



Superintendent's Circular

NUMBER:
EQT-08
Version 01

EXPECTANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

This Circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version.

BACKGROUND

Boston Public Schools aims to graduate all students from high school and prepare them for college and career success. For students who are expecting or raising children, it is especially crucial to maintain high expectations and intensive support for school completion, as pregnancy and parenthood are among the primary reasons many students drop out of school. As a school district, Boston Public Schools aims to prevent student pregnancy through comprehensive health education and access to sexual health services. Under the District Wellness Policy, schools must provide students with access to key resources and services that are developmentally appropriate, and support sexual and reproductive health in a safe and supportive environment. It is also essential to engage with students who are currently expectant or parenting to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment and to promote academic success. Moreover, we must ensure compliance with district policies that prohibit bias-based conduct consistent with federal Title IX law, which prohibits discrimination against students who are pregnant or parenting.

DEFINITIONS

Expectant: an individual, regardless of gender identity, who is either pregnant or the partner of someone who is pregnant.

Parenting: an individual, regardless of gender identity, who is the parent of a child.

Caregiver: an individual currently providing care for the student who has completed the notarized "Caregiver Authorization Affidavit" granting education decision-making rights.

Emancipated minor: an individual under age 18 who is self-supporting and independent of parental control, sometimes as a result of a court order terminating the rights and duties of the parent(s). Under Massachusetts law, a minor who is pregnant or parenting is not automatically emancipated; however, as provided for in the law, pregnant and parenting students can give independent consent for medical or dental care for themselves or their children, including for school-based medical services (see M.G.L. Ch. 112 § 12F).

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act): a federal law that affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. When a student turns 18 years old or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents to the student.

HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act): a federal law establishing national standards and requirements for electronic health care transactions and protecting the privacy and security of individually identifiable health information. This law applies to health care providers and ensures that they do not share medical information about their patients without the patients' permission.

Gender identity: A person's internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female, or neither male nor female. A person's gender identity can be the same or different from their physiology or assigned sex at birth.

Parent: a child's mother or father or both or guardian, or a person or agency legally authorized by a court order to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the mother, father, or guardian.

POLICY

Maintaining Confidentiality

Expectant and parenting students have the right to choose how and when they seek services and support from school staff. School staff must adhere to all applicable laws and regulations on confidentiality for students, including the requirements stated in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). As provided for by this law, expectant and parenting students have the right to have their health and personal information kept confidential, including from other students and school staff who

are not required to be kept informed, except in circumstances involving their physical safety.

When a student informs a school staff member of their expectant or parenting status, the staff member must inform their head of school within a reasonable time period as appropriate. A reasonable time period should be determined by the immediacy of the student's need for an adjusted attendance policy and academic supports; for expectant students, sufficient time should be allowed for medical and health decisions to be made before sharing the student's expectant status with the head of school. The staff member who has been informed must make the expectant or parenting student aware of the need to inform the head of school. The staff member should discuss with the student and determine a reasonable time period in which to inform the head of school. Depending on the details of the situation, the student's preferences regarding confidentiality, and the student's needs, the head of school should then share this information with other staff on a limited, need-to-know basis.

School staff must not force or coerce a student to inform their parents, or any other individual, of any pregnancy or parenting-related information. School staff must not disclose information about a student's expectant or parenting status to the student's parents without permission from the student. If information about a student's pregnancy is documented within the student record of a student under the age of 18, and parents make a request for the student record, FERPA would require the district to present parents with an opportunity to view the student record. Boston Public Schools encourages communication with and involvement of parents/guardians/caregivers regarding health services and student supports. School staff working with

expectant or parenting students should encourage students to consider informing their parents/guardians/caregivers or other trusted family members about the pregnancy and decisions related to that pregnancy.

Nothing in this policy must prevent the disclosure of information in certain limited circumstances: cases of suspected child abuse or neglect (in accordance with laws on mandated reporting of abuse), threats by a minor against themselves or others, or cases where there is a serious risk to a minor's life or health. A student's pregnancy does not in itself constitute a serious risk to a minor's life or health, and therefore does not compel a staff member to file a 51A based solely on the student's pregnancy, regardless of the student's age.

