administrative regulation

Student Searches

Administrative Regulation No. 6014

Classification: Students

Effective Date: November 30, 2026

1 | Purpose

The purpose of this administrative regulation is to:

- Outline the process to use when conducting student searches in a manner that balances CBE's obligation to maintain safe and caring learning environments with students' rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and applicable privacy law.

2 | Scope

This administrative regulation applies to:

- All CBE students, and
- CBE principals and principal designates.

3 | Compliance

All employees are responsible for knowing, understanding and complying with this administrative regulation.

Failure to comply with this administrative regulation may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

4 | Principles

The following principles apply:

- CBE is committed to creating and maintaining safe, caring environments that promote respectful and responsible behaviours.
- Students have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and to be free from unreasonable search.
- Student searches shall only be conducted where reasonable grounds exist and where the search is necessary to address a legitimate safety or security concern.
- Student searches must be proportionate, minimally intrusive, and culturally responsive.

5 | Definitions

CBE: means The Calgary Board of Education.

Principal Designate: means an assistant principal or CBE employee authorized by the principal to conduct or assist with the responsibilities under this administrative regulation.

- During a CBE-sponsored off-site activity, the Teacher-in-Charge is deemed to be the principal's designate for the purpose of this Administrative Regulation (AR).

Prohibited Item: means any item the possession, use, or distribution of which is prohibited by law, the Student Code of Conduct, a CBE administrative regulation, or that may pose a risk to health, safety, or security.

Reasonable Grounds for a Search: means an objectively supportable belief, based on specific and credible information, observations, or both, that a search is likely to reveal evidence of a violation of law, a safety-related breach of the Student Code of Conduct, or a prohibited item that poses a risk to safety or security.

Reasonable grounds may be established through any one or more of the following:

- information received from one or more credible students or other persons;
- a teacher's, principal's, or principal designate's own observations; or
- any combination of the above information that a reasonable person would consider credible and sufficient in the circumstances.

School Property Used by a Student: means any school-owned or school-controlled property assigned to, possessed by, accessed by, or otherwise used by a student, including, without limitation, any article, object, space, storage area, electronic device, information resource, desk, locker, or other property, whether physical or electronic.

Search: means an examination of a student’s person, student articles and objects, student vehicle, or school property used by a student for the purpose of locating evidence, contraband, prohibited items, or items posing a safety or security concern.

Student Articles and Objects: means articles or objects owned or used by a student either on CBE premises or during CBE-sponsored activities such as an off-site activity including but not limited to backpacks, clothing, suitcases, and other bags or containers.

Student Vehicle: means any motor vehicle, motorbike, bicycle, scooter, or other personal transportation device owned, operated or used by a student and located on CBE property or at a CBE-sponsored off-site activity or event.

6 | Regulation Statement

Random Searches Prohibited

1) Random and arbitrary searches of students, school property used by students, student vehicles or student articles and objects including random and arbitrary canine searches are prohibited.

Reasonable Grounds for a Search

2) A principal or principal's designate may conduct a search where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the search will reveal:
    a) evidence of a violation of AR 6005: Student Code of Conduct; or
    b) an item that poses a risk to the health, safety, or security of any person.

Scope of Searches

3) A student's person, student articles and objects, including a student's vehicle, and school property used by a student are subject to search and searches must be conducted in accordance with this administrative regulation.

7 | Procedure

Conduct of Searches

1) Searches may only be conducted by the principal or principal designate in the presence of another CBE employee.
2) For the purpose of this regulation, during an off-site activity the principal's designate is the teacher-in-charge.
3) All searches must:
    a) Be carried out in a reasonable manner,
    b) Respect the privacy of the student,
    c) Be minimally intrusive, and
    d) Be conducted in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner, taking into account the student's age, identity, beliefs and practices, individual needs, and other circumstances relevant to the search.

Requests for Immediate Production of an Item

4) The reasonable grounds requirements in 6(2) do not apply where a principal, principal designate, or teacher directly observes a student possessing, concealing, displaying, using, or attempting to conceal an item and immediately directs the student to surrender or produce the item.
    a) A direction to surrender or produce the item that has been directly observed by the principal, principal designate, or teacher is not considered a search for the purposes of this administrative regulation.

