

DISTRICT PLANNING CHECKLIST

Abuse Prevention *for* Schools & Districts

A practical starting point for building, reviewing, or strengthening a formal student abuse prevention program.

WHY THIS CHECKLIST

Most districts already have pieces of abuse prevention in place. The risk is that those pieces may live in different departments, apply to different groups, or stop at initial hiring. This checklist helps HR, school leaders, risk managers, and student services teams look at the program as one connected system.

USE IT TO

- ✓ **Identify gaps**
- ✓ **Assign ownership**
- ✓ **Set priorities**
- ✓ **Plan next steps**

TEN COMPONENTS OF A FORMAL PREVENTION PROGRAM



Planning note: Requirements differ by state and role. Use this checklist as a planning tool, then confirm applicable law, district policy, collective bargaining obligations, and insurer or risk-pool requirements.

Build the Foundation

Start with clear ownership, consistent expectations, and screening practices that apply across the district.

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LEADERSHIP

Make abuse prevention a district-level responsibility, not an informal task that sits with one office or one school.

☐	Name a district abuse prevention lead and a designated contact at each school or site.	
☐	Create a cross-functional review team that includes HR, student services, legal/risk, school leadership, and other appropriate expertise.	
☐	Define who owns policy, training, screening, reporting procedures, documentation, and annual review.	
☐	Train building-level contacts on their responsibilities and escalation pathways.	
☐	Review the full prevention program at least annually and after a significant incident or legal change.	

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POLICIES

Write the expectations down, keep them current, and make sure they apply consistently.

☐	Maintain written policies for prevention, professional boundaries, recognition, reporting, response, and retaliation protection.	
☐	Align policies with current state law and district procedures.	
☐	Apply the standards to employees, volunteers, contractors, coaches, substitutes, and other adults with student access, as appropriate to role.	
☐	Document reporting pathways: who must report, to whom, by what method, and how quickly.	
☐	Publish where staff can easily find the current policy and reporting procedures.	

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CODE OF CONDUCT

Turn broad policy into concrete, observable expectations for day-to-day interactions with students.

☐	Publish clear do's and don'ts for adult-student interactions in classrooms, activities, transportation, athletics, and off-campus settings.	
☐	Include digital communication, texting, social media, direct messaging, personal devices, photos/video, and one-to-one online contact.	
☐	Address gifts, rides, favoritism, private meetings, physical contact, changing areas, overnight activities, and other higher-risk situations.	
☐	Require acknowledgment of the Code of Conduct before service begins and retain the record with training and screening documentation.	
☐	Include a process for raising concerns about boundary violations before behavior escalates.	

Use screening as one layer of protection, not the whole program.

☐	Screen employees and other adults with student access according to state law, district policy, and role-based risk.	
☐	Confirm that vendors and contractors meet district screening requirements before their personnel work around students.	
☐	Use the appropriate combination of fingerprinting, criminal record searches, sex offender registry checks, and county or jurisdictional searches.	
☐	Check employment history, references, license status, and disciplinary history where permitted and appropriate.	
☐	Establish a re-screening or continuous-monitoring schedule rather than relying only on the initial check.	
☐	Review hiring, separation, and reference practices to ensure the district does not enable known misconduct to move to another school.	

Additional Notes:

Train the Whole School Community

Prevention is strongest when adults, students, and families understand their own role and receive information designed for them.

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STAFF & VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Train before access to students begins, then keep the learning current.

☐	Require abuse prevention and mandated reporting training BEFORE an employee or volunteer begins.	
☐	Cover warning signs, grooming patterns, professional boundaries, digital conduct, reporting obligations, and how to respond to a disclosure.	
☐	Include practical scenarios for educators, coaches, volunteers, substitutes, transportation staff, and other roles.	
☐	Require refresher training on a defined cycle, including updates when laws or district procedures change.	
☐	Track completion centrally and restrict assignment or access when required training is incomplete.	

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STUDENT LEARNING

Give students age-appropriate language, skills, and safe ways to ask for help.

☐	Provide developmentally appropriate personal safety education across grade levels.	
☐	Address unsafe behavior by known adults and peers, not only “stranger danger.”	
☐	Include online safety, grooming, secrecy, boundaries, help-seeking, and trusted adults.	
☐	Ensure students know how and where to report a concern at school.	
☐	Coordinate student lessons with district policy and family communication.	

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PARENT EDUCATION

Help families reinforce the same prevention messages outside school.

☐	Provide parent and caregiver resources that are distinct from staff training.	
☐	Explain what students are learning and how families can continue the conversation at home.	
☐	Communicate district expectations for adult-student boundaries and digital communication.	
☐	Give families clear contact information for questions, concerns, and reporting.	

Make the program visible, auditable, and manageable across every school and adult population.

☐ Track training, screening, signed agreements, renewal dates, and role eligibility in one coordinated system or reporting process.	
☐ Use reminders and escalation rules for upcoming and overdue requirements.	
☐ Be able to report completion by school, role, department, and requirement.	
☐ Retain records according to district policy and legal requirements so district can document reasonable prevention efforts.	
☐ Review program data for recurring gaps, exceptions, or locations that need support.	

ONE SYSTEM

A practical test: Could HR produce a current list of every adult who is cleared, trained, screened, and eligible for student access without reconciling several disconnected spreadsheets?

Additional Notes:

Prepare for Response and Continuous Improvement

A prevention program must also be ready for the moment a concern arises, and for the review that follows.

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Make sure the district understands how prevention, reporting, and response intersect with coverage and risk-management expectations.

☐	Review abuse, molestation, and educator sexual misconduct coverage with the district insurer or risk pool.	
☐	Confirm notice requirements, exclusions, documentation expectations, and access to risk-management resources.	
☐	Compare insurer recommendations with district policy, training, screening, and supervision practices.	
☐	Include risk-management findings in the annual prevention program review.	

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Plan the support pathway before an allegation or disclosure occurs.

☐ Define who coordinates immediate support for a student and family after a report or disclosure.	
☐ Identify counseling, medical, advocacy, and outside community resources that may be needed.	
☐ Clarify roles for HR, student services, school leadership, communications, legal counsel, and law enforcement or child protection agencies.	
☐ Protect confidentiality while keeping required parties informed.	
☐ After an incident, review what the district learned and update policy, training, supervision, or reporting processes as appropriate.	

Additional Notes:

QUICK DISTRICT SELF-ASSESSMENT

We can identify one accountable owner for the district-wide prevention program.	☐ Yes	☐ Partly	☐ No
Our standards apply consistently across employees, volunteers, contractors, and other adults with student access.	☐ Yes	☐ Partly	☐ No
HR can verify current training, screening, agreements, and eligibility without manual reconciliation.	☐ Yes	☐ Partly	☐ No
Students and families receive prevention education designed for them, not just information intended for staff.	☐ Yes	☐ Partly	☐ No

Additional Notes:

Professional Learning Board can help you move from checklist to implementation.

- Online Courses for Staff and Volunteers
- K-12 Student Safety Curriculum
- Parent Education
- Safety Coordinator Training
- Compliance Tracking and Reporting Tools

Explore HR resources and schedule a conversation:
ProfessionalLearningBoard.com/HR-Resources



Planning resource only. This checklist is not legal advice and does not replace review of applicable federal, state, and local requirements, district policy, collective bargaining agreements, or insurer guidance.