

Newburyport Public Schools
School Committee & Central Office Summer Workshop/Retreat

Wednesday, July 27, 2022

NHS Library

4:00 – 9:00PM

- 4:00 – 4:10 Welcome & Opening Comments (Mayor Sean Reardon & Sarah Hall)
- 4:10 – 5:30 Strategic Planning Phase II Presentation (Melanie Subin of Future Today Institute)
- 5:30 Dinner break
- 6:00 - 7:00 Open Meeting Law Presentation (Peter Sumners of Murphy, Lamere & Murphy)
- 7:00 – 7:30 Communications and new website (Lisa Furlong)
- 7:30 – 8:30 1. NPS Policy Handbook/MASC Policy Review Process (Sheila Spalding) (15 min)
 2. Student Representative involvement (15 min)
 3. Creating CISL Subcommittee (LisaMarie Ippolito) (15 min)
 4. School Safety (Sean Gallagher) (15 min)
 • Implement Gun Safety Resolution (i.e. gun storage) (see attached)
 • ALICE Training
 • Crisis Management booklet
- 8:30 EXECUTIVE SESSION - VOTE
*For the purpose of discussing contract negotiations, possible litigation and legal matters,
and not to reconvene in Open Session.*

Adjourn - 9:00PM

Dinner - from Giuseppe's Restaurant

Newburyport Public Schools

Secure Gun Storage Resolution

Newburyport Public School District is committed to empowering all students to become critical thinkers, problem solvers, creators and innovators who advocate for themselves, our community, our nation and our world. We value a safe, inclusive school climate where every student can be their best self. While we work 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 Newburyport Public School District is aware of the statistics surrounding gun violence in the US and the research that proves secure gun storage reduces firearm injuries among our youth.

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,

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

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

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Newburyport School Committee on this 21st day of March 2022.

Karina Moltz
15 Summit Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

June 27, 2022

Mr. Sean Gallagher
Superintendent of Schools
70 Low Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Re.: Newburyport School District Secure Gun Storage Resolution

Dear Superintendent Gallagher,

We applaud the Newburyport School Committee and Newburyport School District for passing the Newburyport Resolution about Secure Firearm Storage Notification in March 2022.

Parents, caregivers, and school communities are especially anxious now about school children's safety, and we must recognize that even Massachusetts is not immune to gun violence. A recently issued CDC report indicates that gun violence is now the leading cause of death of all children and teens in America. We must do everything we can to ensure school safety and the safety of our children, youth, and families.

The Newburyport School Committee resolved:

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

We are writing to emphasize the reasons for this Resolution.

The nation's two largest Teachers' Unions (NEA, AFT) and the nation's largest gun violence prevention organization, Everytown for Gun Safety, issued a report "Keeping Schools Safe Report – A Plan for Preventing Mass Shootings and Ending All Gun Violence in American Schools,"^{1,2} which describes proactive measures to keep schools safe. These measures are based on facts about gun violence in schools and include preventing it from occurring in the first place.

MA has strict safe storage and child access prevention laws. However, one of the measures highlighted in this report is an often overlooked need to raise awareness in the school community about the *critical, life-saving need for secure firearm storage in homes and vehicles*. The goal is to prevent school shootings, youth suicides, and unintentional shootings by unsupervised, unauthorized children and teens gaining access to unsecured loaded firearms.

Schools care about all aspects of child safety, and we applaud Newburyport's Schools commitment and service to the school community, to raise awareness by including secure firearm storage in the School District's safety messaging, along with other messaging on safety issues such as substance abuse, internet safety, fire safety, and more.

The Secure Storage Notification Resolution provides a framework for implementing various actions, is proactive, evidence-based, entails no cost, promotes a simple but wide-reaching message, empowers the public, and does not create any extra work for teachers!

