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# Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is committed to maintaining a sa

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is committed to maintaining a safe, welcoming, and friendly environment that fosters a spirit of mutual trust and respect. To promote a positive and productive environment for effective teaching and learning, ACPS encourages an atmosphere that is respectful of individual differences so students can learn and employees can work in a functional and non-threatening atmosphere.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

A search involves an invasion of privacy. Whether a search of a student is permissible depends on balancing the student's right to privacy and freedom from unreasonable search and seizure against the school division's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all persons in the school community and to carry out its educational mission.

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the health, safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student belongings, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined in this policy and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search.

The locations where searches of students and student property may occur are not limited to a school building or school property. Searches may be conducted wherever the student is involved in a school-sponsored activity.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

 Reasonable Suspicion of violation of school rules: A belief based upon objective facts which lead a school official to reasonably suspect that a school rule has been broken or is about to be committed. A reasonable suspicion must be based on the totality of the circumstances, including the school official's knowledge, training and experience. A reasonable suspicion does not exist unless the school official can articulate the objective factual basis for the school official's belief.

**Reasonable Suspicion of a crime**: A belief based upon objective facts which lead a law enforcement officer to reasonably suspect that a crime has been committed, is being committed, or is about to be committed. A reasonable suspicion must be based on the totality of the circumstances, including the officer's knowledge, training and experience. A reasonable suspicion does not exist unless the officer can articulate the objective factual basis for the officer's belief.

NOTE: Reasonable suspicion is a lower standard than demonstrating probable cause, proof by a preponderance of the evidence, or proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

**Search of a "Student's Person"** means a search of what a student has on their body, including clothing and any personal effects worn on the body. It may include a pat-down of the student's outer clothing.

**Student belongings**: include, but are not limited to, backpacks, mobile phones or other electronic devices, purses, jackets, or other personal effects.

Unauthorized: An item is unauthorized if it is dangerous to the health or safety of students

or school personnel, or disruptive of any function or process of the Division, or any item described as unauthorized in ACPS policies, regulations, and/or school rules.

**School Official**: For the purposes of this Policy, a school official is any employee of the Division that is authorized to conduct searches of students.

Private Areas: The genitalia, anus, groin, breast, or buttocks of any person.

**Contraband**: All substances and materials in which students are prohibited from possessing on school grounds by division policy and/or law.

## REASONABLE SUSPICION SEARCHES

#### Personal Searches

A student's person (including outer clothing) and/or personal effects may be searched by and ACPS administrator whenever the administrator has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials or has violated or is about to violate the law or a school rule and that the search will yield evidence of the violation.

All individual searches of students must be based on reasonable suspicion. The search must be justified at its inception and reasonably related in scope to the circumstances justifying the search.

In the school environment, a search is constitutionally permissible and justified at its inception when a school official has reasonable grounds, based on the totality of the known circumstances, 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.

A search is "reasonable in scope" when it is reasonably related to the objectives of the search and is not excessively intrusive in light of the age and gender of the student and the nature of the suspected infraction.

A personal search may include the use of electronic scanning.

#### Pat-Down Searches

 A pat-down search of a student is when a student is searched by a trained school official by touching the student while the student is fully clothed. Pat-down searches may only be conducted if a school administrator has established reasonable suspicion that evidence will be found to corroborate suspicion that a law or school rule has been broken. If a pat-down search of a student's person is conducted, it will be conducted in private by a school official of the same gender as the student (unless requested otherwise by the student), and with an adult witness of the same gender as the student present. Pat-down searches do not include private areas. The respect and dignity of the student will be maintained at all times by school officials during the pat-down search.

Strip searches involve an extreme intrusion into the rights of a student and may only be

conducted when an extremely serious situation exists requiring immediate action because of an imminent threat of death or great bodily injury to a person or persons. If a strip search is necessary the school official should contact the appropriate law enforcement official, and the search should be conducted by a sworn law enforcement officer of the same gender, in the presence of a same gender adult witness, unless otherwise requested by the student. School officials may only conduct a strip search in cases where it is necessary to avoid the imminent threat of death or great bodily injury to the student or another person. If a strip search must be conducted by a school official, it must be by a same gender official with a same gender adult witness, unless otherwise requested by the student, and the school official must have the prior approval of the superintendent or superintendent's designee, unless the health or safety of a student or other individual would be endangered by the delay.