A student must give written consent to store data linking their name with academic information and their expectant or parenting status. Storing this data together will help to ensure that the student is receiving coordinated academic support. Before giving this written consent, students must be informed that, if they consent, information about their expectant or parenting status may be accessible to their parents as part of their full academic records. Any aggregated or trend data on expectant or parenting students should not include any identifying information. Qualified medical professionals within a school building may keep confidential medical records on pregnant students who have sought treatment.

Ensuring a Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

BPS Equity circulars protect the rights of students, including expectant and parenting students, to attend school in an environment free of bias-based conduct. Regardless of their

sexual orientation, gender identity, relationship status, marital status, race, ethnicity, immigration status, Special Education or English learner status, or other identities, expectant and parenting students have the same right as any other students to attend district schools or programs. District staff must not engage in bias-based conduct toward any expectant or parenting student, or exclude expectant or parenting students from any school, program, class, or extracurricular activity on the basis of a student's expectant or parenting status. School staff are encouraged to bring an anti-racist lens to ensuring that expectant and parenting students be respected, provided with all needed supports, and actively encouraged to achieve their academic goals.

School personnel may require an expectant or parenting student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue participation in such programs or activities only if a certification is also required of all other students with physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician.

All school staff must maintain and communicate high academic expectations for all students, regardless of expectant or parenting status. Bias-based counseling and the use of materials that treat students differently on the basis of sex, including expectant or parenting status, are prohibited.

The Office of Equity and administrators at each school are responsible for monitoring compliance with the provisions of this circular. Individuals who feel that this circular may have been violated or that they have been subject to bias-based conduct may contact the BPS Office of Equity. Any school employee who

becomes aware of bias-based conduct against an expectant or parenting student must report such conduct to the head of school and/or to the Office of Equity.

Finally, to promote a safe and supportive school environment, teachers and school staff must be sensitive to the health needs of expectant and parenting students. For example, some pregnant students may benefit from bringing snacks to class, taking extra bathroom breaks, or leaving class shortly before dismissal to allow more time to pass between classes. Schools must also accommodate new mothers' need to express breastmilk and work with students in partnership with the Office of Equity to identify a private, sanitary location for this purpose, along with appropriate storage space for nursing equipment.

Promoting Academic Success

Expectant and parenting students have the right to remain in their regular or current school program, subject to universal participation requirements for those programs. School programs include but are not limited to: honors programs; special education placements; specialized language programs; alternative programs; extracurricular, intramural, and interscholastic activities; and graduation programs or activities. Students may attend an alternative school or participate in an alternative program or activity for expectant or parenting students, but such enrollment or participation must be completely voluntary and never coerced. The alternative school, program, or activity must align with the Common Core State Standards and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

Implementing Attendance Policies

Absences for reasons of pregnancy and related medical conditions, including pregnancy-related illness or health conditions, the termination of pregnancy, childbirth, and recovery therefrom, must be considered excused absences. Students have the right to be reinstated at the same school with the same status as before the leave began after any pregnancy-related medical leave and/or parental leave.

Students who are parents are entitled to a fair and reasonable parental leave following the birth of a new child. Students who are parents are entitled to a minimum of eight weeks of parental leave for the purpose of giving birth, although a school may not require a student to remain out of school for a fixed period of time post-childbirth. The amount of parental leave for each expectant student shall be determined in consultation with the student, school staff, the student's health care providers, and any other adults the student consents to include. School staff should encourage students to consider including their parents/guardians/caregivers in this conversation.

Documentation from students' licensed healthcare providers may be required for verification of pregnancy and related medical conditions only if it is also required for absences due to other medical conditions.

Absences due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a student's child shall also be considered excused absences. Parenting students shall not be required to provide documentation from a licensed healthcare provider to verify their children's illnesses unless such documentation is also required for absences due to all students' medical conditions.

Schools must support the continuation of learning during excused absences and leave, as medically appropriate. Every reasonable effort must be made to provide school and home-based independent study activities for students who are or will be absent for a significant period of time due to pregnancy-related illnesses, childbirth, and recovery, and parental leave. Students who are pregnant or parenting must have access to homebound or hospital instructional services on the same basis as any other student who misses school for a temporary medical condition.

Students with excused absences due to their expectant or parenting status must have the same opportunity to complete assignments and tests missed, or an equivalent of the work missed, that any other student would have after excused absences. Students must be given full credit upon satisfactory completion of that work.

