

POLICY E17.1
INTERROGATION AND INVESTIGATIONS

Building administrators, school security officers, and/or others designated by the superintendent may conduct investigations and question students about violation of school rules, the student conduct code, and/or law. Unless otherwise provided herein, such investigators shall not be required to contact the student's parent, guardian, or representative prior to questioning and may request law enforcement, school resource officer(s), and/or school security officer(s) for assistance in conducting the investigation.

If there is a reason to believe a violation of a criminal law has been committed, the building administrator, the superintendent's designee, and/or school security officer with authorization of the superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of criminal conduct as provided in law and/or board policy and may request further investigation of the alleged violation.

When a school resource officer or campus police officer initiates an investigation of a potential violation of criminal law by a student on the officer's own initiative and not at the behest of a building administrator or the designee of the superintendent, such officer will notify the building administrator and will make a reasonable attempt to contact the student's parent, guardian, or representative prior to initiating questioning.

Coordination with Law Enforcement

School administrators and/or school security officers shall meet periodically with local law enforcement officials to discuss the district's policies and rules regarding law enforcement contacts with the district.

Notification of Investigations Conducted by Law Enforcement Officers

When law enforcement officers initiate an investigation involving questioning of a student on a topic unrelated to a report of child abuse or neglect or to verify the identity of the student during school hours, the building administrator shall make a reasonable attempt to contact a parent, guardian, or representative of the student(s) prior to such questioning. Notification or attempted notification of a parent, guardian or representative shall be documented by the administrator involved. If a student's parent, guardian, or representative is not present during such questioning of a student, the principal may be present unless otherwise specified in law or board policy.

Child Abuse and Identity Investigations Conducted by Law Enforcement Officers

The administration shall cooperate with law enforcement officers who are conducting investigations of suspected child abuse or neglect, or concerning the student's identity. For any investigations concerning known or suspected child abuse or neglect, school staff shall follow the procedures outlined in "A Guide to Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect" compiled by the Department of Children and Families, specifically pages 17-18 (made available to all employees annually) instead of the requirements of this policy.

Law Enforcement Initiated Investigations at School

In cases not involving the investigation of known or suspected child abuse or neglect or involving the student's identity, law enforcement officers shall not be permitted to initiate and conduct investigations involving questioning of students during the school hours unless the student's parents or guardian has given the school permission to allow the questioning, a valid search warrant have been presented to the building administrator for such purposes, or in demonstrated emergency situations. If a demonstrated emergency is found, the building administrator shall require identification of law enforcement officials and reasons for the interrogation of a student. If the building administrator is not satisfied with either the identification or the reason, the request shall not be granted. The building administrator shall attempt to notify the superintendent and the officer's superiors of the reasons for the refusal.

Taking Students Into Custody

Students shall not be voluntarily released by school officials to law enforcement authorities unless the student has been placed under arrest or taken into custody by law enforcement, school resource officers, campus police officers, or Department of Children and Families ("DCF") authorities pursuant to a child abuse investigation. Except as otherwise specified in this policy, a reasonable effort shall be made to notify the student's parent, guardian, or representative when students removed from school for any reason. Parents shall not be notified by school officials when their child is taken into custody by DCF, school resource officers, campus police officers, and/or law enforcement as a result of allegations of abuse or neglect. Except as provided above and/or as specified in a court order or arrest warrant, if a student is taken into custody by a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or campus police officer, building administrators shall make a good-faith effort to contact the student's parent or guardian. Notification efforts shall be documented.

When a student has been taken into custody or arrested on school premises without prior notification to the building administrator, the school staff present shall ask the law enforcement officer to notify the building administrator of the circumstances as quickly as possible and shall themselves contact the building

administrator with any information they have regarding the child being taken into custody. School resource officers and campus police officers are expected to contact the building administrator as soon as practicable after taking a student into custody.

Disturbance of School Environment

Law enforcement officers may be requested to assist in controlling disturbances at school and, if necessary, to take students or other persons into custody.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, “campus police officer” is a school security officer employed by and designated by the board to aid and supplement law enforcement agencies of the state, city and county in which the school district is located.

For the purposes of this policy, students will not be deemed to be “taken into custody” when they are being questioned by a school resource officer, school security officer, and/or campus police officer about a violation of state law, county resolutions, city ordinances, board policy or regulation, and/or school rules on property owned, occupied, or operated by the school district or at the site of a function sponsored by the school district.