Every pat-down and/or strip search will be documented in a manner determined by the Office of Safety and Security Services. The justification for and results of the search must be included in the report, which will be submitted to the principal or designee and shared with the student's parent/legal guardian in the parent's/legal guardian's preferred language.

## Vehicle Interiors

The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student has violated or is about to violate the law or a school rule and that the search will yield evidence of the violation, or that illegal or unauthorized materials or other evidence of illegal or otherwise prohibited activities are contained inside the automobile.

## BLANKET AND RANDOM ADMINISTRATIVE SEARCHES

Lockers, Desks, and Other School-Provided Storage

Student lockers, desks, and similar school-provided storage facilities are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers and are responsible for the content of their assigned lockers at all times. Periodic general inspections of lockers, desks, and similar school-provided storage facilities may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

## Vehicle Searches

School parking lots are ACPS property and all school rules and ACPS policies apply to parking lots.

Student parking on ACPS property is a privilege, not a right. The school retains authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of the exteriors of student automobiles on school property. The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student has violated or is about to violate the law or a school rule and that the search will yield evidence of the violation, or that illegal or unauthorized materials or other evidence of illegal or otherwise prohibited activities are contained inside the automobile. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without

notice, without student consent and without a search warrant. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

# **School Computers**

The school computer system, as defined in Policy GAB/IIBEA: *Responsible Computer System Use*, is school property. Students are only authorized to use the school's computer system and other similar educational technology consistent with the educational mission of the school and in accordance with Policy GAB/IIBEA. School officials may search school computers, software and internet access records at any time for any reason and without student consent.

# Weapons Abatement

The process in which technology, equipment and/or staff are used to proactively prevent weapons from entering a school facility.

## **CONSENT SEARCHES**

When consent is given, the school official does not need to demonstrate grounds for reasonable suspicion. A student's consent is valid only if given willingly and with knowledge of the meaning of consent.

Students will be told of their right to refuse to be searched, and that their refusal will not in itself trigger administrative consequences.

Consent may be terminated at any time requiring that the search immediately stop. If the reasonable suspicion standard is met, however, and consent is not obtained or has been withdrawn, the search may still be conducted.

# SEARCHES INVOLVING LAW ENFORCEMENT

School Resource Officers (SROs) may be present at student searches. Any searches conducted by SROs must occur in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Alexandria City School Board and the Alexandria Police Department (APD).

## **TRAINING**

Generally, the principal or designee is the school official authorized to conduct student searches. The school official should be knowledgeable of the relevant laws, the Student Code of Conduct and this policy, and be trained in proper search techniques. They must also adhere to this policy for random and individualized searches. The administrative procedures that lead to a search should support the least intrusive, most reasonable, and individualized search possible. The school official should respect the individual privacy rights of the individual students.

Each school principal must maintain a list of school officials who have been authorized to conduct student searches.

#### SEIZURE OF ILLEGAL MATERIALS

If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such items are turned over to the proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

## DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

All searches and seizures, including unannounced, random searches, will be documented and the records maintained in accordance with procedures developed by the ACPS Office of Safety and Security Services.

The Superintendent will provide the prior school year's data reflecting all occurrences of search and seizure for each school in the Division to the Board annually. The report will include non-identifiable, disaggregated, demographic data for the students involved in the searches, including any referrals to law enforcement.

All contact between law enforcement officers and ACPS students under this policy will be conducted in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

212	Adopted:	December 5, 1996
213	Amended:	July 6, 2000
214	Amended:	June 15, 2004
215	Amended:	July 1, 2005
216	Amended:	March 12, 2015
217	Amended:	December 16, 2021

220 Legal Refs.: New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325 (1985).

Constitution of the United States, Amendment IV.