Using Liaisons to Share Information

Heads of school that oversee any student in grades 6-12 must identify a school liaison for the Expectant and Parenting Students Policy to help share information among the school community. Schools must submit the name of this liaison to the Health and Wellness Office. The liaison may be a guidance counselor, school nurse, social worker, or other school staff member. Should the expectant and parenting student liaison step down, a replacement must be identified and reported to the Health and Wellness Office within 15 school days.

Liaisons will work with the school leadership and the School Wellness Council to share this policy with staff, students, and families. All schools within the district that include any grades 6-

12 must disseminate this policy among school staff and administration. The policy must also be shared with students and families within the first month of school, and it must be posted in the school nurse's office throughout the school year. The school must make the policy publicly available in any school-based health centers or health resource centers. The name of the expectant and parenting student liaison as well as a copy of this policy must also be posted on the school website.

Heads of school are ultimately responsible for the academic success of their students. Therefore, school leaders must intervene in cases where students' needs are not being met, especially when the action or inaction of school staff is a contributing factor.

The Office of Health and Wellness will coordinate training for liaisons. That office must supply district and community resources to liaisons. Liaisons must make this information available to students and staff as needed.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

Central offices and departments (e.g., Opportunity Youth, Health Services, Health & Wellness), in collaborations with school superintendents, will work with schools where there are multiple expectant and parenting students, where existing support systems may not be adequate to support their needs, to help establish a plan for providing more comprehensive systems of support. For example, this could include creating a school-based team to develop and implement individual student plans, hiring a part-time student liaison to work with expectant and parenting students, or bringing in external programs or resources to support students. In all cases, the plan must be approved by the head of school and must match available school resources (particularly staff and budget).

This policy and its associated implementation procedures will be reviewed annually by the Office of Equity and the Office of Health and Wellness and updated as needed.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

Rights of Expectant and Parenting Students

Expectant and parenting students have the right to:

1. Choose how and when they seek services and support from school staff.
2. Choose when and how to inform parents/guardians/caregivers or other trusted family members of their pregnancy and decisions related to that pregnancy.

3. Have information shared with school personnel on a need-to-know basis only, unless the student provides written, informed consent.
 - a. In particular, students must give written, informed consent before information on their expectant or parenting status is stored in school files alongside their academic information.
4. Participate in school programs, activities, classes, or extracurricular activities and remain in their regular or current school program, subject to universal participation requirements.
 - a. Enrollment by expectant or parenting students in any alternative program or activity must be completely voluntary.
5. Have their absences excused when due to the illness or medical appointment of a child or their own pregnancy-related reasons.
6. Complete assignments and tests missed, or an equivalent of the work missed, after excused absences due to their expectant or parenting status and receive full credit upon satisfactory completion of that work.
7. Participate in a conference with school staff and health care providers about the amount of parental leave they will take, and to choose which other adults (including parents/guardians/ caregivers or other trusted family members), if any, to include in that conference.
 - a. Students are entitled to a minimum of eight weeks of parental leave.

- b. BPS employees may not require a student to remain out of school for a fixed period of time post-childbirth.
- 8. Receive Home and Hospital Instruction services to continue learning and obtain instruction during excused absences and/or leave that total more than 14 days in a school year.
 - a. Students must provide a qualified physician's statement to access Home and Hospital Instruction services.
- 9. Be reinstated at the same school at the conclusion of pregnancy and/or parental leave with the same status as before the leave began.

Protecting Student Confidentiality

- 1. Boston Public Schools employees must adhere to all applicable laws and regulations on confidentiality for students, including the requirements stated in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
 - a. Obtain written, informed consent from expectant or parenting students before storing data linking students' names with academic information and expectant or parenting status.
 - b. Before giving written consent, students must be informed that, if they consent, information about their expectant or parenting status will be entered into their educational records to ensure that students are receiving necessary supports, and educational records are accessible to their parents in accordance with FERPA.

