

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ASDR 2022-2023-01

**A RESOLUTION BY THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD TO REQUIRE EDUCATION
ON THE SAFE AND SECURE STORAGE OF FIREARMS**

Whereas, firearms are the leading cause of death among children and teens in the United States; and

Whereas, an estimated 4.6 million American children live in households with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm; and

Whereas, in nationwide incidents of gun violence on school grounds, 75 percent of active shooters are current students or recent graduates; and

Whereas, firearms are the #1 cause of death for children and teens (ages 0-19) in Alaska; and

Whereas, an average of 20 Alaskan children and teens (ages 0-19) die by guns every year; and

Whereas, 1 in 10 Alaska adults live in a home with an unlocked and loaded firearm; and

Whereas, nearly half (48.9%) of Alaska high school students and 40.6% of high school students in the Anchorage School District report that they “could get and be ready to fire a loaded gun;” and

Whereas, 25.3% of Alaska high school students and 26% of Anchorage students said they had seriously considered suicide in the last 12 months; and

Whereas, 8.5% of Alaska students and 6.6% of Anchorage students reported having carried a weapon to school on at least one day in the 30 previous days; and

Whereas, the percentages of Anchorage School District elementary and secondary students who reported feeling safe at school substantially decreased between 2021 and 2022; and

Whereas, 8% of Anchorage School District students agreed or strongly agreed in 2022 that their school is badly affected by crime and violence in the community; and

Whereas, education on secure firearm storage is an essential component to any effective strategy to keep schools, students, and communities safe; and

Whereas, secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens; and

Whereas, the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center recommends the importance of appropriate storage of weapons because 76 percent of school shooters used firearms acquired from the homes of parents or close relatives; and

Whereas, lawmakers, community members, and local leaders are working together across the country to implement public awareness campaigns, such as the National PTA-endorsed Be SMART program, which encourages secure gun storage practices and highlights the public safety risks of unsecured guns; and

Whereas, SMART stands for:

- Secure all guns in your home and vehicles;
- Model responsible behavior around guns;
- Ask about the presence of unsecured guns in other homes;
- Recognize the role of guns in suicide; and
- Tell your peers to be SMART; and

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; and

Whereas, keeping students, teachers and staff safe from the threat of gun violence should be the responsibility of all adult stakeholders, including and especially School Board members; and

Whereas, School Board leadership must continually work to increase student and school safety;

Now therefore, be it resolved, that the Anchorage School Board directs the Superintendent to distribute the “Be Smart Alaska” safe and secure firearm storage information to all stakeholders and update Student Handbooks to include this information; and

Resolved further, that the Anchorage School Board directs the Superintendent to create an appropriate letter, in English and in the top five languages spoken in ASD, to parents and guardians that explains the importance of secure gun storage to protect minors from accessing unsecured guns, to be included in annual registration materials at each school site; and

Resolved further that the Anchorage School Board and the Superintendent will continue to work with local authorities, partners, healthcare-providers, and non-profits to collaborate and increase efforts to inform all District stakeholders, including parents, students, and the community of our collective obligations to securely store firearms.

This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon approval by the School Board.

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD

Margo Bellamy, School Board President

Dave Donley
Pat Higgins
Kelly Lessens

Andy Holleman
Carl Jacobs
Dora Wilson