

StudentsSearch and Seizure – Use of Drug Detection Dogs

Since illegal drug use is harmful and interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of young people, the Arlington Public School District has a fundamental legal and ethical obligation to prevent drug use and to maintain a safe and drug free educational environment. As part of the district's effort to keep the high school and junior high school safe and free from illegal drugs, the school principal may authorize the use of law enforcement drug detection dogs to search school lockers and cars parked in the school parking lot under the following guidelines:

1. The dogs will be brought into the school both during and after school hours. The principal shall determine when the drug detection dogs will be used. Sniff searches will be conducted at random times throughout the school year.
2. The dogs will search lockers, vehicles parked in the school parking lot and/or classrooms and students' possessions in those classrooms (with students removed). Students will not be searched by drug detection dogs. During school day sniff searches, students will not be in direct contact/proximity to dogs.
3. If the drug detection dog identifies a locker, vehicle, student possession or student occupied seat, then school officials and law enforcement personnel will search the area and conduct an investigation. Parents/Guardians will be notified if illegal drugs or contraband are discovered in a student's possession, locker or vehicle. School penalties for possession of an illegal substance are governed by the school discipline code and may range from suspension to expulsion.
4. If an illegal drug is found, law enforcement will conduct a criminal investigation. If, during this investigation, probable cause exists to warrant an arrest, an arrest will be made.
5. If a student refuses to unlock a vehicle identified by a drug detection dog, the student will be subject to school sanctions for refusing to submit to a search. Law enforcement personnel will take appropriate action based on departmental policies.
6. Drug detection dog searches in the Arlington Public Schools may involve the Blair Police Department, Washington County Sheriff and/or state patrol.

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