

Bartlett City Board of Education		6027
Descriptor Term: INTERROGATIONS AND SEARCHES	Descriptor Code: Student Services	Issue Date: 06/23/2014
	Rescinds:	Revised: 07/24/2025 07/23/2026

1 **INTERROGATIONS BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

2 Students may be questioned by teachers or a school or district administrator about any matter
3 pertaining to the operation of a school and/or the enforcement of its rules. Questioning must be
4 conducted discreetly and under circumstances which will avoid unnecessary embarrassment to the
5 student. Any student answering falsely or evasively or refusing to answer a question may be subject
6 to disciplinary action, including suspension.

7 If a student is suspected or accused of misconduct or infraction of the Student Code of Conduct, the
8 school or district administrator may interrogate the student without the presence of
9 parent(s)/guardian(s).

10 **INTERROGATIONS BY POLICE (AT ADMINISTRATOR'S REQUEST)**

11 If a school or district administrator has requested assistance by law enforcement to investigate a
12 crime, the police may interrogate a student suspect in school during school hours. The school or
13 district administrator shall first attempt to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student unless
14 circumstances require otherwise. However, the interrogation may proceed without attendance of
15 the parent(s)/guardian(s), but the school or district administrator shall be present during the
16 interrogation. The use of policewomen or female staff members is desirable in the interrogation of
17 female students.

18 **POLICE-INITIATED INTERROGATIONS**

19 If the police deem circumstances are of sufficient urgency to interrogate students at school for
20 unrelated crimes committed outside of school hours, the police department shall first contact the
21 school or district administrator regarding the planned interrogation and inform him/her of the
22 probable cause to investigate. The school or district administrator shall make reasonable efforts
23 to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the interrogation unless circumstances require otherwise.
24 The interrogation may proceed without attendance of the parent(s)/guardian(s), but the school or
25 district administrator shall be present during the interrogation.

26 **SEARCHES BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

27 In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the Superintendent shall develop
28 procedures regarding the searching of students, lockers, vehicles, and containers which are
29 consistent with state law and regulations. The Superintendent shall develop additional procedures
30 to ensure compliance with all of the provisions of the School Security Act of 1981.¹

¹ T.C.A. §§49-6-4201 – 4218

When circumstances dictate, BCS Principals may order that vehicles parked on school property by students or visitors, containers, packages, lockers, or other enclosures used for storage by students or visitors, and other areas accessible to students or visitors be searched in the Principal's presence or in the presence of other members of the Principal's staff.²

A student may be subject to a physical search because of the results of a locker search, or because of information received from a teacher, staff member, student, or other person if the Principal determines that all of the following standards of reasonableness are met:

1. A particular student has violated school policy;
2. The search will yield evidence of the violation of school policy or will lead to disclosure of a dangerous weapon, drug paraphernalia, or drug;
3. The search is in pursuit of legitimate interests of the school in maintaining order, discipline, safety, supervision, and education of students;
4. The search is not conducted for the sole purpose of discovering evidence to be used in a criminal prosecution; and
5. The search is reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student, as well as the nature of the infraction alleged to have been committed.

Searches may be conducted only by a:

1. School Resource Officer who is acting, for the purpose of the search, as a school official;
2. School Security Officer; or
3. School administrator who has completed the required training pursuant to T.C.A. §49-6-4212³; or
4. School employee designated by the Superintendent who has completed the required orientation and training⁴.

If a student is under eighteen (18) years of age, then the Principal must notify the student's parent or legal guardian within a reasonable time of the search.

Any dangerous weapon or drug located in the course of a search shall be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement officer.

A school or district administrator may search cellphones and other electronic devices that are brought to school by student if a reasonable suspicion that a school policy and/or school district policy has been or will be violated. The search must be reasonably related to the objective of ascertaining whether a school policy and/or school district policy has been or will be violated.

To facilitate a search that is found to be necessary of students, visitors, containers, or packages, metal detectors and other devices designed to indicate the presence of dangerous weapons, drug paraphernalia, or drugs may be used in searches, including hand-held models that are passed over or around a student's or visitor's body, and students, visitors, containers, and packages may be required to pass through a stationary detector.

² T.C.A. §49-6-4204

³ 2025 Public Acts, Chapter No. 244

⁴ T.C.A. 49-6-4205

- 1 To facilitate a search that is found to be necessary, dogs or other animals trained to detect drugs or
- 2 dangerous weapons by odor or otherwise may be used in conducting searches, but the animals shall
- 3 be used only to indicate areas requiring a search and shall not be used to search the persons of
- 4 students or visitors.

- 5 This Policy shall be posted on the BCS website and in Student Handbooks.