

Section J:

Knox County Board of Education

Students

Descriptor Term:

**Random Searches for
Dangerous Weapons, Drugs and
Drug Paraphernalia**

Descriptor Code:

J-201

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11/08

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12/23

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8/23

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It is the goal of Knox County Schools to provide a safe learning environment free from dangerous weapons, drugs and drug paraphernalia.¹ The use of these items in our greater community is at a life or health threatening level and, therefore, random searches are necessary to protect the student body.²

All vehicles, lockers other storage areas, containers, packages and their contents brought onto the school property by students or visitors are subject to search for weapons, drugs and drug paraphernalia.³

Random searches will be conducted in a manner no more intrusive than necessary to achieve the goal of preventing drugs, drug paraphernalia, firearms, and other dangerous weapons in schools. Random personal searches of students may be conducted on school campuses by the use of walk-through metal detectors or hand held magnetometers.⁴ Any provision in this policy shall not preclude the school district from conducting reasonable searches as approved in Policy J-200 where such a search is warranted to protect the safety of students and staff.

Containers carried on campus by students, including, but not limited to, backpacks, book bags, handbags and musical instrument cases, are subject to search by certified explosives detection canine, weapons/metal detectors, x-ray machine or physical inspection by authorized school employees.

Material held in contravention of Knox County Board of Education policy and other contraband discovered during the course of a random search as described above shall be confiscated and students in possession of such items will be subject to discipline.

The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures so that random student searches are not targeted to any individual, group, class, race, gender, school, or geographical area unless there is a specific and reasonable suspicion that such a search is warranted to protect the safety of students. The Director of Schools shall personally approve all random searches of schools.

Random search protocols may be conducted at athletic events or other Knox County Schools events at the discretion of the Director of Schools.

As required by Tennessee law, firearms, other dangerous weapons and controlled substances as defined by Tennessee law⁵ discovered in the course of a random search shall be reported to law enforcement.⁶

Policy J-201 has been promulgated to address the Board's concern about the significant increase in the use of firearms in the commission of crimes as stated by local law enforcement in the greater community and the continuing discovery of dangerous weapons and controlled substances on Knox County Schools campuses.

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Legal References:

1. T.C.A. § 49-6-4203(a).
2. T.C.A. § 49-6-4203(e)(2).
3. T.C.A. § 49-6-4204(a).
4. T.C.A. § 49-6-4207.
5. T.C.A. § 39-17-401, et seq.
6. T.C.A. § 49-6-4209.

Cross Reference:

- Knox County Board of Education Policy J-200 Interrogation and Searches.

Approved as to Legal Form
 By Knox County Law Director 7/25/2023
 /Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director