

# What's hiding in your locker?

During the spring of last school year, drug searches began at Antioch Community High School. Some students feel that this is an invasion of their property and violates their personal rights. Police must

have a warrant to search a person's house, so why can a student's belongings be searched? But the line isn't so clear when separating what rights students have and don't have.

Drug searches were an issue brought up to Antioch Village Police, the school board and Superintendent Dennis Hockney by the community. The police, along with the school board and Hockney put together a procedure to

eliminate the presence of drugs at ACHS.

Unannounced searches are performed by Antioch police officers, accompanied by approximately six canine units whom enter the school and scour the building for contraband materials. The school is broken down into sectors while the dogs sniff every locker. If the dog detects any illegal substances, the locker is then searched by an ACHS dean. By law the police are not allowed to go through the locker. The student of the locker is then notified.

"I think it's fair they know, even if we didn't find anything," said Sean Garrison, ACHS dean of

students. This is usually the case. Since the searches began, there has been only one confirmed seizure of an illegal substance.

"That's what we want," said Garrison, referring to the apparent minimal presence of drugs at ACHS.

School lockers are property of the school, not the student, and that is the final factor that makes drug searches lawful.

The school also holds a certain amount of parental responsibility over its students. This is known as in loco parentis, or the school assumes the duties of a parent when they are not present.

"If your parents are allowed to go through your room, then why can't the school go through your locker?" asked ACHS senior Kathryn Fourtney, approving of the school's involvement in helping to protect the students.

Some ACHS students however don't feel the law is right.

"They can't just go looking for it," said ACHS senior Jon Waschow. "If there's probable cause, then I can see it," Waschow continued.

Waschow's concerns are reflected by other students as well.

Garrison went on to explain that drug searches are a proactive approach to keeping students on the right track, not an attempt at violating a student's rights.

"I hope there are better choices [being made]," said Garrison. Some students understand why drug searches are used and agree with them.

"It's [drug searches] good because people should be punished if they have drugs," said ACHS freshman Tom Krei.

ACHS senior Andrea Casapao is understanding of the searches as well, saying, "I don't see it as a violation of anything. It's fine with me."

"They're just trying to keep the school safe for everyone," said ACHS senior Katie Kozuch.

# Why not the teachers

## The Drug Testing Process

1. Students are randomly selected from the computer data base of eligible participants
2. A Condell employee administers the test with an ACHS staff member present
3. The student being tested is given one bottle of water, and then sent to the prepared bathrooms
4. The test givers wait outside and make sure that the toilettes are not flushed.
5. The urine samples are then poured into several viles and shipped out to be tested

drugs that are legal for teachers," he said. He also said most employers that drug test employees do so because their substance use would endanger others.

Carlson and others may not mind drug tests in the workplace, but Carlson doesn't agree with ACHS new random drug testing policy. Beginning this year, ACHS randomly drug tests students in athletics and extracurricular activities. Since Carlson is a soccer player, he could be randomly drug tested at any time.

"I think that it is unfair that only the athletes are getting tested," said Carlson. "Why should we be the only ones punished?"

According to Dr. Jon Crawford, ACHS principal, randomly drug testing students is legal because "participation in these activities is a privilege, not a right." The school couldn't randomly drug test everyone, because students have a right to an education.

Sean Garrison, ACHS head dean, said that students always have the right to refuse.

"We aren't forcing anyone to do random drug tests," he said.

If they do refuse, however, they won't be able to participate fully in their extracurricular activities.

Although drug tests are legal, students like Carlson don't have to be happy about taking them.

"If we have to do it, all schools should have to do it," said Kyle Johnson, ACHS senior. "It's a double standard."

Other students don't have a problem with the policy.

"I agree with what [administrators] are doing to keep kids from doing what they are doing," said Samantha Miller, ACHS senior.

Since Miller was on the cross country team and part of National Honor Society, she could be tested.

"I wouldn't have anything to worry about [if I got tested,]" said Miller.

Johnson also questions the

way the tests are being given. "There is no way that test is random," he said. He believes that the administration chooses students who they suspect are doing drugs to test.

