

## SEARCH OF STUDENTS AND SEIZURE OF PROPERTY

It is very important for students and parents to understand that, **in order to maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student lockers or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search.** The term "unauthorized" 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 school, or any item described as unauthorized in school rules available beforehand to the student. A student's failure to permit searches and seizures will be considered grounds for disciplinary action which may include involving the local police agency in emergency situations as determined by the school administrator.

A **student's person and/or personal effects** (i.e., purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials. 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 sex and with an adult witness present, when feasible. If the school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student has on his or her person an item immediately dangerous to the student or to others, the student should be isolated, police notified and appropriate disciplinary action administered. A student search record must be completed regarding any personal search.

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege, not of right. The school retains authority to conduct **routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of the exteriors of student vehicles** on school property. The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school authority has reasonable grounds for suspecting that illegal or unauthorized materials are contained inside. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant. A student search record must be completed regarding any automobile search.

Student **lockers** 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. Periodic general inspections of lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant. However, notice to expect periodic general inspections should be communicated in writing (student handbook) to the students prior to the issuance of the locker. All lockers should be inspected at least quarterly. Searches of specific lockers or locker areas may be conducted as needed. A record should be made of each general search. Any illegal materials found during a locker search should be reported by completing a student search record.

If a search yields **illegal or unauthorized materials**, such findings shall be turned over in person to either the Chief of the Fulton County School Police or the Office of Student Discipline or proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.