224 Constitution of Virginia, Article I, section 10.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 18.2-67.10, 22.1-279.7, 22.1-280.2:3.

Virginia School Search Resource Guide (Virginia Department of Education,

October 2000).

231	Cross Refs.:	CLA	Reporting Acts of Violence and Substance Abuse
232		EGAA	Reproduction and Use of Copyrighted Materials
233		GAB/IIBEA	Responsible Computer System Use
234		JFC	Student Conduct
235		JFCD	Weapons in School
236		JFCF/JFCI	Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) in Schools
237		KNAJ	Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

#### GENERALLY

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is committed to maintaining a safe, welcoming, and friendly environment that fosters a spirit of mutual trust and respect. To promote a positive and productive environment for effective teaching and learning, ACPS encourages an atmosphere that is respectful of individual differences so students can learn and employees can work in a functional and non-threatening atmosphere.

 A search involves an invasion of privacy. Whether a search of a student is permissible depends on balancing the student's right to privacy and freedom from unreasonable search and seizure guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, against the school division's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all persons in the school community and to carry out its educational mission.

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the health, safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student belongings, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined in this policy and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search.

The locations where searches of students and student property (as described in Section III of this policy) may occur are not limited to a school building or school property. Searches may be conducted wherever the student is involved in a school-sponsored activity.

#### DEFINITIONS

Reasonable Suspicion of violation of school rules: A belief based upon objective facts which lead a school official to reasonably suspect that a school rule has been broken or is about to be committed. A reasonable suspicion must be based on the totality of the circumstances, including the school official's knowledge, training and experience. A reasonable suspicion does not exist unless the school official can articulate the objective factual basis for the school official's belief objective, specific information known by a law enforcement officer or school official that leads them to reasonably suspect a person has, or is about to, violate a law or school rule. It is a lower standard than demonstrating probable cause, proof by a preponderance of the evidence, or proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

Reasonable Suspicion of a crime: A belief based upon objective facts which lead a law enforcement officer to reasonably suspect that a crime has been committed, is being committed, or is about to be committed. A reasonable suspicion must be based on the totality of the circumstances, including the officer's knowledge, training and experience. A reasonable suspicion does not exist unless the officer can articulate the objective factual basis for the officer's belief.

NOTE: Reasonable suspicion is a lower standard than demonstrating probable cause, proof by a preponderance of the evidence, or proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

Search of a "Student's Person" means a search of what a student has on their body,

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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including clothing and any personal effects worn on the body. It may include a pat-down of the student's outer clothing. Searches of a student's person should only be performed by individuals of the same gender. Such searches will not occur in public spaces and will have an adult witness, as discussed in Section III. of this policy.

Student belongings: include, but <u>are notis not</u> limited to, backpacks, mobile phones or other electronic devices, purses, jackets, or other personal effects. Searches of student belongings may, but are not required to, occur in public spaces, including hallways, etc.

"Unauthorized:" An item is unauthorized if it is means any item dangerous to the health or safety of students or school personnel, or disruptive of any lawful function, mission, or process of the Divisionschool, or any item described as unauthorized in ACPS policies, regulations, and/or school rules available beforehand to the student.

School Official: For the purposes of this Policy, a school official is any employee of the Division that is authorized to conduct searches of students. Generally, the principal or designee is the school official authorized to conduct student searches. The school official should be knowledgeable of the relevant laws, the Student Code of Conduct and this policy, and be trained in proper search techniques. They must also adhere to this policy for random and individualized searches. The administrative procedures that lead to a search should support the least intrusive, most reasonable, and individualized search possible. The school official should respect the individual privacy rights of the individual students.

Private Areas: The genitalia, anus, groin, breast, or buttocks of any person. Need definition

Contraband: All substances and materials in which students are prohibited from possessing on school grounds by division policy and/or law.

#### REASONABLE SUSPICION SEARCHES

#### Personal Searches

 A student's person (including outer clothing) and/or personal effects may be searched by <u>and ACPS administrator a school official</u> whenever the <u>administrator official</u> has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials or has violated or is about to violate the law or a school rule and that the search will yield evidence of the violation.

