

## Arlington Public Schools Resolution: Secure Gun Storage

One of the Arlington Public Schools' highest priorities is school safety. While we focus on all areas of safety, this resolution has a particular focus on gun violence prevention through the leadership of the district, information sharing, empowerment, and education of our school community.

The Arlington Public Schools are aware that an estimated 4.6 million American children live in households with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm<sup>1</sup> and that each year nearly 350 children under that age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else<sup>2</sup>. That is roughly one unintentional shooting per day, and 77 percent of these incidents take place inside a home<sup>3</sup>. Another 700 children die by gun suicide each year<sup>4</sup>, most often using guns belonging to a family member<sup>5</sup>. Research shows that secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens<sup>6</sup>.

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 homes;

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, Across the country, lawmakers, community members, and local leaders are working together to implement public awareness campaigns, such as Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America's 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 guns;

Whereas, State law requires adults to securely store their firearms;

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<sup>1</sup> Azrael D, Cohen J, Salhi C, Miller M. Firearm storage in gun-owning households with children: results of a 2015 national survey. *Journal of Urban Health*. 2018; 95(3):295-304, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0261-7>. Study defined children as under the age of 18.

<sup>2</sup> Everytown for Gun Safety. #NotAnAccident Index. 2020. <https://everytownresearch.org/maps/notanaccident>. Analysis includes incidents that occurred between 2015 and 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Everytown for Gun Safety. #NotAnAccident Index. 2020. <https://everytownresearch.org/maps/notanaccident>. Analysis includes homes of the shooter, the victim, relatives' homes, friends' homes, and "other" homes.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death. A yearly average was developed using five years of most recent available data: 2015 to 2019. Children defined as aged 0 to 17.

<sup>5</sup> Johnson RM, Barber C, Azrael D, Clark DE, Hemenway D. Who are the owners of firearms used in adolescent suicides? *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*. 2010;40(6):609-611. Study defined children as under the age of 18. Over 80 percent of children who died by gun suicide used a gun belonging to a family member.

<sup>6</sup> Grossman DC, Mueller BA, Riedy C, et al. Gun storage practices and risk of youth suicide and unintentional injuries. *JAMA*. 2005; 293(6):707-714. Study found households that locked both firearms and ammunition had an 85 percent lower risk of unintentional firearm deaths than those that locked neither.

Whereas, In order to continue with preventive 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 inform parents and guardians of their legal obligations regarding the secure storage of firearms;

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

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Arlington School Committee