

Search Policy

Searches of Students & Students' Personal Property

A search of a student's personal property or clothing shall only be undertaken when there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is concealing an object(s) or substance(s) in violation of school rules/policy, the law, or which may be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of enrolled students. The Superintendent or designee must authorize all searches.

When the principal has reasonable suspicion that one or more students are carrying a prohibited object, article, or substance or are otherwise in possession of a prohibited object, article, or substance on school property or at a school-sponsored event, all personal property belonging to the suspected student(s) may be subject to inspection. When determining the scope of a search, the principal shall ensure that any measures adopted are reasonably related to the object of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student.

Search Procedure

For the purposes of this policy, personal property includes, but is not limited to: a student's vehicle, backpack, book bag, and/or purse. Students may also be asked to empty their pockets; however, strip searches and cell phone searches are prohibited.

Searches of persons should be conducted in private by a school employee of the same sex as the student with a school employee or school resource officer present as a witness.

Searches of Vehicles

The principal or designee, with a witness present, shall conduct searches of student vehicles if the vehicle is parked on school property and if reasonable suspicion exists. The principal shall make a reasonable attempt to contact the student who owns the vehicle and ensure s/he is present during the inspection unless an emergency situation is deemed to exist. If a vehicle is locked and its owner cannot be contacted or refuses to open it, the principal shall contact law enforcement.

Involvement of Law Enforcement

The principal/Superintendent may request the assistance of law enforcement to conduct any portion of a school-initiated search of a student/student's personal property that would pose a safety threat if conducted by school staff. In all other cases, law enforcement must have probable cause in order to search a student/student's personal property.

Illegal substances found during searches of students/students' personal property will be turned over to proper authorities.

Reporting Requirements

The principal will contact the student's parents to indicate a search has been conducted and report any findings or disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will be conducted in accordance with AP 6310 Student Conduct and Discipline and AP 6320 Suspension and Expulsion. Disciplinary actions will be recorded in the district's Student Information System.

Searches of Lockers

The District retains ownership and control of all lockers. Access to all lockers is a legal right of school officials whose responsibility it is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students enrolled. Students shall have no reasonable expectation of privacy when using lockers. Students shall be given advanced notice of this policy through student handbooks or another form of notification.

Lockers may be subject to suspicionless searches, inspections for purposes such as routine maintenance, or searches where there is suspicion that locker(s) contains objects/substances that are illegal, violate school policy, or may be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of district students.

Search Procedure

When a locker is subject to a search, the principal should be accompanied by at least one other school staff member.

Students' personal items stored in lockers such as, but not limited to, book bags, purses, and coats shall not be searched unless there exists reasonable suspicion that they contain an object(s) or substance(s) in violation of school rules/policy, the law, or which may be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of enrolled students.

Use of Trained Dogs & Involvement of Law Enforcement

Trained dogs may be used to smell the outside of students' lockers. If the dog detects the possibility of objects/substances that are illegal or violate school policy, the principal shall search the locker in accordance with the search procedure above.

In the event a police officer or other law enforcement officer is to conduct a search of a student's locker, probable cause is necessary unless the search is school-initiated and would pose a safety threat if conducted by school staff.

Illegal substances found in lockers will be turned over to proper authorities.

Reporting Requirements

The principal will contact the student's parents to indicate a search has been conducted and report any findings or disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will be conducted in accordance with AP 6310 Student Conduct and Discipline and AP 6320 Suspension and Expulsion. Disciplinary actions will be recorded in the district's Student Information System.

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