All individual searches of students must be based on reasonable suspicion. In order to be permissible (i.e., "reasonable" under the Fourth Amendment), the The search must be be based on individualized suspicion of wrongdoing. This means that the search must be:

- 1. j.Jjustified at its inception; and
- 2. <u>rRreasonably</u> related in scope to the circumstances justifying the search.

In the school environment, a search is constitutionally permissible and "justified at its inception" when a school official has reasonable grounds, based on the totality of the known circumstances, 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.

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**Commented [4]:** Not in model policy, recommend deletion, we've already covered this.

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A search is "reasonable in scope" when it is reasonably related to the objectives of the search and is not excessively intrusive in light of the age and gender of the student and the nature of the suspected infraction.

A personal search may include the use of electronic scanning. in cases suspecting weapons

#### Pat-Down Searches

A "pat-down search" of a student is when a student is searched by a trained school official by touching the student while the student is fully clothed. Pat-down searches may only be conducted if a school administrator has established a high level of reasonable suspicion that evidence will be found to corroborate suspicion that a law or school rule has been broken. If a pat-down search of a student's person is conducted, it will be conducted in private by a school official of the same gender as the student (unless requested otherwise by the student), and with an adult witness of the same gender as the student present. Pat-down searches—do not include any part of the body that is typically considered a student's private areas areas. The respect and dignity of the student will be maintained at all times by school officials during the pat-down search.

Strip searches involve an extreme intrusion into the rights of a student and may only be conducted when an extremely serious situation exists requiring immediate action because of an imminent threat of death or great bodily injury to a person or persons. If a strip search is necessary the school official should contact the appropriate law enforcement official, and the search should be conducted by a sworn law enforcement officer of the same gender, in the presence of a same gender adult witness, unless otherwise requested by the student. School officials may only conduct a strip search in cases where it is necessary to avoid the imminent threat of death or great bodily injury to the student or another person. If a strip search must be conducted by a school official, it must be by a same gender official with a same gender adult witness, unless otherwise requested by the student, and the school official must have the prior approval of the superintendent or superintendent's designee, unless the health or safety of a student or other individual would be endangered by the delay.

Every pat-down and/or strip search will be documented in a manner determined by the Office of Safety and Security Services. The justification for and results of the search must be included in the report, which will be submitted to the principal or designee and shared with the student's parent/legal guardian in the parent's/legal guardian's preferred language.

#### Vehicle Interiors

The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student has violated or is about to violate the law or a school rule and that the search will yield evidence of the violation, or that illegal or unauthorized materials or other evidence of illegal or otherwise prohibited activities are contained inside the automobile.

## BLANKET AND RANDOM ADMINISTRATIVE SEARCHES

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Lockers, Desks, and Other School-Provided Storage

 Student lockers, desks, and similar school-provided storage facilities are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers and are responsible for the content of their assigned lockers at all times. Periodic general inspections of lockers, desks, and similar school-provided storage facilities may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

Vehicle Searches Exteriors

School parking lots are ACPS property and all school rules and ACPS policies apply to parking lots.

Student parking on ACPS property is a privilege, not a right. The school retains authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of the exteriors of student automobiles on school property. The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student has violated or is about to violate the law or a school rule and that the search will yield evidence of the violation, or that illegal or unauthorized materials or other evidence of illegal or otherwise prohibited activities are contained inside the automobile. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

School Computers

The school computer system, as defined in Policy GAB/IIBEA: Responsible Computer System Use, is school property. Students are only authorized to use the school's computer system and other similar educational technology consistent with the educational mission of the school and in accordance with Policy GAB/IIBEA. School officials may search school computers, software and internet access records at any time for any reason and without student consent.

Weapons Abatement

<u>Describe proce</u> The process in which technology, equipment and/or staff are used to proactively prevent weapons from entering a school facility.

