

AUTHORITY FOR SCHOOL SEARCHES

The Jackson School Board attempts to provide a safe, healthy educational environment for all students. Therefore, the Board has authorized student conduct codes to limit anti-social behavior on the part of students. The administrators are charged with implementing effective, appropriate preventive and disciplinary measures to assure a good learning environment.

The lockers, desks and all furniture and equipment in the school are considered property of the school district; therefore, the principal or designated administrator has the right to inspect and search any part of the school at any time.

Persons on school property or participating in school activities are subject to search and may have their backpacks, book bags, handbags, or other similar items, including but not limited to vehicles driven or parked on school property, searched by the school principal or designee when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will turn up evidence that the individual has violated, either the law or the school rules. The administration will develop guidelines for implementation of this policy including procedures for those who refuse search until proper law enforcement authorities can be summoned.

The use of “sniffer” dogs trained for the identification of illegal substances will be permitted in the school to inspect the premises upon request by the building administrator or superintendent, and with approval of the superintendent. Such inspection shall be conducted by a qualified law enforcement agency, and the principal or designated building administrator shall accompany the law enforcement officer. This policy will be published annually in the student handbooks.

Procedure

The Principal/designee will establish reasonable grounds by:

1. Identifying (a) the student's suspicious conduct, behavior, or activity; (b) the source of the information; and (c) the reliability of the source of information.
2. Determine if such conduct would be a violation of the law or school rules.
3. Determining if the student is likely to possess or have concealed any item, material, or substance which is itself prohibited or which would be evidence of a violation of the law or school rules.

If the Principal/designee determines that reasonable grounds exists:

1. Person in question will be accompanied to the Principal's office or other designated area with his/her belongings.
2. Person in question will be informed of intended search based on reasonable suspicion.
3. In the case of a student, an attempt will be made to notify the parent or legal guardian before the search is made.
4. The principal or designee will proceed to search by asking the student to remove all items from pocket(s), purse(s), handbags, backpacks, gym bags, etc.
5. If the person in question refuses to be searched or to have his/her belongings searched, they will be detained until the proper law enforcement authorities are summoned and the officials will continue with the search.