

Jefferson Township High School

Student Random Drug Testing: Questions and Answers

Q: Is there a drug problem in the schools?

A: Ongoing events within the community illustrate the opportunities for the misuse of illegal substances. The Board of Education believes that the abuse of illegal substances presents a continuing challenge to the schools within the District and a clear danger to the student population as a whole.

Q: How will drug testing solve the problem of illegal drug use?

A: It does not solve the problem. But it does help prevent problems. Drug testing is a deterrent. Kids know they have nothing to worry about if they don't use illegal drugs.

Q: Who will be eligible for testing?

A: Students in grades nine through twelve. This program is 100% voluntary. Both parents and students must consent for the student to be in the testing pool.

Q: Should all students be included?

A: It is believed that drug testing prevents drug abuse by giving students another reason to decline the offer of illegal substances. The law only permits testing of students who participate in co-curricular activities, including athletics and clubs, student who are given parking privileges, and those who volunteer. Jefferson's program is 100% voluntary.

Q: Who decides which students are tested and how? How do you protect the student from being singled out?

A: Students are tested at random. They are selected by their student I.D. number utilizing a computer and in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Board of Education. We intend to test at least 10% (2.5% minimum) of the students in the testing pool over the course of the school year using a urine-based screening test.

Q: How are students tested?

A: Students will report to a mobile laboratory or designated school facility, and provide a urine sample into a collection and testing device. These devices can test for five (5) or more drugs on-site at the school in as few as five (5) minutes. Students are given maximum privacy to produce the sample.

Q: Is the process fair?

A: The proposed policy provides checks and balances to ensure the integrity of the program and the dignity of the students. The tests are confirmed and then reviewed by a physician who consults with the family to insure that the test result is accurate and that there is no legitimate reason the student tested positive such as from a prescription drug. Remember that it is our hope that all test results are negative!

Q: How many students do you think the schools will catch with drug tests?

A: The goal is not to catch anyone. The implementation of this policy is designed to provide students with an accepted reason to say “No” when approached to participate in illegal drug use.

Q: Is urine drug testing an invasion of privacy?

A: No. This form of testing is a standard procedure that most people will experience at some point in their lives either at their doctor’s office or when applying for a job. This is 100% voluntary.

Q: Are there disciplinary penalties if a student tests positive on a drug test?

A: The intent of this program is not to punish students, but rather deter drug use, or if necessary, support rehabilitation. The District plans to use student testing as another tool to deter drug use and help students to get further drug education or counseling. The results are not turned over to law enforcement and are not part of the records sent to colleges. The results are confidential under Federal and/or State law.

Q: Does drug testing create an accusatory attitude that will breed distrust or further alienate students and adults?

A: It is not a trust issue, it is a safety issue. Our responsibility is to provide protection for our students. Schools that implement drug testing programs report that the school atmosphere becomes more positive. In addition, drug test results are counseling purposed and are not turned over to law enforcement.

Q: Will students who test positive have their future prospect in college and in the workplace compromised by the test results?

A: No. Drug tests are kept confidential and federal and/or state law prevents them from being released outside the school. The results do not follow the student once he/she leaves high school.

Q: What happens if a student sample is confirmed positive for illegal drugs?

A: Voluntary Random Drug Testing

If a student tests positive for a substance during a voluntary random screen:

- a) Require a Chemical Dependency Evaluation (CDE) (at parent expense), with the results submitted to the Student Assistance Counselor (SAC).
- b) Within five (5) school days, parent must provide SAC with confirmation of appointment for CDE.
- c) Require a signed release form from the parent in order for the school and evaluating agency to exchange information.
- d) Review the clinician's/agencies written report on findings and therapeutic recommendations.
- e) Payment of any expenses relating to, and including, treatment will be the obligation of the parent and not the school district.
- f) If treatment is recommended, student must begin treatment within 2 weeks of recommendation. Failure to comply with treatment recommendations will result in the student being ineligible to attend school.
- g) The educational program will continue if the student is enrolled in an in-patient facility for diagnosed chemical dependency.

- h) Schedule a re-entry meeting for the student to return to school after completion of any requirements and disciplinary consequences which may occur as per “Treatment” section of these regulations.

Q: Could students beat drug tests if they wanted to?

A: It is possible, but not likely. If testing is properly performed it is very hard to beat a drug test. Specimens are checked for adulteration and dilution and confirmed by a more sensitive technology.

Q: How do students enter/exit the testing pool?

A: All students participating in the program must submit a signed “Consent to Test” form to the Student Assistance Counselor in the High School Guidance Office prior to participating in the program. Participating students who wish to exit the program must submit the “Consent to Exit” form to the Student Assistance Counselor.

Q: How much does drug testing cost me?

A: The entire cost of this program is paid by the Board as part of a drug prevention program. There is no direct cost to you.