

**QUESTIONING AND SEARCHES OF STUDENTS
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to provide guidelines for the conduct of student questioning and searches by the school administrator (which includes the Principal, Asst. Principal, Superintendent or designee). These are guidelines only and may be adjusted within reasonable and lawful limits on a case-by-case basis.

- A. Questioning by Principals/Designee
 - 1. Principals are under no obligation to notify a student’s parents/guardians prior to questioning a student regarding alleged violations of Board policies, school rules and/or federal/state laws. If law enforcement officers are involved, refer to policy KLG – Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities.
 - 2. The Principal shall inform the student of the reasons for the questioning and provide an opportunity for the student to respond to any allegations. The principal shall make a reasonable effort to question the student in a location out of the sight and hearing of other students.
 - 3. If a student fails to cooperate, lies, misleads or threatens any person during questioning, he/she may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

- B. Searches of Students and/or Personal Property in Students’ Immediate Possession
 - 1. Principals are authorized to search students and/or personal property in the students’ immediate possession when, in their judgment, there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student has violated or is violating the Board policies, school rules and/or federal/state laws.
 - 2. All searches of students and/or personal property shall be authorized and conducted by the principal in the presence of a witness, except where the circumstances render the presence of a witness impractical.
 - 3. Searches should be reasonably related to the suspected violation and no more intrusive than necessary to discover the evidence for which the search was instigated. Searches may include the student’s outer clothing (e.g., pockets, jacket, shoes, hat) and personal belongings (e.g., purse, backpack, gym bag, lunch bag). If the search discloses evidence and a broader search may be justified. The principal shall consult with the Superintendent prior to taking any further action.
 - 4. Searches which disclose evidence that a student has violated Board policies or school rules will be addressed through school disciplinary procedures. Evidence of violation of federal/state laws may result in school disciplinary action and/or be forwarded to law enforcement authorities for possible investigation/prosecution.

5. Principals are required to document all searches and items seized/impounded on the Student Search Form or by another reasonable method.

C. Searches of Lockers, Desks and Other School Facilities

1. School staff, students and parents shall be informed of this policy/procedure on an annual basis.
2. Principals shall consult with the Superintendent prior to conducting random searches.
3. Searches of individual student lockers, desks or other storage facilities and their contents based upon reasonable suspicion will be conducted in the presence of the student and a witness, if practical under the circumstances of the search.
4. Searches which disclose evidence that a student has violated Board policies or school rules will be addressed through school disciplinary procedures. Evidence of violation of federal/state laws may result in school disciplinary action and/or be forwarded to law enforcement authorities for possible investigation/prosecution.
5. Principals are required to document all searches and items seized/impounded on the Student Search Form or by another reasonable method.

D. Patrolling of Parking Lots

1. Students may drive vehicles to school and park in designated areas in accordance with school rules. Principals retain the authority to patrol parking lots.
2. If principals have a reasonable suspicion that a vehicle which a student has parked at school contains evidence that the student has or is violating a RSU #2 Board policy, a federal/state law and/or there is a substantial threat to the welfare and safety of the schools, law enforcement authorities will be requested to render assistance in accordance with Board policy KLG – Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities.
3. If practical, the student should be present during the search. A reasonable effort will be made to conduct searches out of the sight and hearing of other students. The student may be given the opportunity to open any closed items or items that are not easily accessible to visual search. If the student refuses, the administrator shall open and search the items.
4. Principals are required to document all searches and items seized/impounded on the Student Search Form or by another reasonable method.

E. Canine Patrols

1. The Superintendent may authorize canine patrols to take place anywhere on school property if he/she deems it advisable to maintain school safety or if

there is a reasonable suspicion that drugs, weapons, and/or other illegal substances of items will be found. Canine patrols may include school lockers and/or student vehicles in school parking lots.

2. The Superintendent must make requests for canine patrols in writing to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Only certified dogs and handlers may be used.
3. Whenever possible, canine patrols will be scheduled to minimize disruption of the academic program and risk of contact with students.
4. When canine patrols take place during the school day, teachers will be notified prior to the initiation of a canine patrol to keep students in their classrooms, or designated evacuation area during the patrol. Any student in the parking lot, or anywhere outside of a classroom, prior to a canine patrol will be instructed to report to the school office, appropriate classroom, or evacuation area.
5. All lockers and/or student vehicles will be scanned during a canine patrol. Any locker and/or vehicle identified by the canine patrol will be noted by the school administrators accompanying the patrol.
6. Immediately following removal of the dogs, each area noted during the canine patrol will be searched. Each search will be conducted by a school administrator in the presence of a witness, except where the circumstances make the presence of a witness impractical.
7. The student should be present during a search of his/her locker or vehicle. A reasonable effort may be made to conduct the search out of sight and hearing of other students. The student may be given the opportunity to open any closed items or items that are not easily accessible to visual search. If the student refuses, the administrator shall open and search the items.
8. Principals are required to document all searches and items seized/impounded on the Student Search Form or by another reasonable method.

F. Involvement of Law Enforcement Authorities

1. Principals have the discretion to request the assistance of law enforcement authorities in accordance with Board policy.

Cross Reference: JIH-E – Student Search Checklist
KLG – Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

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