

RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

It is the policy of the schools to cooperate with law enforcement agencies in the interest of the larger welfare of all citizens. At the same time, schools have the responsibility to parents for the welfare of the students while they are in the care of the school. To carry out this responsibility, school officials should observe the following:

I. CUSTODY

A duly authorized police officer may require that a pupil be released to his/her custody providing a written request from the local police department is presented to the school official in charge. The request for custody should only be made when one or more of the following conditions exist or in other situations required by law:

1. There is probable cause to believe that the youth is directly involved in a violation of a local ordinance, state or federal statute, and the police are therefore legally authorized to take custody of the student.
2. It appears in the best interest of the student that he/she be taken into interim care as provided by law.

The request must be signed by the local police chief or his/her official representative. Both the police and school officials have a responsibility for notifying the parent/guardian of the action taken as soon as possible. Advance notice to the school principal by the police prior to taking action is encouraged. Any exception to the requirement for parent/guardian notification shall be made only by the Building Administrator and only in accordance with a written request by police.

II. QUESTIONING

If the police department needs to question a pupil, the most desirable practice would include the prior notification of the parent/guardian and further, the presence of the parent/guardian at the time of the questioning. Prior notification to parents shall not be required in instances where the police department certifies that to do so would increase the threat of serious harm to the pupil or another person. In all cases, the police department shall be responsible for ensuring that any self-incrimination rights of the pupil are respected. It is recognized that the above conditions may not be easily arranged in every instance and it is expected that in such instances, whenever possible, the police department will call the school and request a message be passed on to a student. Both agencies are expected to make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian and apprise them of the situation. The age of the child should be considered and only age appropriate requests made.

III. HIRING POLICE OFFICERS

When members of the police force are hired to be present at school functions, the administrator present for, or in charge of the event, will give them direction, recognizing that the police are present to insure the safety of all.

IV. DISTRICT COMMUNICATION WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

A. INFORMAL COMMUNICATION

Informal communication between schools and the juvenile officer is encouraged.

B. FORMAL COMMUNICATION

Specific allegations of misconduct by a particular student made by school officials to the police shall also be reported by school officials to the parent/guardian unless those allegations are made confidential by law.

1. For safety reasons, when a student leaves school grounds without permission and has not returned, the school will call the student's parents/guardians and will call the police to inform them of the unauthorized departure.
2. When a student presents a risk of immediate physical harm to himself/herself or others and he/she needs to be brought under control and the student's parents/guardians do not assist or are not able to assist in gaining control of the student, or the individual education plan is not effective or is not known, the school will call the police to assist in gaining control of the student.
3. The District shall report to the police whenever it has clear knowledge (reliably reported, witnessed or personal admission) that a student has assaulted (as defined in Webster's Dictionary) another student, volunteer, and/or employee of the District. School administrators shall apply this provision in a consistent manner for all students. In all cases of reported assault, the parent/guardian of the students involved will be notified, at a minimum, in writing that the incident has been reported to the police.
4. Every employee of the District retains the legal right to file a complaint with the police when assaulted or threatened by a student. Whether an employee files such a complaint is completely within the employee's own discretion.
5. The District shall report to police whenever it has a clear knowledge of a crime committed by any student.

V. POLICE PROFILE

The Wells-Ogunquit C.S.D. School Committee recognizes that cooperation with law enforcement agencies is beneficial for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the schools, and for safeguarding all school property. A cooperative relationship could also serve as an enhancement to the academic program and improve perceived student attitudes toward law enforcement.

The Wells-Ogunquit C.S.D. recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement can make in the educational program. When appropriate to the curricular area, law enforcement officials should be invited to participate in classroom learning situations.

In addition to education-related activities, efforts should also be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to provide better understanding and communication.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

When a situation arises, which may, in the reasonable judgment of the principal, require the police to take a more active role in the school than is usually required, the principal will consult with the Superintendent who will then contact the School Committee Chairperson regarding the anticipated police involvement. The Superintendent, after consulting with both the principal and School Committee Chairperson, will decide as to the need for: 1) immediate action, 2) confidentiality of the action, and/or 3) School Committee approval. In all cases, the police involvement should be considered necessary for the continued safety and well-being of the students. At all times, the police and school officials shall conduct their business with as little disruption to the educational process as possible.

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