2. When a student informs a school staff member of their expectant or parenting status, the staff member must inform their head of school within a reasonable time period as appropriate in order to provide coordinated academic support and adjusted attendance policies.
 - a. A reasonable time period should be determined by the immediacy of the student's need for an adjusted attendance policy and academic supports, balanced with the time needed by an expectant student to make personal health decisions before the head of school is informed.
 - b. The staff member should explain to the student the need to inform the head of school in order to make a coordinated plan for academic success. The staff member should discuss with the student what a reasonable time period would be for them so there is a shared understanding and accountability of the next steps.
 - c. If the student is pregnant and needs more time and support to consider their options and connect with a medical provider, the staff and student should make a plan to check in regularly to ensure the student receives timely support. The staff member is not required to inform the head of school if the pregnancy is ended.
 - d. Depending on the details of the situation, the student's preferences regarding confidentiality, and the student's needs, the head of school should then share this information with other staff on a limited, need-to-know basis. The school nurse may be helpful if health

care coordination with the student's medical provider is needed. A school social worker may be helpful in connecting the student to other support services. The student should be consulted before sharing their status with other staff; this is essential to building trust, honoring student autonomy, and ensuring the student feels safe and supported.

3. School staff members must not disclose a student's expectant or parenting status to that student's parents regardless of age without permission from the student. Additionally, staff members must not force or coerce students to inform their parents, or any other individual, of any pregnancy or parenting-related information.
 - a. School staff working with expectant or parenting students should encourage them to consider informing their parents/guardians/caregivers or other trusted family members of the pregnancy and decisions related to that pregnancy. Having a support system where they live is very important during pregnancy and while parenting. However, to help the student make a support plan, the trusted staff should ask if the student believes that telling their family about the pregnancy will put the student in danger and should be aware of such dynamics in the student's home life. A school social worker, a trained reproductive health counselor, or a similar support role may be best suited to help counsel a student in this matter.
 - b. In accordance with Massachusetts General Law (Chapter 119, Section 51A), school staff are expected to disclose information on child abuse or neglect to the

appropriate authorities. Mandated reporters must report if, when acting in their professional capacities, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering certain kinds of physical or emotional injury. The kinds of physical or emotional injuries that must be reported are those that are the result of (i) abuse inflicted upon the child which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, including sexual abuse; (ii) neglect, including malnutrition; or (iii) physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth. A student's pregnancy does not in itself constitute a serious risk to a minor's life or health and does not automatically require submitting a report.

4. School staff members should reach out to the school policy liaison, a school administrator, or the Office of Equity to get support in understanding confidentiality procedures as needed.

Ensuring a Safe, Supportive Learning Environment

BPS employees must:

1. Treat all students, including expectant and parenting students, with respect, recognizing that all students have the potential to succeed.
2. Maintain and communicate high academic expectations for all students, regardless of expectant or parenting status.
3. Recognize and address the ways multiple forms of bias, including racial bias, may impact an expectant or parenting student's opportunities for academic success.

4. Ensure that expectant and parenting students are not excluded from any school, program, class, or extracurricular activity on the basis of the student's expectant or parenting status.
 - a. Teachers and school staff are encouraged to be sensitive to the health needs of expectant and parenting students. For example, some pregnant students may benefit from bringing snacks to class, taking extra bathroom breaks, or leaving class shortly before dismissal to allow more time to pass between classes.
 - b. Schools must also accommodate new mothers' need to express breast milk. Contact the Office of Equity for assistance as needed.
5. Any BPS employee, student, or family member who becomes aware of possible bias-based conduct against an expectant or parenting student should report such conduct to the head of school and/or to the BPS Office of Equity.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. *School administrators are responsible for:*
 - a. Ensuring school staff's compliance with the policy.
 - i. Intervene in cases where students' needs are not being met, especially when the action or inaction of school staff is a contributing factor.
 - b. Identifying a school policy liaison: Schools with any grades 6-12 must identify an Expectant and Parenting Student Policy liaison to share information with school staff, students, and families.

- i. School leaders must submit the name of the policy liaison to the assistant superintendent, Office of Health & Wellness, by the first day of school each year. See contact at the end of the circular.
 - ii. If the school's policy liaison steps down, the school leader must identify a replacement and report their name to the Assistant Superintendent, Office of Health & Wellness, within 15 school days.
 - iii. Every school has a different structure for providing student support services; therefore, the school-based position of the liaison may differ among schools. It is usually best if the liaison is in regular contact with expectant and parenting students as part of their job, such as a guidance counselor or social worker. At the K-8 or middle school level, where there are generally fewer expectant or parenting students, it may be appropriate for a health teacher or other interested teacher to serve as liaison. School nurses may not be the ideal choice as a liaison since they may not be available to leave the nurse's office during school hours to share information with other staff.
- c. Overseeing the policy liaison to ensure communication of the policy to all staff, students, and families.
 - d. Working with the Office of Equity to accommodate new mothers' need to express breast milk by identifying a private, sanitary location for this purpose, along with appropriate storage space for nursing

equipment. Bathrooms are not appropriate facilities, even if private. To qualify, spaces should be “shielded from view and free from any intrusion.” For more guidelines, see the fact sheet on “Break Time for Nursing Mothers Under the FLSA,” available at <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs73.htm>

- e. Reporting any instances of possible bias-based conduct against an expectant or parenting student to the Office of Equity (phone: 617-635-9650 or email: bpsequity@bostonpublicschools.org)
 - i. It is considered bias-based conduct to exclude an expectant or parenting student from any school, program, class, or extracurricular activity on the basis of a student's expectant or parenting status.
 - ii. Enrollment by expectant or parenting students in any alternative program or activity must be completely voluntary.

2. School Expectant and Parenting Student Policy liaisons are responsible for:

- a. Completing the initial district training for policy liaisons within the first few months of school, and any refresher training as required. The training objectives are to increase knowledge about the policy and related laws and improve skills in supporting expectant and parenting students and communicating with the school community.
- b. Ensuring that the policy is shared with students, families, and school staff.

- i. Work with the school leadership and the school wellness council to share the policy with staff, students, and families, ensuring translation for students and families whose primary language is not English.
 - ii. Make the policy and any appropriate resources available in the school nurse's office and any school-based health centers or health resource centers.
 - iii. Post the name of the policy liaison and a copy of the policy on the school website so any member of the school community can access it.
- c. Disseminating information about district and community resources.
 - i. Inform administrators, staff, and students about the availability of resources for expectant and parenting students; see Office of Health & Wellness for resources.
 - ii. Disseminate information about support resources to expectant and parenting students directly as appropriate or through other school staff members as needed; students are not required to meet with the liaison if they do not wish.
- d. Supporting all school staff in maintaining student confidentiality as required by this policy and the law.
 - i. Liaisons do not need to be informed of the identity of any expectant and parenting student unless the student chooses to inform the liaison; information and resources can be shared through

the school staff member with whom the student has confided.

- ii. Liaisons are not expected to be case managers or counselors for expectant or parenting students unless this is already part of their job requirements.

3. School nurses are responsible for:

- a. Offering regular check-ins with expectant students to monitor their health and wellness during their pregnancy. The type and frequency of check-ins should be established based on the student's wishes, needs, and determined in consultation with the student.
 - i. Health services should be provided in a safe and supportive environment free from bias-based conduct towards expectant or parenting students.
- b. Maintaining confidential medical records on pregnant or parenting students who have sought treatment. School nurses must be particularly aware of their responsibilities under state and federal law and regulations, especially the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- c. Partnering with the head of school and the Office of Equity to accommodate new mothers' need to express breast milk by identifying a private, sanitary location for this purpose, along with appropriate storage space for nursing equipment. Bathrooms are not appropriate facilities, even if private. To qualify, spaces should be "shielded from view and free from any intrusion." For more guidelines, see the fact sheet on "Break Time for

Nursing Mothers Under the FLSA,” available at <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs73.htm>

- d. Helping to determine the amount of parental leave a student will take following the birth of a child in consultation with the student, school staff who are already aware of the student's expectant status, the student's health care providers, and any other adults the student consents to include.
 - i. Students are entitled to a minimum of eight weeks of parental leave.
 - ii. BPS employees may not require a student to remain out of school for a fixed period of time post-childbirth.
- e. Posting the policy in the school nurse's office throughout the school year and making the policy publicly available in any school-based health centers or health resource centers.

4. Guidance counselors are responsible for:

- a. Providing expectant and parenting students with academic support and guidance when requested. Students should be encouraged to seek support from school guidance counselors to make an academic plan, but students have a right to choose how and when they seek services and support from school staff.
 - i. Work with expectant and parenting students to determine a school schedule that promotes on-time arrival and regular attendance. For some

students, this may include flexible scheduling, independent study periods, or online courses (provided that online courses include sufficient opportunities for in-person interaction and support as needed).