A Dec. 2021 press release by Everytown for Gun Safety indicated that 2 million children now attend K-12 schools with secure firearm storage notification policies in place.³ Schools across the country, including in CA, OR, AZ, CO, VT, IL, TX, NV, FL, MI, MA, GA, SC, VA, have implemented resolutions and/or partnered with the Be SMART program in a variety of ways, at their discretion. We urge you to consider various ways of moving forward. Every day that goes by

before awareness is raised widely and on a regular basis (*e.g.* as each school year begins) with all District parents and caregivers, presents a risk of tragedy. Please consider these ideas:

- Notifying the school community – about the life-saving effects of secure firearm storage (some facts given on page 4) and their legal responsibility to follow current MA safe storage and child access prevention law. Notification could take place by one or more of the following methods, with the primary goal of maximizing outreach to parents and caregivers.
 - Parent Notification Letter or Email
 - Superintendent’s Newsletter
 - Updating Student Handbook
 - School website and social media
 - Press release

- Broader educational outreach (over time):
 - Educational presentations for parents and staff
 - National PTA-endorsed Be SMART program (*e.g.* by Everytown for Gun Safety volunteers)
 - Education on suicide prevention (*e.g.* by Suicide Prevention organizations)
 - Review of MA safe storage laws (*e.g.* by Law Enforcement)
 - Educational School Safety initiatives, *e.g.* school safety fair, symposium, newsletter, etc.
 - Publicizing Be SMART on the school website – besmartforkids.org
 - School health forms – “If you have firearms in your home, how are they stored?”
 - Educational programming for students: Consider implementing the Sandy Hook Promise ‘Know the Signs’ program (there is a cost)

A recent example from Plymouth School District of notifying their school community to raise awareness is included here. Perhaps it may be helpful: parents’ email (<https://www.smore.com/wxtun>) and School District’s website: (<https://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/Page/4318>).

We are happy to offer further examples and resources for any initiatives you may wish to consider. We are volunteers with Everytown for Gun Safety/MA Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. Be SMART for Kids (besmartforkids.org) is part of our public education campaign to raise awareness of measures that can help reduce gun violence. Also signing on to our letter in support of implementation of the Secure Storage Notification Resolution are other members of the Newburyport community, listed below.

Sincerely,

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¹ <https://everytownresearch.org/report/preventing-gun-violence-in-american-schools/>

² There is also a shorter version of this report, “How Can We Prevent Gun Violence at American Schools?” at <https://everytownresearch.org/report/how-can-we-prevent-gun-violence-in-schools/>.

³ <https://bit.ly/3yErqBG>

Additional signatures from Newburyport community members:

Mason Mitchell-Daniels
28 Strong Street

Jane Niebling
45 Temple Street

Sarah Barrett
13 Essex Street

Elizabeth Rankin and Aaron Flanagan
16 Columbus Ave

Tasha Cough and Scott Yewell
8 Fair Street

Kristine Botto
32 Storeybrooke Drive

Lee Bryars
35 Middle Street

Kara and Braden Larmon
57 Milk Street

Vanessa and Mike Ferreira
24 Moulton Street

Elizabeth Luekens
3 Fruit Street

Kelly Dziepak
201 High Street

Paula Estey
3 Pine Street

Eliza Bobek and Daniel Ramirez
92 Prospect Street

Pam Marese
3 Goldsmith Drive

Melissa Bouse
6 Iona Ave

Prince and Trish Boateng
18 Merrill Street

Lisa Matas Navarro
13 Washington Street

Robyn Kichen
17 Washington Street

Tammy Newman
50 Temple Street

Pete Robbins
15 Summit Place

FACTS ABOUT GUN VIOLENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

Gun violence is now the leading cause of death for all children and teens.

The suicide rate among young people has increased exponentially since 2007, and it is at an all-time high.

Every year, nearly 700 children 17 and under, die by suicide with a gun.

Over 80% of minors who die by firearm suicide accessed the gun from their own home or that of family members.

Every year, nearly 350 children under the age of 18 gain access to a firearm and unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else.

In the past year, 42% of LGBTQ+ youth in the US contemplated suicide.

78% of minors under age 18 who commit gun violence on school grounds access the gun from their own home or the homes of family members and friends.

4.6 million children live in homes in the US where there is at least one loaded, unsecured firearm.

Every year, 3 million children witness gun violence. We know that children exposed to violence, crime, and abuse are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, suffer from depression, anxiety, and PTSD, fail or have difficulties in school, and engage in criminal activity.

41% of adolescents in gun-owning households report having “easy access” to the guns in their homes.

It is estimated that 54% of gun-owning households do not lock all their firearms securely.

Households that lock both firearms and ammunition have a 78% lower risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries among children and teens and an 85% lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries.