

HighTech LA
17111 Victory Blvd.
Van Nuys, CA 91406

Random Metal Detector Searches – Policy

PURPOSE:

- The purpose of this program is to deter the bringing of weapons such as guns, knives, or any other items, which might cause harm or injury.
- Metal detectors may be used for the purpose of searching students who might be suspected of being in possession of a weapon or other item that might cause harm or injury..
- Any person found to be in possession of a gun or other dangerous weapon as defined in the California State Penal or Education Codes or in the School's Charter/Discipline Policy, shall be arrested. If during the course of a search, contraband is observed that is a violation of published school policy and/or regulations, such items may be confiscated and the students may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Students who refuse to submit to a wand search consistent with these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary actions for defying the valid authority of school personnel. Further, depending upon the situation, the School reserves its right to remove the student from school grounds and/or contact law enforcement, as needed. Other persons refusing a search consistent with these guidelines must be escorted off campus.

PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING RANDOM METAL DETECTOR SEARCHES

- Posting Signs
 - Signs shall be posted in several prominent locations at the site advising that all persons on the premises are subject to search for weapons by metal detector.
- Selection of Staff to Conduct Metal Detection Searches
 - The search team should be comprised of certificated employees, both male and female, and augmented with other staff as necessary.
 - School Police may be requested to accompany and observe the search team, but may not participate in the actual searching. School Police participation in random searches must be limited to handling arrests or other criminal situations that might occur during the course of a metal detection search operation. However, School Safety Officers (SSOs) who are properly trained may assist with random metal detector searches, as they are not sworn officers.

- Personnel selected to be members of the school search team must be respectful and sensitive to the right of privacy and other concerns of the individual being searched.
 - The searching of any students, employee, or visitor shall only be conducted by a search team member of the same gender.
- Scheduling Metal Detection Searches
 - HTLA will conduct random metal detector searches on a weekly basis. Search operations should be conducted at various hours of the school day to avoid predictability.
 - HTLA will keep a record of the random metal detector searches
- Selection of Location On The Site To Conduct Metal Detection Searches
 - Whenever possible, locations within the building grounds will be selected that do not expose students or other persons being searched to the view of the general student body population, particularly to the view of those who are not being subjected to the search procedure.
 - Whenever possible, the location of the search operation should be adjacent to the classrooms or hallway in which students who are to be subject to the search are located. A nearly vacant classroom, office or workroom should be available in the event that it becomes necessary to more thoroughly search a particular student. This would be the case when a metal detector (wand) activates and it is not possible to satisfactorily determine the cause either through questioning or a light pat-down of the person. Whenever it is necessary for a student to be removed for a more thorough search, he or she shall be accompanied by two adult employees of the same gender as the student. The California Education Code Section 49050 prohibits removal or rearranging of pupil's clothing in a manner to permit a visual inspection of the underclothing, breast, buttocks, or genitals of pupils.
- Random Search Versus Total Population Search
 - A total population search is one wherein every person who enters the premises is searched; such as at selected athletic events or after-school events.
 - Although called a random search, a specific pattern of who is to be selected to be searched is established prior to implementation. In addition, the search personnel may not deviate from the pattern during the course of that particular session. As an example, every third or fifth person who enters a hallway or classroom may be searched or some other means be used to establish a method of selection which results in an objective, unbiased search pattern.
 - No student or persons shall be selected to be searched based solely upon their gender, race, ethnicity, physical appearance, manner of dress, or association with any particular group of persons.
- Search Operation

- A pre-established random plan should be used to select which students and what articles are to be searched. It is important that sufficient staff be involved in the search to prevent the possibility of any selected student disposing of contraband/weapons or not reporting to the location where the metal detection search is being conducted.
- All Students selected shall be required to bring all of their personal effects in their possession at the time they are selected, i.e., coat, purse, book bag, backpack, or other similar articles.
- Upon entering the metal detection search location, the selected student shall be advised of the purpose of the operation, the method in which the search will be conducted, and the fact that this selection was made in a random manner.
- A student or person to be searched shall be directed to remove all metal objects from his/her pockets (including coins, etc.). The student is to give his/her personal belongings, as described above, to a search team member or they should be placed on a table or desk in plain view of the student. The student, followed by the student's personal belongings, shall then be scanned by a hand-held metal detector (wand). The staff member operating the device must use an identical scanning technique/pattern on each student and their belongings. Personal belongings that contain non-removable metal parts that will cause the wand to alert may be physically searched only to the degree necessary to affirm that no firearms, weapons, or other dangerous objects that could cause harm or injury are contained therein.
- The staff member will scan the entire student, including socks, front and back pockets, waist, chest, and legs.
- If the metal detector activates, the student shall be asked whether he or she is in possession of any metallic object in the area scanned. After determining the suspected article is not a firearm, weapon, or other dangerous object that could cause harm or injury and is removable, request the students to remove the article and re-scan. If an activation reoccurs and the article cannot be removed, the operator shall visually confirm the student's explanation, i.e., jewelry, belt, buckle, rivets on pants, or as a second alternative, by lightly touching the area which is causing the repeated activation.

Approved, Board of Directors, HighTech LA: April 9, 2013

Amended: Board of Directors, HighTech LA: December 3, 2013