
MERCER COUNTY	MERCER AREA	1,104
MIFFLIN COUNTY	MIFFLIN COUNTY	4,939
MONROE COUNTY	POCONO MOUNTAIN	9,000
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP	4,545
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	COLONIAL	4,966

MONTGOMERY COUNTY	NORTH PENN	12,677
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	NAZARETH AREA	4,724
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	SAUCON VALLEY	2,160
PERRY COUNTY	NEWPORT	1,070
PERRY COUNTY	WEST PERRY	2,420
POTTER COUNTY	AUSTIN AREA	183
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY	MAHANOEY AREA	1,023
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY	MINERSVILLE AREA	1,138
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY	TAMAQUA AREA	2,124
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY	WILLIAMS VALLEY	1,032
SNYDER COUNTY	MIDD WEST	2,177
SOMERSET COUNTY	TURKEYFOOT VALLEY AREA	354
SOMERSET COUNTY	WINDBER AREA	1,220
SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY	MOUNTAIN VIEW	936
TIOGA COUNTY	SOUTHERN TIOGA	1,814
VENANGO COUNTY	FRANKLIN AREA	1,958
WASHINGTON COUNTY	AVELLA AREA	543
WASHINGTON COUNTY	BENTWORTH	1,138
WASHINGTON COUNTY	BETHLEHEM CENTER	1,164
WASHINGTON COUNTY	CALIFORNIA AREA	886
WESTMORELAND COUNTY	GREENSBURG SALEM	2,737
WESTMORELAND COUNTY	KISKI AREA	3,640
WESTMORELAND COUNTY	MONESSEN CITY	796
WESTMORELAND COUNTY	MOUNT PLEASANT AREA	2,047
WESTMORELAND COUNTY	NEW KENSINGTON-ARNOLD	1,895
WESTMORELAND COUNTY	SOUTHMORELAND	1,889
WESTMORELAND COUNTY	YOUGH	1,962
WYOMING COUNTY	LACKAWANNA TRAIL	999
WYOMING COUNTY	TUNKHANNOCK AREA	2,295

*Enrollment numbers are from Pennsylvania Department of Education's website.