

# A Weekend Event

## The Scenario:

You are at an amusement park with your family on a weekend. You see Paul, a teacher from your school, kissing and holding hands with a young girl you think you recognize from your school. They don't see you. 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 the young girl? To other students? To you? To your school? To LAUSD?

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

Because this is not during work time or “in the course and scope of your employment” you are not legally required to file a Suspected Child Abuse Report. In this situation, you are not a mandated reporter. However, if you have reason to believe the child is being abused, you may call the Local Law Enforcement Agency. You should not investigate, but refer the incident to the appropriate authorities.

In the child’s best interest and well-being, the incident should be reported. Failure to report could jeopardize the child’s safety.

### Other Considerations

As a precaution, you may want to inform the school administrator of the conduct to see if there have been prior similar acts.

By reporting this situation to your administrator, you may enable her/him to obtain sufficient information leading to reasonable suspicion. The administrator then becomes the mandated reporter.

Whether or not the administrator has 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, s/he should 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.

The administrator 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 (see 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. All adults on campus have a responsibility to ensure a safe learning environment. 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. Also take this opportunity to think about the different reporting obligations you have during your time “on the clock” versus as a private citizen.

## Emotional Support