#### CONSENT SEARCHES

The Fourth Amendment is not violated if a student knowingly and voluntarily consents to a search. When consent is given, the school official does not need to demonstrate grounds for reasonable suspicion. A student's consent is valid only if given willingly and with knowledge of the meaning of "consent." All of the circumstances surrounding the consent determine whether it was knowingly and voluntarily given.

Students will be told of their right to refuse to be searched, and that their refusal will not in itself trigger administrative consequences.

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192 Students should demonstrate an awareness of the risk to themselves involved in granting school
193 officials permission to search. Consent searches may be invalid if the student perceives themself
194 to be at some risk of suspension or other disciplinary action if they do not grant permission for the
195 search.

Ceven once given, consent may be terminated at any time requiring that the search immediately stop. If the reasonable suspicion standard is met, however, and consent is not obtained or has been withdrawn, the search may still be conducted.

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#### SEARCHES INVOLVING LAW ENFORCEMENT-OR SECURITY OFFICERS

School Resource Officers (SROs) may be present at student searches. Any searches conducted by SROs must occur in accordance with the the but do not typically conduct the search. As sworn law enforcement officers, SROs must have probable cause to search an individual student; whereas, school officials are only required to demonstrate reasonable suspicion. Any time the SRO program is in effect within ACPS schools, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Alexandria City School Board and the Alexandria Police Department (APD) will define and clarify the role of SROs in conducting searches and seizures.

#### **TRAINING**

Generally, the principal or designee is the school official authorized to conduct student searches. The school official should be knowledgeable of the relevant laws, the Student Code of Conduct and this policy, and be trained in proper search techniques. They must also adhere to this policy for random and individualized searches. The administrative procedures that lead to a search should support the least intrusive, most reasonable, and individualized search possible. The school official should respect the individual privacy rights of the individual students.

Each school principal must maintain a list of school officials who have been authorized to conduct student searches.

ACPS employs School Security Officers (SSOs) to perform school security functions who are *not* sworn law enforcement officers. Because an SSO could be the individual who first identifies the need to search, however, they should be trained in appropriate search procedures and knowledgeable of laws and policy that govern student searches.

#### SEIZURE OF ILLEGAL MATERIALS

If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such items are turned over to the proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

#### DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

All searches and seizures, including unannounced, random searches, will be documented and the records maintained in accordance with procedures developed by the ACPS Office of Safety and Security Services.

The Superintendent will provide the prior school year's data reflecting all occurrences of search and seizure for each school in the Division to the School Board annually. The report will include non-identifiable, disaggregated, demographic data for the students involved in the searches, as well

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240	as the resulti	<del>ng administrati</del>	ve responses or consequences issued in accordance with the Student			
241		Code of Conduct, including any referrals to law enforcement. (The report will not include				
242		personally identifiable information regarding students.)				
243	1					
244	As outlined i	n the current M	1emorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Alexandria City			
245		ool Board and the Alexandria Police Department (APD), any incident in which a law				
246		enforcement officer(s) makes official contact with a student(s) will be documented, tracked and				
247	reviewed by	reviewed by the Office of Safety and Security Services by using the ACPS Law Enforcement				
248	Occurrence R	Report Form. All	l contact between law enforcement officers and ACPS students under			
249			l in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).			
250						
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252	Adopted:	December 5, 1996				
253	Amended:	July 6, 2000				
254	Amended:	June 15, 2004				
255	Amended:	July 1, 2005				
256	Amended:	March 12, 2015				
257	Amended:	December 16	, 2021			
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260	Legal Refs.:	New Jersey v.	. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325 (1985).			
261						
262		Constitution of	of the United States, Amendment IV.			
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264		Constitution of	of Virginia, Article I, section 10.			
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266		Code of Virgi	inia, 1950, as amended, §§ <u>18.2-67.10</u> , 22.1-279.7, 22.1-280.2:3.			
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269		October 2000	).			
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275 276		JFCD JFCF/JFCI	Weapons in School			
276		KNAJ	Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) in Schools Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities			
211		MNAJ	Relations with Law Emorcement Authornes			