



March 4, 2024

**S.F. No. 3746: Physical and Sexual Abuse Standards
Letter of Support- Minnesota School Counselor Association**

Minnesota school counselors have a legal, ethical, and moral responsibility to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the proper authorities. School counselors work to identify the behavioral, academic, and social/emotional impact of abuse and neglect on students and ensure the necessary supports for students are in place.

In addition to the reporting aspects of our jobs as school counselors, school counselors also:

- Understand child abuse and neglect and its impact on children's academic, career and social/emotional development
- Provide interventions promoting resiliency, healthy interpersonal and communication skills and self-worth
- Make referrals to outside agencies when appropriate
- Engage families in the school community
- Identify barriers and limitations that affect healthy family functioning and may lead to child abuse or neglect
- Identify instances of child abuse and neglect and respond on both individual and systemic levels
- Provide professional development in consultation on child abuse to school staff, families and the school community

Minnesota school counselors recognize that as school systems that see and support youth on some of the most constant and consistent bases it makes sense to include child physical and sexual abuse prevention instruction and are in full support.

Minnesota school counselors also recognize that it cannot be left to the schools and employees in the school districts to do this work in a silo and would encourage the legislature to continue partnering with various agencies, non-profits, communities, families, and others to address child abuse in all its forms in a proactive and preventive way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelsey Dren".

President, Minnesota School Counselor Association

