

QUESTIONING AND SEARCHES OF STUDENTS

The Augusta School Committee seeks to maintain a safe and orderly environment in the schools. School administrators are authorized to question and/or search students in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures.

Students may not bring, possess or store at school any items or substances which are prohibited by law, school committee policies and/or school rules, or which interfere with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.

Students may be searched upon reasonable suspicion that they have violated or are violating board policies, school rules, and/or state or federal law. When special circumstances exist, including, but not limited to, a suspected ongoing violation of the board's drug or weapons policy, or when a potential threat to safety is identified, school administrators may search groups of students, including the entire student body, without individualized suspicion.

Student use of all school storage facilities, including but not limited to lockers, desks, and parking lots, is a privilege granted by the school. All storage facilities are school property and remain under the control, custody and supervision of the school. Students have no expectation of privacy in school storage facilities or for any items placed in such storage facilities. School administrators have the authority to inspect and search storage facilities and their contents, with or without reasonable suspicion, and without notice or consent.

If a search produces evidence that a student has violated or is violating the law, school committee policies and/or school rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school administrators and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence may be forwarded to law enforcement authorities as required by law or as deemed appropriate by school administrators.

If a student refuses to comply with a search directive, the student shall be subject to disciplinary action. The penalty for non-compliance with the search directive shall correspond to the range of penalties that may be imposed for the underlying violation. If there is a range of possible penalties for the underlying violation, the penalty for non-compliance may fall anywhere within that range, up to and including the maximum possible penalty.

School staff, students and parents shall be informed of this policy on an annual basis through handbooks and/or other means selected by school administrators.

The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement, with input from legal counsel, administrators, staff and others as appropriate, any administrative procedures necessary to carry out this policy. Such administrative procedures shall be subject to school committee approval.

**Cross Reference: JIH-R – Questioning and Searches of Students - Administrative
Procedure**

JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety

JK – Student Discipline

KLG - Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

Augusta Board of Education

Adopted: April 10, 2002