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Students who score 'high' flunk test

Shorecrest High School uses alcohol-sniffing device

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All the studying in the world won't help Shorecrest High School students pass the school's toughest new test.

It's administered by a breath-alcohol analysis machine, and if you flunk it you're out.

Thirteen students have found out the hard way already this school year, receiving suspensions ranging from three days to a full semester for setting foot on school property after consuming alcohol.

In nearly every case, school officials used a new \$500 breath-analysis machine to obtain proof of drinking, said Robert Kogane, Shorecrest's vice principal.

The number of suspensions isn't unusually high,

said Principal Susan Derse. What is unusual is the use of the machine to prove a student has been drinking.

The state keeps no such statistics, but officials from Seattle schools and other surrounding school districts said they've never purchased a device that measures the alcohol content of one's blood — although many are considering it.

Another Shoreline-area high school, Shorewood, also owns a blood-alcohol testing machine, but school officials said it's rarely used.

The machines, similar to those used by police agencies, determine the blood-alcohol level of a person who breathes into it. For a driver to be cited for driving while intoxicated, the machine must register at least .10 percent alcohol in the bloodstream.

For a student, the amount is insignificant. Any

drinking before or during any school event is prohibited. "If it registers more than .01, that's enough for us," said Kogane, who has administered most of the blood-alcohol tests.

Once caught, a student has the option of accepting a semester-long suspension or a three-day suspension coupled with a substance-abuse assessment and treatment program. Second offenders are out for the semester, period.

No student ever has refused to take the test, Kogane said.

"If they did," he said, "my line would be, 'I can give you the test or the police can.'"

That threat alone makes use of the machine a repressive measure, said Michael Jones, a Lynnwood attorney who's won numerous court challenges to driving-while-intoxicated convictions based on blood-

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