

### **Questioning and Searches of Students**

The Board recognizes its responsibility to ensure that discipline is maintained in the schools and that a safe, orderly environment conducive to the educational process is preserved. Therefore, school officials may conduct reasonable searches of students and their possessions, when in their judgment, there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the policies or regulations of the school. The search must be reasonably related in scope to the circumstances which precipitated the search and the school official conducting the search shall take into account the age of the student, the ability of the student to understand the situation, the sex of the student and the nature of the alleged infraction.

Lockers and other storage facilities on school premises are school property and shall remain at all times under the control, custody, authority and supervision of the school authorities. Lockers and other storage facilities on school premises are school property and shall remain at all times under the control, custody, authority and supervision of the school authorities. Students have no expectation of privacy in school storage facilities or in any items placed in such storage facilities. School administrators have the authority to inspect and search school storage facilities and their contents on a random basis, with or without reasonable suspicion and without notice or consent. Students and teachers shall be notified that random searches of lockers and vehicles may be made at any time as directed by the superintendent or principal.

A search of school property, including but not limited to school lockers may be made at the discretion of the Superintendent or Principal when reasonable grounds exist for suspecting that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the policies or regulations of the school. Students will have prior notice that lockers and other storage facilities made available to them for temporary storage of their personal possessions remain under the control and ownership of the school administration and that the school administration has the right to search lockers, desks, and other storage facilities for items which violate law, school policies and regulations, or which may be harmful to the school or its students.

The deterrence of the possession of weapons or other dangerous objects is necessary to promote health and safety within the school setting and to provide a school environment conducive to education. When the administration in any school has reasonable grounds for suspecting that weapons or dangerous objects are in the possession of unidentified students or when there has been a pattern of weapons or dangerous objects found at a school, on school property, at a school function or in the vicinity of the school, the administration is authorized to use stationary or mobile metal detectors (also called scanners). School officials operating the metal detectors must comply with the rules and regulations for the use of such devices as directed by the superintendent. Students will be apprised in advance that the use of metal detectors has been authorized by the Board.

Student vehicles on school property may be searched by the administration or law enforcement officials when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or the policies or regulations of the school.

Canine patrols, using dogs trained to detect drugs and/or weapons, may be used to identify individual lockers or student vehicles to be searched by school administrators. Canine patrols may be authorized to take place anywhere on school property. If a canine patrol indicates the presence of drugs and/or weapons in a student's locker or vehicle, that location will be subject to search by school administrators. Canine patrols may only be authorized by the Superintendent.

A student may be interviewed by persons investigating child abuse or neglect (including police officers and Department of Human Services personnel) without the consent of and outside the presence of a parent, guardian or school personnel. When a student who is suspected of being a victim of child abuse is removed from school, the principal or designee must give the telephone number and address of the student's parent/guardian to the Investigator. The Investigator then has the responsibility to notify the parent/guardian.

For other matters, a student will not be interviewed on school property by law enforcement officers unless a school official and at least one of the following other persons is present: parent/legal guardian of the student or the student's attorney. For the purposes of this policy, the definition of school official shall be Superintendent, Principal, Assistant Principal or teacher who has been specifically designated by the Principal or Superintendent to act in his/her stead.

For the purposes of this policy, school officials should consider the following factors when determining whether there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a search will reveal evidence that a student has violated or is violating either the law or the policies or regulations of the school:

1. The search must be based on some form of reliable evidence and not a hunch;
2. Reliable evidence includes information, facts, or circumstances which would lead a reasonable person to conclude that search may turn up evidence of a violation of a school rule or the law;
3. The evidence must be recent, not stale;
4. The school official may rely upon information from a student, in the absence of any facts which indicate a student informant is being untruthful;
5. The school official may take into account the exigency of the situation in making a decision to conduct a search investigator.