- b. Obtaining written, informed consent from expectant or parenting students before storing data linking students' names with academic information and expectant or parenting status. Before giving written consent, students must be informed that, if they consent, information about their expectant or parenting status will be entered to ensure that students are receiving necessary support, and then may be accessible to their parents as part of their full academic records.
- c. Ensure that any counseling or information provided to students is unimpeded by bias.
- d. Ensure that any student's decision about whether to participate in alternative schools, programs, or activities for expectant or parenting students is completely voluntary if sharing information with students about those programs.
- e. If a school does not have a guidance counselor on staff, these responsibilities fall to the head of school.

5. *The student's school leader or their designee is responsible to:*

- a. Bring together the student, other school staff already aware of the student's expectant or parenting status, the student's health care providers, and any other

adults the student consents to include to determine the amount of parental leave for each expectant student. Encourage students to consider including their parents/guardians/caregivers in this conversation.

- i. Students are entitled to a minimum of eight weeks of parental leave.
 - ii. BPS employees may not require a student to remain out of school for a fixed period of time post-childbirth.
- b. Ensure that students are reinstated at the conclusion of a pregnancy and/or parental leave with the same status as before the leave began.
- c. Support the continuation of learning during excused absences and leave, as medically appropriate, including by working with the student to arrange a temporary home or hospital instructional services through the BPS Opportunity Youth Department.
- d. Work with expectant and parenting students to determine a school schedule that promotes on-time arrival and regular attendance. Contact the Homeless Education Resource Network (HERN) to arrange transportation and promote school attendance among expectant or parenting students experiencing homelessness who are residing outside of the district.
- e. Ensure that absences are excused when they arise from pregnancy and related medical conditions, including pregnancy-related illness or health conditions, the termination of pregnancy, childbirth, and recovery therefrom. Documentation from

students' licensed healthcare providers may be required for verification of pregnancy and related medical conditions only if it is also required for absences due to other medical conditions.

- f. Ensure that absences are considered excused when they are due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of a student.

6. Central Office Staff

a. Office of Health and Wellness is responsible for:

- i. Tracking names of school-based policy liaisons
- ii. Coordinating initial and any needed refresher training resources for policy liaisons. The training will include best practices on disseminating information about the expectant and parenting students policy, on finding and distributing resources to students in a culturally responsive way, and on expectations for data collection and confidentiality.
- iii. Maintaining up-to-date district and community resources for supporting expectant and parenting students and sharing these resources with liaisons.

b. Office of Equity is responsible for:

- i. Monitoring compliance with this policy, including responding to reports of possible bias-based conduct.
- ii. Ensuring communication of the policy at every level of staff within the district and

communicating the policy yearly to families through the BPS Guidebook.

- iii. Reviewing the policy and its associated implementation procedures annually and updating as needed in collaboration with the Office of Health and Wellness and other central office stakeholders identified in this policy.
- iv. Sharing the expectant and parenting students policy and policy updates with the Boston Student Advisory Council and other student groups.

c. The Department of School Health Services is responsible for:

- i. Providing training and guidance to school nurses on best practices for working with expectant and parenting students, including how to ensure confidentiality in accordance with this policy and the law and providing culturally responsive services.

d. Office of Opportunity Youth is responsible for:

- i. Working with schools to help support the continuation of learning during excused absences and leave through the Home and Hospital Instruction Program.
- ii. Through supervisors of attendance, responding to inquiries about attendance policies or reporting, including policies on excused absences for expectant and parenting students.

- iii. Through the Homeless Education Resource Network (HERN), working with schools to arrange transportation and promote school attendance among expectant or parenting students experiencing homelessness who are residing outside of the district.
- e. *Central office departments tasked with student support services, such as Guidance and Social Work, are responsible for:*
 - i. Supporting the communication of this policy to the school-based staff they support and supporting professional development to ensure staff is trained and have the resources to support expectant and parenting students.
 - ii. Identifying schools with large numbers of expectant and parenting students, such that existing support systems may not be adequate to support their needs and helping to establish a plan for providing more comprehensive systems of support.

For more information about this circular, contact:

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OR

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