



York Schools Secure Gun Storage Resolution

WHEREAS, Evidence strongly suggests that secure firearm storage is an essential component to any effective strategy to keep schools and students safe ¹;

WHEREAS, An estimated 4.6 million American children live in households with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm²;

WHEREAS, Every year, roughly 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else.³ That's roughly one unintentional shooting per day, and 70 percent of these incidents take place inside a home⁴;

WHEREAS, Another 1,200 children and teens die by gun suicide each year, most often using guns belonging to a family member;

WHEREAS, In incidents of gun violence on school grounds, 75 percent of active shooters are current students or recent graduates, and up to 80 percent of shooters under the age of 18 obtained their guns from their own home, a relative's home, or from friends⁶;

WHEREAS, Research shows that secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens⁷;

WHEREAS, The U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center recommends the importance of appropriate storage of weapons because many school attackers used firearms acquired from their homes⁸;

WHEREAS, Across the country, lawmakers, community members, and local leaders are working together to implement public awareness campaigns⁹, such as the Be SMART program, which is endorsed by the National PTA and which encourages secure gun storage practices and highlights the public safety risks of unsecured guns¹⁰;

WHEREAS, School districts across the country have begun to proactively send materials home to parents and guardians informing them of applicable firearm storage laws and firearm secure storage best practices ¹¹;

WHEREAS, Keeping students, teachers and staff safe from the threat of gun violence should be the responsibility of all adult stakeholders at each of our school sites;

WHEREAS, Maine State law imposes penalties on adults when a child gains unsupervised access to unsecurely stored firearms¹²;

WHEREAS, In order to continue with preventative measures to increase student and school safety we must act now; now therefore, be it:

RESOLVED, That the School Committee directs the Superintendent and staff to update the Student Handbook to include information about parents' and guardians' obligations regarding the secure storage of firearms;

RESOLVED further, That the School Committee directs the Superintendent to create an appropriate letter, in English and other languages, to parents and guardians that explains the importance of secure gun storage and the obligations to protect minors from accessing irresponsibly stored guns, to be included in annual registration materials at each school site, and, be it finally;

RESOLVED, That the School Committee and the Superintendent will continue to work with local law enforcement agencies, health agencies and non-profits to collaborate and increase efforts to inform District parents and guardians of their obligations regarding secure storage of firearms in their homes.

Signed and dated the seventh day of February 2024, on behalf of the York School Committee and the York Superintendent of Schools.

Tom Martine

Tom Martine
York School Committee Chair

Timothy L. Doak

Timothy L. Doak
York School Department, Superintendent of Schools

Resources

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