



# RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

660 West Daley Street

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Rule 447.1

## Procedure for Police Interview of Students

The following guidelines are to be used by administrators when law enforcement officials interview students in school during regular school hours. These guidelines do not apply to interviews conducted by District professional staff including the District's Police Liaison Officer.

1. All student interviews with law enforcement officials conducted on school premises shall receive prior approval of the building principal or designee. Approval of an interview request shall take into consideration such factors as the age of the student and cognitive ability, the purpose of the interview, the subject matter of the interview, whether the conduct occurred on school grounds, and the seriousness of the conduct at issue. If the subject matter of the interview pertains to non-school related issues, the law enforcement officials will conduct their interviews off school grounds and not during school time, unless one of the circumstances outlined in part 5 (below) apply.
2. For all student (under age 18) interviews, when practical, a reasonable effort will be made by the police officer to contact the student's parent/guardian prior to arrival at the school to conduct the interview. If prior contact has not been made, the building principal or designee will make a reasonable effort to contact the student's parent/guardian in advance of the interview, except in the case of child abuse/neglect referrals. Reasonable effort being defined as contact by phone at home or place of employment. The interview may proceed prior to notification of the parent or guardian if:
  - a. The situation is determined by law enforcement and administration to require prompt action.
  - b. The situation is determined to be of a serious nature.
  - c. The attempt to contact the student's parent/guardian has been unsuccessful.

NOTE: If the parent is not notified in advance, then a follow-up phone call will be made and/or a certified letter will be sent from the principal or designee to explain the proceedings.

3. Whenever practical, the time and place of interviews will be scheduled by the appropriate building administrator after prior notice from the law enforcement officer. Administrators, in consultation with the law enforcement officer, will consider the need for the student interview during regular school hours and work toward minimizing interviews that disrupt the instructional day.
4. Every effort should be made by the administrators and the law enforcement officers to minimize school disruption by:
  - a. Law enforcement officials attempting to contact the parent prior to arrival at the school to conduct the interview.
  - b. Conducting plain clothes interviews whenever possible.

- c. Interviewing in private, low student traffic areas.
  - d. Notifying students individually by school personnel when an interview is to be conducted.
  - e. Interviewing during non-instructional time (i.e. study hall, lunch) whenever possible.
  - f. Law enforcement officials will notify the building principal or designee when the interview is completed.
5. The law enforcement officials may conduct interviews in situations where:
- a) The parent or guardian is suspected of a crime and the student has information as a witness or a victim.
  - b) The student is a victim of a particularly sensitive crime such as sexual assault or child abuse and will include a school guidance counselor or social worker.
  - c) A delay may result in flight of the suspect.
  - d) A delay may result in the destruction of evidence.
  - e) A delay may result in the opportunity to cover up the crime.
  - f) A delay may result in an unnecessary threat to the community.
  - g) The student voluntarily approaches the law enforcement official
  - h) There is a non-investigatory discussion.
  - i) Under such circumstances as the law enforcement official, in the best exercise of his/her professional judgment, determines such an interview or interrogation is warranted.
6. A building administrator or designee will be present during the interview.

In all of these situations, every possible step should be taken to insure a minimum of embarrassment or loss of class time for the student.

The office of the District Administrator shall be notified immediately when any of the actions addressed in these guidelines has occurred.

Cross Reference:      Wisconsin Statutes Section 48.981

Approved:              January 13, 2000  
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