

STUDENT INTERVIEWS

The Merton Community School District recognizes that cooperation with law enforcement agencies is necessary for the education and protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the district schools and for safeguarding all school property. At the same time, the district recognizes its responsibility to protect the educational process and to provide for the concerns of parents/guardians regarding the welfare of their children.

Law enforcement officials will be called to the school when laws may have been violated and in situations which threaten the safety of students and/or employees. In these situations, students may be interviewed by law enforcement officials in accordance with Board policy and established procedures. Law enforcement-initiated student interviews that are not school related shall not be conducted on school premises, except in emergencies or as specifically required by law.

All student interviews with law enforcement officials conducted on school premises shall receive prior approval of the building principal or designee. If a request for a student interview is denied, the building principal or designee shall state the reason for such denial. Law enforcement officials may appeal decisions made by the building principal or designee to the District Administrator.

Consistent interview procedures shall be applied to all students.

General Requirements Regarding Student/Law Enforcement Interviews on School Premises

Except as otherwise specifically provided, all student interviews with law enforcement officers on school premises shall be governed by the following guidelines:

1. Law enforcement officers should make every reasonable attempt to interview students outside of the school setting except in cases where the school has requested law enforcement assistance, emergencies or as specifically required by law.
2. All student interviews with law enforcement officers on school premises shall be conducted in such a way as to minimize school disruptions.
 - Interviews should be coordinated with the student's schedule if at all possible.
 - Interviews should not be allowed during an exam, except in an emergency.

- The principal, or his/her designee, should summon the student from his/her class rather than the law enforcement officer, unless the police department and school administration feel the situation warrants personal contact by the officer.
 - Interviews should be conducted in a closed setting as to promote confidentiality.
3. **While there is no legal requirement that parents/guardians be notified prior to police contact with a student, for student victims, witnesses or suspect interviews, the following will apply:**
- A. School officials shall attempt to notify a student's parent/guardian prior to allowing a student suspect and/or student victim interview. If efforts to contact parent/guardian are unsuccessful, the law enforcement interview will proceed according to policy.**
 - B. Student witness interviews with law enforcement officials will be allowed without parent/guardian permission.**
 - C. Parents will be notified by the principal/designee whenever a law enforcement interview has occurred.**
 - D. This does not apply to investigations involving neglect or child abuse.**
4. If the student is asked to leave the building and accompany the officer to the police station, the police department is responsible for contacting the student's parent or guardian. If there are any complaints regarding the removal of a student from school, or notification, they should be directed to the district attorney or the appropriate police department.
5. A school official shall be present during any student interview with law enforcement officers on school premises.

The Merton Community School District shall not discriminate in standards and rules of behavior including student interviews, on the basis of sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability. Discrimination complaints shall be processed in accordance with established procedures (see policy 6010: A.B.C.).

Wis. Statutes: Sections 48.19, 48.981, 118.257

Adopted: March 16, 1998

