

A Matter of Days

The Scenario:

A few days before graduation, you walk into Mr. Harold's classroom after school to ask him a question. You see him sitting very close to Helen, a senior. They are holding hands and talking quietly, but you can't hear what they are saying. When they see you, they let go of each other's hands and scoot back a bit. What do you do?

Discussion Begins

What do you do?

Do you report? If so, to whom? If so, when? If you don't, what might happen to Helen? To other students? To you? To your school? To LAUSD? If you do, what might happen to Mr. Harold? His family?

If you report and the Local Law Enforcement Agency or the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) tells you...

...to **handle it administratively**, what do you do next?

...**they will investigate**, what do you do next?



Legal Response

If there is reasonable suspicion that child abuse occurred, a Suspected Child Abuse Report must be filed with either the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or the Local Law Enforcement Agency.

Other Considerations

Whether or not you have reasonable suspicion that child abuse occurred, there may be sufficient information to determine that Sexual Harassment and/or improper conduct has occurred (see the LAUSD Code of Conduct and Employee Code of Ethics). Accordingly, you should notify an administrator and the Title IX Complaint Manager. Follow the steps in the Title IX Policy/ Complaint Procedure Bulletin (BUL-2521.1) and Sexual Harassment Policy Bulletin (BUL-3349.0). Educational Equity can provide training in the area of Sexual Harassment for both students and staff.

If you are an administrator, you should then notify the Local District Operations Coordinator. At this time, the Local District Superintendent or Unit/Division Head must exercise discretion as to whether the employee should be removed from the school site or work assignment (BUL-3357.1).

As appropriate, the Local District Operations Coordinators and/or Division of Human Resources Representatives shall consult with Employee Relations and communicate with the Local Law Enforcement Agency to determine whether they may begin an administrative investigation. Once clearance has been obtained from the Local Law Enforcement Agency, the administrative investigation shall proceed. Upon conclusion of the investigation, appropriate administrative action should be taken, if warranted.

Listen

Although it may be difficult to see your colleague in this position and you may have a strong emotional reaction, pay attention to the details of what you see. You may want to take notes to help with remembering details.

Protect

Act immediately by following the legal response. Doing so is the best way to protect students and the learning environment.

Connect

Every school site has protocols, systems, and resources to support and address student safety and well-being. This is an opportunity to become familiar with and use the procedures, policies, and resources at your work site.

Model

Maintain a professional and calm level of emotions and reactions. Do not express shock or anger at the possible perpetrator or event.

Teach

Take this opportunity to review the district policy regarding appropriate teacher/student boundaries. Refer to the LAUSD Code of Conduct and Employee Code of Ethics.

Emotional Support