

FAIRFIELD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

SEARCHES

6480

- 6480.1 The District retains joint control over student lockers. The District reserves the right to inspect student lockers at anytime at the sole discretion of the building principal. The District reserves the right to search individual student lockers without prior warning at any time the school principal has a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare and safety of students in the school. When searching student lockers for other reasons, the student shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present.
- 6480.2 District officials may search students provided that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The scope of the search should be reasonably related to the objectives of the search, not excessively intrusive, considerate of the age and sex of the student, and related to the nature of the infraction. All searches should be conducted by the principal or his/her designee and in the presence of another staff member. Any search of a student's person involving a pat-down should be done by a school official of the same sex unless an emergency situation exists that could compromise the safety of staff members and students.
- 6480.33 Searches should be carried out under the doctrine of in loco parentis and should not place school officials in the role of a law enforcement agent. Probable cause is a legal term used to describe the amount of evidence necessary for the police to conduct a search and seizure. Reasonable suspicion or "reasonable cause to believe" is the lesser standard of evidence necessary for a school to initiate an in-house investigation. School officials, under the doctrine of in loco parentis, have some leeway in searches and disciplinary action.
- 6480.4 The school official conducting the search shall seize any item found in the search which is evidence of a violation of the law or guidelines for student discipline. The seizure shall be made to protect the health, safety and welfare of the student involved and other students. Any illegal materials may be used as evidence in any disciplinary, juvenile or criminal proceeding.

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