

Students, not suspects



Policing and surveillance are happening in schools everywhere, so it's important you know what rights you do have, and the difference between your rights in school vs outside.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO

1 Insist a parent, guardian, or lawyer to be present if police want to question you in school. And no matter where you are, you can always refuse to answer questions from police.

However, it is very important to say clearly that you want your parent, guardian or lawyer present, and that you will not speak to the police. Repeat if necessary, so that there is no confusion.

2 Refuse to answer any questions from police or school administrators about your immigration or citizenship status.

Public schools cannot require a Social Security number or US birth certificate from students.

3 Wear religious clothing, inform others about your religion, and be excused from school for religious holidays.

You should be sure to inform the school in advance that you will be absent.

4 Express political views and engage in political speech.

As long as it doesn't cause disruption, you should be able to exercise this right without experiencing backlash.

KEEP IN MIND

School Resource Officers (SROs) are police,

therefore search and seizure laws apply as they do for police encounters, although there may be local laws that make it easier for them to question you or search you or your locker. Students under 15 usually have a right to have a parent or guardian present.

* **HINT:** Don't keep anything in your locker that you don't want people to see.

In contrast, you must answer questions from school officials.

Surveillance camera footage in schools is used by school officials if they suspect you have done something wrong.

However, surveillance cameras are not allowed in bathrooms or locker rooms.

Your social media might be monitored

by SROs or other school staff. If they see what they consider concerning content, they may refer you to law enforcement for an "intervention."

* **HINT:** School computers may be monitored, so using your own devices and keeping your profile and posts private offers you more protection from this kind of surveillance.

* REMEMBER

Just because you have rights, doesn't mean that officers or administrators will respect them. If you feel your rights have been violated, reach out for support.

afsc.org/4StudentRights