

High Tech Los Angeles
CAMPUS SEARCH & SEIZURE BOARD POLICY

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

High Tech Los Angeles (“Charter School”) 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 Charter School rules and regulations, jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of students and Charter School 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, Charter School adopts this policy outlining the search of students and their property, student use areas, and/or student lockers and the seizure of illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials in the search.

NOTICE

Written notice of this policy shall be provided to students and their parents and/or guardians at the commencement of each school year and 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 Charter School to students, parents and/or guardians and Charter School employees. Including a summary in a handbook or other materials shall satisfy the annual notice requirement set forth in this paragraph. In addition, Charter School shall place signs and/or other posted notifications on campus regarding this policy, as appropriate.

STUDENT SEARCHES

A student’s person and/or personal effects (e.g. backpack, purse, etc.) may be searched if a school official has reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating either the law or Charter School rules and regulations, including, but 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 school rules or regulations.

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.

Any search of a student and/or their personal effects shall be conducted in the presence of another adult witness whenever possible. The scope of the search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the pupil and the nature of the infraction.

In no case shall a strip search be conducted by school officials, including asking a student to remove or arrange some or all of their underclothing, and/or inspecting of parts of the student's underclothing or body.

STUDENT USE AREAS

Student use areas, including, but not limited to, instructional and recreational space, are school property and remain at all times under the control of Charter School. However, students shall assume full responsibility for the security and condition of these areas. Periodic general inspections of instructional space and other areas of the school may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time without notice.

METAL DETECTION DEVICES

The Board believes that the presence of weapons in the schools threatens the district's ability to provide the safe and orderly learning environment to which students and staff are entitled. The Board also believes that metal detector searches offer a reasonable means to keep weapons out of the schools and mitigate the fears of students and staff.

Metal detectors, such as metal detection wands or other metal detection devices, may be used to search a student's person and/or personal effects whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of a weapon or in the context of a random search to maintain and protect the safety, security, and peace of students, Charter School employees, and the Charter School.

The following procedures shall be followed when using metal detectors to conduct random searches of students:

1. Searches involving metal detectors shall be minimally intrusive and involve the use of neutral criteria for selection.
2. Before walk-through, students shall be asked to empty their pockets of metallic objects.
3. If an initial activation occurs, students shall be asked to remove other metallic objects they may be wearing (e.g., belt and jewelry) and to walk through a second time.
4. If a second activation occurs, a hand-held metal detector shall be used.
5. If the activation is not eliminated or explained, staff shall escort the student to a private

area.

6. In the private area, an expanded search shall be conducted by a staff member of the same gender as the student, in the presence of another district employee.
7. The search shall be limited to the detection of weapons.

CANINE SEARCHES

School officials, including campus security or school police/resource officers, may use trained detection dogs in inspections for illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials in school facilities and around school grounds. All dogs must be accompanied by a qualified and authorized trainer who will be responsible for the dog's actions and who can verify the reliability and accuracy in sniffing out contraband. Trained detection dogs may sniff lockers, student use areas, and other inanimate objects throughout school property. Such inspections are not considered searches and do not require reasonable suspicion.

An indication by the dog that illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials are present on school property shall constitute reasonable suspicion, authorizing school officials to search the area or other inanimate object and closed containers and objects within, without securing the consent of the student.

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 for ultimate disposition.

DISCIPLINE

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