According to Judy Smithhisler, the ACHS dean who coordinates the drug testing effort, said the tests are completely random. The students who are to be tested are picked using a computer database.

Smithhisler always has a second party present when she creates the list using Microsoft Excel. That person must also sign the list to show that Smithhisler followed guidelines.

"The bottom line is students have to trust that we will follow state guidelines when administering these tests," said Garrison.

Garrison and Smithhisler also said they could lose their jobs if they violated those rules.

"It's not worth trying to get one kid," Smithhisler said.

Students can also be drug tested if deans have "reasonable suspicion" that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, according to Garrison.

If a student smells like an illegal substance, is acting in an abnormal manner, or was seen by an ACHS staff member using an illegal substance, that constitutes reasonable suspicion, said Garrison.

Students who commit a drug violation can also choose to be randomly drug tested. Students who have violations like possession and use of illegal substances normally will receive a 10-day suspension.

However, in order to reduce their sentence to 5 days, students can choose to comply with their drug assessment program, according to Garrison. Students are evaluated about their drug use, and a recommendation is made.

One possible recommendation is that a student would have to take random drug tests every time athletes are tested for the remainder of the year.

# ATTENTION

Walking down the hall is Will Addison, an ACHS sophomore. As Will strolls down the hall, he randomly puts up flyers for his friend's band concert. As he stops to place a flyer just above a water fountain, he is suddenly thrust around, with a steady grip upon his shoulder. To his horror, towering over him is an administrator, enraged with fury.

After Will is questioned about the flyers, he is brought down to the deans office in the hope to "get down to the bottom of things."

Will defends himself, stating that he "simply didn't know." How was he suppose to know that you needed an administrator's signature before being allowed to post any sort of flyer or poster on the walls of Antioch Community High School. Unfortunately, School Board policy doesn't allow Will to claim ignorance.

As in Will's scenario, many students don't understand the importance and need of a signature for those stack of flyers that someone may want to pass out. Before even being considered to get a signature, there are several forms to be completed by the student who wishes to distribute the material. Several important guidelines must be followed.

According to the Board of Education District 117 Policy, "students shall not distribute written material that: (A) causes substantial disruption to the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities; (B) violates the rights of others; including but not limited to material that is libelous, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright; (C) is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to the maturity level of students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or persuasively lewd and vulgar, or containing indecent and vulgar language; or

(D) is primarily intended as an immediate solicitation of funds.

However, even though these rules are established, we still see flyers and posters up all over the school without administrative signatures. Does this mean faculty isn't doing their job, or do they just not care?

"I think it has to be really hard for administrators to catch them (students). Plus, I guess the faculty needs to decide whether or not it's worth the time to even try to hunt them down," said Angela Balanag, ACHS English teacher. "I don't feel that students even realize what their putting up there for everyone to see."

Even though there is a policy, some students don't feel that their rights are being violated by the Board. Some feel as if they bring the students of ACHS protection, but at the same time don't feel that you should have to go through so much just to get a signature.

Nick Mastrodano, an ACHS junior, said, "We should be able to advertise our

own things and doings in school, unless they are improper to public showings. You shouldn't have to go through what you do in order to be able to post signs and such. I agree, in essence, that maybe the signs should be checked, but not signed."

Other students disagree with everything about the signatures and posting signs in general.

"I don't think we should have to get approval to put signs up. Teens aren't going to waste their time to put up something recreational," said Elayna Krause, ACHS junior.

Krause also feels that it's not necessary to go through all of the requirements.

"It's hard for local bands to advertise their concerts, especially because the school won't even consider that school related material."

So, although numerous students feel that their rights are in question, the Board of Education feels that they need to choose what they feel is right "to better the school community."

## Handout Guidelines

Handouts Must Not...

- Cause substantial disruption to the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities.
- Violate the rights of others; including but not limited to material that is libelous, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright.
- Be socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to the maturity level of students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or persuasively lewd and vulgar, or contain indecent and vulgar language.
- Be primarily intended as an immediate solicitation of funds



# STUDENT'S RIGHTS

## Defining the Limits

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