

Parents Find School's Random Drug Testing Policy Too Strict **News**

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HOLDEN, MO (KCTV) - One man doesn't agree with his kids' school's policy of demanding random drug tests.



The policy in question that covers grades seven through twelve at Holden R-III's schools allows kids to opt out of the drug tests and still go to school. What they can't do though is participate in after-school activities and at least one parent says that's taking it too far.

If a student wants to play for the Eagles, they have to submit to random drug tests. The same goes for choir or any other extracurricular activities. Also included is parking on the school's campus.

That's something Jessica Talley can't do because her dad refused to have her drug tested.

"And she cannot be in choir if we don't sign the drug testing, the random drug testing," Bob Talley said.

To the Talley family, the school district's policy tells kids they are guilty until proven innocent.

"Until a kid is guilty, why do we want to drug test them? Why do we want to put them through the humiliation?" Bob Talley said.

"Why don't they drug test the children that have caused concern and not everyone?" Chris Talley said.

The school superintendent says one kid on drugs is a danger to every kid.

"It's a safety issue," said Superintendent Wade Schroeder.

He also points to an important distinction between what the policy restricts and the right to an education.

"We believe that extracurricular activities and parking in a parking lot: those things are privileges," Schroeder said.

He said the policy has been in place since 2006 and has the added benefit of giving kids an easy out in peer pressure situations.

The Talley family said participating in activities may not be a right by law, but they see it as a different kind of right, especially when your kids haven't done anything wrong.

"You should be able to go to band or choir, or football and play the activity without being suspect," Chris Talley said.

"Without the pressure of somebody looking over your shoulder watching your every move," Bob Talley said.

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<http://www.kttn.com/kgofm/modules/news/article.php?storyid=113322>

Because Jessica Talley loves choir, her parents have decided they will allow the testing if their daughter prefers that to the alternative, though they say they will be doing so under protest.

The superintendent said he thinks the policy is not unusual.

KCTV5 checked with several area districts. Pleasant Hill, Lee's Summit, and Kansas City, KS, got back to us and said they do not have any such policy.