

POLICY

BOARD OF EDUCATION
LINCOLN PARK

PUPILS
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Pupil Right of Privacy

5770 PUPIL SEARCH AND SEIZURE (PUPIL RIGHT OF PRIVACY)

The Board of Education recognizes that a pupil's right of privacy may not be violated by unreasonable search and seizure and directs that no pupil be searched without reason or in an unreasonable manner.

Teaching staff members are charged with the responsibility of maintaining order and discipline in the schools and of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the pupils in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, a teaching staff member may search or request the search of the person or property of a pupil as authorized by this policy, with or without the pupil's consent, whenever he or she has reasonable grounds to suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of school rules. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction, the pupil's age, and the pupil's disciplinary history. Except in exigent circumstances, a search of a pupil's person shall be conducted by a person of the pupil's gender, where feasible under the circumstances

The Board acknowledges the need for the in-school storage of pupils' possessions and shall provide storage places, including desks and lockers, for that purpose. Where locks are provided for such storage places, pupils may lock them against incursion by other pupils. In no storage place provided by the Board shall pupils have such an expectation of privacy as to prevent examination by a school official. Pupils shall be notified in writing at the beginning of each school year that inspections of their lockers, desks, and other storage facility, if any, may be conducted. The school principal and the other appointed administrator, if any, are directed to conduct, without further notice, the regular inspection of such facilities provided to pupils for the storage of property.

Except as required by exigent circumstances, a request for the search of a pupil or a pupil's private possessions will be directed to the building principal or other designated official who shall, whenever feasible, first request the voluntary consent of the pupil to the inspection.

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The search of all pupil's private possessions shall take place before the departure of the buses for all overnight field trips. Such search shall inspect the contents of duffle or overnight bags, to ascertain that no glass, sharp objects, Illegal substances, or otherwise harmful materials are enclosed. Notice of such search shall be given to parents/guardians in writing in advance of the field trip. All searches shall be supervised by the school principal or his/her designee. If a parent wishes to do the search in the presence of an administrator, and notification to the administrator is given in advance, the parent may do so.

A search prompted by the reasonable belief that the circumstances are exigent and pose an immediate threat, will be conducted by any teaching staff member with as much speed and dispatch as may be required to protect persons and property.

The principal shall conduct a pupil search on the request of a law enforcement officer only on presentation of a duly authorized search warrant or on the voluntary and knowing consent of the pupil or when the principal has independent grounds to suspect the presence of an incriminating object. The principal will make every effort to protect the identity of pupils reporting or cooperating in any investigation.

The principal shall be responsible for the prompt recording in writing of each pupil search, including the reasons for the search; information received that established the need for the search and the name of the informant, if any; the persons present when the search was conducted; any substances or objects found; and the disposition made of them. The principal shall be responsible for the custody, control, and disposition of any illegal or dangerous substance or object taken from a pupil.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-19.2

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