



The Academy of Alameda

A K-8 Public Charter School Organization

CAMPUS SEARCH & SEIZURE POLICY

Statement of Findings

The Academy of Alameda (“AoA”) recognizes and has determined that the occurrence of incidents which may include the possession of firearms, weapons, alcohol, controlled substances, or other items of contraband prohibited by law or AoA rules and regulations, jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of students and AoA employees.

The California Constitution requires that all students and staff of public schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure, and peaceful. As such, AoA adopts this Policy outlining the reasonable search of students and their property, student use areas, and/or student lockers and the seizure of illegal, unsafe, unauthorized or contraband items and materials through a search based upon reasonable suspicion.

Definitions

- “*Reasonable Suspicion*” means a sufficient probability that the search will reveal evidence the student has violated or is violating the law. Certainty is not required. Articulate facts must support a school official’s reasonable suspicion that a search is justified. In no case shall a search be conducted if predicated on mere curiosity, rumor or hunch.
- A “*violation of either the law or AoA rules and regulations*” includes, but is not limited to, possession of illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials. Illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials include those materials which are dangerous to the health or safety of students or school personnel, are disruptive or potentially disruptive, or which have been cited as unauthorized in AoA rules or regulations.

Notice

Written notice of this Policy shall be provided to students and their parents and/or guardians at the start of each school year and/or upon enrollment during the school year. A summary of this Policy shall also be placed in the Student Handbook and other materials, as appropriate, to be disseminated by the AoA to students, parents and/or guardians and Charter School employees.

Student Searches

An Academy of Alameda official (e.g., administrator, or designee from the Restorative Justice Team) may conduct a reasonable search of a student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., backpack, purse, etc.) if a school official has reasonable suspicion that the student is engaged in or has engaged in illegal activity or a violation of The Academy of Alameda's rules and regulations. Whether a search is reasonable depends on the context within which a search takes place. The AoA official must assess the reliability of the student or person providing the information, the degree of danger to others, and the immediacy of the need for a search.

The search of a student and/or of their personal effects must be:

1. **Justified at its Inception:** There are reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will turn up evidence that the student is violating or has violated the law or AoA rules. Articulable facts must support an AoA official's reasonable suspicion that a search is justified. In no case shall a search be conducted if predicated on mere curiosity, rumor or hunch; and
2. **Reasonable in Scope:** The measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

Required Conduct of Searches:

Additionally, any search of a student and/or of their personal effects shall be:

1. Conducted in the presence of at least one (1) other adult witness;
2. Conducted out of the presence of other students to maintain student confidentiality;
3. Conducted in a manner that does not involve:
 - a. Conducting a body cavity search of a student manually or with an instrument; or
 - b. Removing or arranging any or all of the clothing of a student to permit visual inspection of the underclothing, breast, buttocks, or genitalia of the student.
4. Documented by keeping a log of the search methods as well as a written description and/or pictures of any prohibited or illegal items ultimately seized as a result of the search.
5. The parent/guardian of the student who was searched will be contacted as soon as possible after the search. AoA personnel will explain why the child was searched. (I added this on 12.11/20)

Student Use Areas

Student use areas, including, but not limited to, instructional and recreational space, are considered AoA property and remain at all times under the control of the school. Periodic general inspections of instructional space and other areas of the school may be conducted by AoA officials for any reason at any time without notice.

Lockers

Student lockers, including P.E. lockers, are school property and remain at all times under the control of AoA. Students shall assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. Student lockers may not be used to store illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials.

The acceptance and use of locker facilities on school campus by any student shall constitute consent by the student to the search of such locker facilities by authorized AoA personnel and/or law enforcement. ~~Inspections of lockers may be conducted by AoA personnel and/or law enforcement through the use of trained dogs as described above. (I suggest taking this this section 12/11/20)~~

Seizure of Illegal, Unauthorized, or Contraband Materials

If a lawfully conducted search yields illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials, such materials shall be turned over to the proper legal authorities.

Discipline

If illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials are discovered during a search, including but not limited to searches conducted by AoA officials, The Academy of Alameda may impose discipline upon the student(s) (including suspension and/or expulsion) in accordance with AoA's discipline policies and procedures. AoA shall notify law enforcement authorities if any search and/or seizure results in the discovery of illegal contraband.

Video Surveillance

AoA may utilize video surveillance devices in all common areas of the school campus including, but not limited to, outdoor spaces, entrances and exits, parking lots, stairwells, hallways, classrooms, the main office, and any other commonly used spaces. AoA shall not utilize video surveillance devices in private spaces such as restrooms. The Academy of Alameda's intent and purpose in utilizing video surveillance devices is to ensure student and staff health, welfare, and safety in order to maintain safe and orderly conduct throughout the school day.

AoA shall not use audio recording where there is an expectation of privacy without prior consent of all parties subject to recording. Students, staff, parents, and other members of the public are similarly prohibited from audio recording on AoA campus without prior consent. This policy does not prohibit the AoA from recording classes as needed for teacher development nor any other permissible audio recording by AoA otherwise provided under the law.

Video surveillance recordings are not considered student education records unless the recording is maintained and (1) intended for use in a disciplinary action or proceeding, (2) depicts an activity that shows a student violating the law, (3) shows a student getting injured, attacked, victimized, ill, or having a health emergency, (4) contains personally identifiable information from a student's educational record. A video surveillance recording is not considered a student's

education record when the student's image is incidental to the activity shown in the recording or when the student is participating in a public activity.

AoA shall comply with all state and federal law regarding access to, review, and disclosure of student records, including Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). This includes compliance with lawful requests under the California Public Records Act, from law enforcement, and other appropriate agencies. The Academy of Alameda will evaluate the legality of any requests in advance of disclosure and will comply with all notice requirements under FERPA.

Adopted: