

## **Policy 5131.7: Weapons And Dangerous Instruments**

**Status:** ADOPTED

**Original Adopted Date:** 03/01/2008 | **Last Revised Date:** 12/01/2022 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 12/01/2022

The Governing Board recognizes that students and staff have the right to a safe and secure campus free from physical and psychological harm and desires to protect them from the dangers presented by firearms and other weapons.

### **Possession of Weapons**

The Board prohibits any student from possessing weapons, imitation firearms, or other dangerous instruments, as defined in law and administrative regulation, in school buildings, on school grounds, when using district provided transportation, at school-related or school-sponsored activities away from school, or while going to or coming from school.

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 49390 and 49393, as added by SB 906 (Ch. 144, Statutes of 2022), require certificated and classified employees of the district, or other school officials such as Governing Board members, whose duties bring the employee or other school official in contact on a regular basis with students in any of grades 6-12, as part of a middle school or high school, who are alerted to or observe any threat or perceived threat of a homicidal act, as defined, to immediately report the threat or perceived threat to law enforcement in accordance with Education Code 49393. "Threat or perceived threat" means any writing or action of a student that creates a reasonable suspicion that the student is preparing to commit a homicidal act related to school or a school activity. This may include possession, use, or depictions of firearms, ammunition, shootings, or targets in association with infliction of physical harm, destruction, or death in a social media post, journal, class note, or other media associated with the student. It may also include a warning by a parent, student, or other individual. While the law is specific to district staff, the concept also applies to students and anyone else in the school community.

Districts are encouraged to consult with the California Office of Emergency Services (OES) and utilize resources such as the State Threat Assessment System and Regional Fusion Centers to help assess potential threats. For more information see OES' web site.

If a student is in possession of a prohibited weapon, imitation firearm, or dangerous instrument which creates a threat or perceived threat of a homicidal act, any employee or other school official who is alerted to or observes such threat shall immediately report the threat to law enforcement.

Under the power granted to the Board to protect the safety of students, staff, and others on district property and to maintain order and discipline in the schools, any school employee is authorized to confiscate any prohibited weapon, imitation firearm, or dangerous instrument from any student on school grounds.

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to 20 USC 7961, any district receiving federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is mandated to have a policy requiring that any student who brings a firearm to school be referred to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system. This mandate reinforces Education Code 48902, which requires the principal or designee to notify law enforcement authorities of violations of Education Code 48900(c) and (d) and Penal Code 245, 626.9, and 626.10. In addition, Education Code 48902 requires the principal or designee to notify law enforcement authorities when a student possesses a firearm or explosive or sells or furnishes a firearm at school. For more information see AR 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process.

The principal or designee shall notify law enforcement authorities when any student possesses a firearm, explosive, or other prohibited weapon or dangerous instrument without permission, sells or furnishes a firearm, or commits any act of assault with a firearm or other weapon. (Education Code 48902; Penal Code 245, 626.9, 626.10; 20 USC 7961)

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 48915 and 20 USC 7961 require the mandatory expulsion of a student who has possessed a firearm, brandished a knife, or committed any other acts listed in Education Code 48915(c). See AR 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process for grounds for suspension and expulsion and expulsion procedures.

Unless a student has obtained prior written permission as specified below, a student possessing or threatening others with any weapon, dangerous instrument, or imitation firearm shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion in accordance with law, Board policy, and administrative regulations.

All staff shall be made aware of their responsibilities regarding the reporting of potential homicidal acts to law enforcement, and receive training in the assessment and reporting of such threats.

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**Original Adopted Date:** 04/12/2017 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 04/12/2017

The Board of Education recognizes that students and staff have the right to a safe and secure campus free from physical and psychological harm and desires to protect them from the dangers presented by firearms and other weapons.

**Possession of Weapons**

The Board prohibits any student from possessing weapons, imitation firearms, or other dangerous instruments, as defined in law and administrative regulation, in school buildings, on school grounds or buses, at school-related or school-sponsored activities away from school, or while going to or coming from school.

Under the power granted to the Board to protect the safety of students, staff, and others on district property and to maintain order and discipline in the schools, any school employee is authorized to confiscate any prohibited weapon, imitation firearm, or dangerous instrument from any student on school grounds.

Unless he/she has obtained prior written permission as specified below, a student possessing or threatening others with any weapon, dangerous instrument, or imitation firearm shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion in accordance with law, Board policy, and administrative regulations.