Fair Notice

5) Principals must ensure that students and parents/guardians are provided with annual notice that, in accordance with this administrative regulation, the following may be subject to search where authorized by this regulation:
    a) students;
    b) school property used by a student; and
    c) student articles and objects, including student vehicles.

Notification to the Student

6) Prior to conducting a search of a student's person, the principal or principal's designate must advise the student of:
    a) the reason for the search;
    b) the minimally intrusive manner in which the search will be conducted; and
    c) the reasonable steps that will be taken to ensure the search is respectful of the student's dignity, privacy, identity, and religious, cultural, or other protected beliefs and practices.
7) It is not necessary to notify a parent before a search of the student's person is conducted, but the principal or the principal's designate must inform the student's parents about the search of the student's person as soon as practicable.

Conducting a Search

8) Searches of a student's person shall only be conducted by the principal or principal's designate in a private setting and in the presence of another CBE employee acting as a witness. The witness is responsible for observing the search and supports transparency and documentation.
9) When conducting a search of a student's person, the principal or principal's designate shall use the least intrusive measures reasonably necessary to achieve the purpose of the search.
    a) The scope of the search shall be proportionate to the nature of the concern and limited to what is reasonably necessary to locate the item or evidence being sought.
10) Searches of a student's person are limited to directing the student to produce, remove, or display items.
    a) A principal or principal's designate shall not conduct a strip search or any search involving physical contact with a student under any circumstances.

Search of Electronic Information

11) A principal or principal's designate may authorize a CBE employee to search CBE electronic information resources stored at the school or facility and used by a student.
12) A search of CBE centrally stored electronic information resources used by a student may only be done by a director of Information Technology Services or their designate according to AR 1062: Responsible Use of Electronic Information Resources, upon the request of a principal or the principal's designate.

School Desk or Lockers

13) School property used by a student is the property of the CBE and is subject to search by the principal or principal's designate in the presence of another CBE employee.

    a) In certain circumstances, it may be preferable that the student be present when the desk, locker or school storage area is searched, but it is not required.

Search Reports

14) A Student Search Report must be completed whenever a search is conducted.

15) The completed Student Search Report is to be retained at the school or site for the current school year plus one (1) year and then destroyed, unless

    a) The Student Search Report supports a disciplinary action such as a suspension or expulsion, in which case the report will be retained with the suspension or expulsion documentation according to its retention schedule (found in AR 6024: Student Records).

Securing and Returning Confiscated Property

16) Where a principal, principal designate, or teacher confiscates a student's property that is interfering with learning but not otherwise prohibited or required to be retained for safety, investigative, disciplinary, or law enforcement purposes, they shall:

    a) take reasonable steps to secure the property;

    b) maintain a record of the confiscation in accordance with school procedures; and

    c) return the property to the student, or where appropriate, to the student's parent/guardian, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Alcohol, Drugs or Other Illegal Substances

17) If a student is found in possession of alcohol, drugs or other illegal substance, the principal must:

    a) Contact Calgary Police Services for the management of alcohol, drug, or illegal substance possession and legally authorized disposal and;

    b) Ensure that an appropriate response to intervention is implemented in accordance with Administrative Regulation 6006: Progressive Student Discipline and aligned with CBE's Student Well-Being Framework.

8 | History

Approval	April 4, 2005
Revision/Review Dates	November 30, 2026
Next Review	November 2031

9 | Related Information

Operational Expectations

- OE-1: Global Operational Expectations
- OE-2: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students
- OE-4: Treatment of Employees

Administrative Regulations

- AR 1062: Responsible Use of Electronic Information Resources
- AR 6005: Student Code of Conduct
- AR 6006: Progressive Student Discipline
- AR 6024: Student Records
- AR 6031: Safe and Caring Learning and Work Environments

Legislation

- *Education Act*, SA 2012, c. E-0.3
- *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Part I of the Constitution Act, 1982, being Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK), 1982, c 11

Forms / Documents

- Student Search Report