

INTERROGATIONS AND SEARCHES

Searches by the staff

The right and need of inspection of students' school lockers, desks and student personal property is inherent in the authority granted school boards and administrators for the purpose of ensuring student and employee safety and the enforcement of school rules and policies. Lockers and desks are school property which students have the privilege of using and students do not have a total right of privacy to the contents of their assigned lockers and desks and may be searched by school officials upon reasonable cause to suspect that the search will reveal evidence of a violation of a school rule and/or criminal law.

The following rules apply to the search of school property assigned to a specific student (locker, desk, etc.) and personal property of students (clothing, book bags, gym bags, purses, etc.), and the seizure of items:

1. There must be reasonable cause and individualized suspicion (of the student's locker/desk/personal property) by school authorities to believe that an article kept in the locker, desk, clothing, book bag/gym bag, purse, etc. constitutes evidence of a crime and/or school rule violation.
2. Search of school property assigned to a student shall be for a specifically identified item, and shall be conducted in his/her presence and with his/her knowledge, unless an immediate perceived threat exists to safety of students and/or employees, and in such cases a search may be conducted without prior notice to the student and without the student being present.
3. General housekeeping inspection of school property may be conducted with reasonable notice.
4. Illegal items (drugs, weapons, etc.) or other possessions reasonably to be a threat to the safety or security of others may be seized by school authorities at any time.
5. No strip searches (strip searches are defined as the removal of the layer of clothing immediately covering the skin/undergarment) shall be conducted by school personnel. Should school personnel believe that a strip search is necessary under the circumstances the school will immediately contact law enforcement, and the student shall remain in the immediate presence of a school official until a law enforcement officer arrives.
6. The school may, for purposes of conducting a search of school property assigned to a student or a search of a student, have a law enforcement officer present during the search.
7. The school may request law enforcement to bring a drug-sniffing dog to school, without prior notice to students, for the purpose of identifying the presence of illegal drugs in school buildings, on school property, and student parking areas on and adjacent to school property.

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