5013
Student Searches by School Staff

Authority to Conduct Reasonable Cause Searches. Multiple state and federal laws permit the board to establish health, safety, and discipline rules governing students. The law permits searches when there is a reasonable suspicion that a search will lead to evidence that the student is violating the law, board policy, or other school rules, and the search is reasonably limited in scope. This policy is designed to clarify and implement the board's authority under the law and to authorize the use of metal detecting wands as a component of reasonable suspicion searches.

Need for Searches. The district has seen a marked increase of disciplinary issues related to possession of vaping devices, along with other contraband and unsafe items on school grounds, in school vehicles, and at school activities. Possession of these items disrupts the educational environment and poses a substantial risk to the health and safety of students, school personnel, and patrons, but many of the items of concern are difficult to detect and may be hidden by students intentionally. For these and other reasons, the board authorizes reasonable searches of students' possessions and their persons by trained school administrators, including the use of metal detecting wands.

Use of Wands. Use of a metal detecting wand is intended to detect concealed items after there is reasonable suspicion of student misconduct justifying a search. This policy is not designed to suggest or require that all students are searched by wand without reasonable suspicion. The use of the wand will allow for searches to be conducted in a minimally invasive manner after the administration has reasonable suspicion to search.

Any search of a student's person as a result of reasonable suspicion shall be conducted in private, and it is required that search be conducted in the presence of at least two school staff members. The student and their possessions may be scanned with a wand by a trained administrator. If the wand detects metal on the student, the student will be asked to remove any potential sources of metal from that area. If the wand alerts a second time, staff may conduct additional searches, which may include asking the student to empty and turn out their pockets, remove their coats, shoes, hats or other non-invasive items of clothing.

If the wand detects metal in a student's backpack, bag, coat, purse, or other possession, the student will be asked to remove all metal items. If the wand alerts a second time, staff may search the item to determine the source.

In the event of student refusal or defiance during a wand search, authorized personnel may conduct other types of searches if permitted by law; may discipline the student for failure to comply; and may refer the matter to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Handling Search Results. Upon discovering any prohibited item, the appropriate administrator will confiscate the item, notify the student's parents or guardians, and make any other report as required by law. Discipline or other exclusion may be imposed as permitted by law and district policy at the discretion of the administration. In circumstances where the item may appropriately be returned to the student, the student's parent or guardian may be asked to retrieve the item.

Adopted on: July 24, 2023
Revised on: _____
Reviewed on: _____