EDD/723 - ETHICS AND VALUES IN LEARNING ORGANIZATION

**Agonizing Over Ecstasy at Cedar Hill School**

Miss Chelsea is vice-principal of Cedar Hill Christian Secondary School, a small independent schoolin a prosperous suburban neighborhood. In the last term of her fourth year at the school, MissChelsea was approached by several teachers about a grade 12 student, Amie. Amie’s erratic behaviorhad led them to suspect that she was under the influence of drugs while in their classes. All theteachers agreed that, since March, Amie seemed more uncoordinated, disoriented, and confusedthan she had been the previous term. Therefore, Miss Chelsea called Amie to her office and withoutrevealing her sources explained her concerns. Amie reassured Miss Chelsea that she was fineand explicitly denied taking any illegal drugs. Miss Chelsea later contacted the school counselorand asked him to monitor the situation.Later the same week, the coach for the school’s senior hockey team noticed that his goaltender,Alain, was unusually agitated in class and in practice. When queried, Alain replied that he was nervous about an upcoming game. He also denied any involvement with drugs whenasked. The coach informed Miss Chelsea about the matter, and she asked the coach to monitorAlain’s behavior.The next Monday, a father complained that two students, Sean and Brad, had taken his daughteroff campus to smoke marijuana during the lunch period. According to the father, his daughter,Phyllis, and the boys had joined two others to share a joint. Miss Chelsea spoke with each studentindividually. Each acknowledged the lunchtime trip but denied smoking marijuana.One week later, a mother turned in a daybook toMiss Chelsea that she had found under a benchat a bus stop a block from school grounds. The mother attached a note suggesting that the administration

look through it before returning it to the student.When Miss Chelsea opened the daybook

she discovered that it belonged to Amie. In the sleeve at the back she found a birthday card fromAmie’s boyfriend, Carl, promising her an ecstasy pill for her birthday party and mentioning thenames of two other students who would be joining them in their special “celebration.”Miss Chelsea immediately initiated an investigation involving Amie, Carl, and the other studentsnamed in the binder: Alain and Brad. All were grade 12 students who had only a few weeks of classes left to complete high school. All had been students of Cedar Hill for 3 years or more.Interviews were conducted individually with the four students. All admitted that they smokedmarijuanaregularly; Amie, Carl, and Alain also confessed to recent experimentation with ecstasy. Inaccordance with school regulations, Miss Chelsea suspended all four students until a review panelcomposed of school administrators could be convened to consider their cases. Each student wasreminded that, as stated in the “School Regulations” section of their *Student Handbook,* any staffmember or student found to be under the influence of illegal drugs while at school was subject todismissal or permanent expulsion.At Cedar Hill, review panels are called on to make recommendations to the School Executive Boardwhenever the possibility of permanent expulsion is involved. The Executive Board retains final authority.The student and his or her guardians are provided with a copy of the reviewpanel’s recommendations**Appendix A** Additional Case Studies in Educational Leadership **153**1 week before the Executive Board is convened. At themeeting, guardians are given an opportunity toaddress the recommendations of the review panel. The board meeting is attended by the local superintendentof independent schools, whose role is to ensure that all relevant information is considered anddue process observed. At the end of themeeting, the board goes into executive session andmakes a final

determination of consequences based on the recommendation of the reviewpanel, prior school and districtprecedent, and whatever additional evidence was presented at the meeting.The review panel recommended that because all four students admitted to being regularly underthe influence of marijuana during school hours, all four should be permanently expelled. Amie’smother argued that no consequences should be assigned because Miss Chelsea initiated her investigationonly after illegally examining her aughter’s daybook. The parents of the other studentsasked for leniency because expulsion would prevent the students from graduating that year, andthe students had been cooperative with the investigation. In Alain’s case, his father reminded theboard of its ruling in a previous case of illegal drug use, in which the captain of the hockey teamwas suspended for only 4 weeks, dropped fromthe team, and put on probation for the rest of year.The Executive Board suspended all four students from Cedar Hill for 5 weeks. This would allowthe students to graduate pending adequate grades on their final examinations and no further violations.Any support the students needed to prepare for their examinations would have to be providedby tutors hired at the parents’ expense.

1. Was Miss Chelsea justified, or even obligated, to examine the contents of Amie’s daybook?

(Relevant case law on this subject should be examined before rendering a decision.)

No more than 125 to 150 words. Relevant case law must be referenced to justify answer.

*Answer should be like this Example--According to Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007), the school has a right based on ?school speech? doctrine to act upon information that is referencing illegal drug use. The question of whether Miss Chelsea was justified can be supporte*

*this is someone answer. This is just an example of the formt*