The principal or designee shall notify law enforcement authorities when any student possesses a firearm, explosive, or other prohibited weapon or dangerous instrument without permission, sells or furnishes a firearm, or commits any act of assault with a firearm or other weapon. (Education Code 48902; Penal Code 245, 626.9, 626.10; 20 USC 7151)

**Possession of Pepper Spray**

To prevent potential misuse that may harm students or staff, students are prohibited from carrying tear gas or tear gas weapons such as pepper spray on campus or at school activities.

**Reporting of Dangerous Objects**

The Board encourages students to promptly report the presence of weapons, injurious objects, or other suspicious activity to school authorities. The identity of a student who reports such activity shall remain confidential to the extent permitted by law.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies designed to facilitate student reporting of the presence of injurious objects on school grounds, such as tip hotlines, electronic transmissions, or other methods that preserve the student's anonymity. Incident reports and records shall not identify the student who reported the possession. The Superintendent or designee also shall inform staff, students, and parents/guardians that students who report the presence of injurious objects on school campuses are to be protected and their identity shielded.

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## Advance Permission for Possession of a Weapon for Educational Purposes

CSBA NOTE: 20 USC 7961 allows possession of a firearm on school grounds for educational purposes when (1) the firearm is lawfully stored in a locked vehicle or (2) the principal authorizes possession for approved activities and the district has adopted appropriate safeguards to ensure student safety. Penal Code 626.10, consistent with 20 USC 7961, authorizes students to possess certain weapons with written permission of certificated or classified staff when necessary for a school-sponsored activity or class.

The following optional section is for use by districts that wish to allow such possession of firearms and other weapons and should be modified to reflect specific safeguards and timelines adopted by the district.

The parent/guardian of a student who desires to possess a firearm, imitation firearm, or other prohibited weapon on school grounds for an educational purpose shall submit a written request to the principal, at least five school days in advance of the planned possession which explains the planned use of the weapon and the duration, together with a written explanation from the staff person responsible for the school-sponsored activity or class.

The principal may grant permission for such possession when it is determined that possession of a firearm, imitation firearm, or other prohibited weapon on school grounds is necessary for a school-sponsored activity or class or as part of the educational program. Factors that shall be considered include, but are not limited to, the planned use of the weapon, the duration and location of the planned use, whether an audience is expected, and any perceived adverse effects to the safety and well-being of students or staff. If the principal grants such permission, the student and staff person shall be provided with a written explanation regarding any limitations and the permissible duration of the student's possession.

When the principal or designee grants permission, all necessary precautions shall be taken to ensure the safety of all persons on school grounds and the safe keeping of the weapon, including, but not limited to, inspecting a firearm to verify that no live ammunition is present. Any permitted weapon shall be stored in a locked vehicle or in an appropriate, locked container before and after its authorized use.

Any student granted permission to possess a weapon may be suspended and/or expelled if the weapon is possessed or used inappropriately.

### Possession of Pepper Spray

CSBA NOTE: Penal Code 22815 allows minors age 16 or older to purchase and possess tear gas or tear gas weapons for purposes of self-defense if they are accompanied by a parent/guardian or have the written consent of a parent/guardian. Option 1 below is for use by districts that allow students to bring such defensive items to school and reflects that a student can be disciplined under Education Code 48900 or 48915 if such an item is used for a purpose other than self-defense. Option 2 is for use by districts that prohibit students from bringing such items to school.

#### OPTION 1: (Districts that allow students to bring tear gas or tear gas weapons)

When accompanied by a parent/guardian or with the written consent of a parent/guardian, students age 16 or older may legally possess tear gas or tear gas weapons such as pepper spray for the purpose of self-defense. However, such students shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion if such items are used inappropriately or for any purpose other than self-defense.

#### OPTION 2: (Districts that prohibit students from bringing tear gas or tear gas weapons)

To prevent potential misuse that may harm students or staff, students are prohibited from carrying tear gas or tear gas weapons such as pepper spray on campus or at school activities.

### Reporting of Dangerous Objects

CSBA NOTE: The following section should be modified to reflect district practice. Pursuant to Education Code 49330, an "injurious object" is an object capable of inflicting substantial bodily damage not necessary for the academic purpose of the student and those objects listed in specified sections of the Penal Code; see the accompanying administrative regulation. These weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, knives, metal knuckles, and explosives.

The Board encourages students to promptly report the presence of weapons, injurious objects, or other suspicious



activity to school authorities. The identity of a student who reports such activity shall remain confidential to the extent permitted by law.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies designed to facilitate student reporting of the presence of injurious objects on school grounds, such as tip hotlines, electronic transmissions, or other methods that preserve the student's anonymity. Incident reports and records shall not identify the student who reported the possession. The Superintendent or designee shall also inform staff, students, and parents/guardians that students who report the presence of injurious objects on school campuses are to be protected and their identity shielded.

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