

**RESOLUTION OF THE
WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
IN SUPPORT OF SECURE FIREARM STORAGE**

WHEREAS, the issue and apparent escalation of incidents involving firearms in the United States and in our communities is of great concern to the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education;

WHEREAS, the Board agrees with evidence that strongly suggests that secure firearm storage is an essential component to any effective strategy to keep our communities, our schools, and our students safe;

WHEREAS, an estimated 4.6 million American children live in households with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm¹;

WHEREAS, every year, roughly 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else, which is roughly one unintentional shooting per day, and 70 percent of these incidents take place inside a home²;

WHEREAS, another 700 children and teens die by gun suicide each year, most often using guns belonging to a family member³;

WHEREAS, in incidents of gun violence on school grounds, 75 percent of active shooters are current students or recent graduates⁴, 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 friends⁵;

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 teens⁶;

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

WHEREAS, across the country, lawmakers, community members, law enforcement agencies, and local leaders have worked together to implement public awareness campaigns, such as the Be SMART program, which is endorsed by the National Parent Teacher Association and which encourages secure gun storage practices and highlights the public safety risks of unsecured guns⁷;

WHEREAS, school districts across the country have joined the efforts of lawmakers, community members, and leaders to help inform the community about the dangers of improper firearm storage⁸;

WHEREAS, keeping students, teachers and school staff safe from the threat of gun violence should be the responsibility of all adult stakeholders; and;

WHEREAS, State law imposes criminal penalties on adults who fail to properly secure a firearm, allowing a minor access to that unsecured firearm;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education does hereby join the efforts of other school districts and community partners across the country in support of promoting safe firearm storage;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education will support the Superintendent and staff in updating the district website to include information explaining the importance and logistics of properly storing firearms;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education will support the Superintendent to create an appropriate communication to be published biannually to families of WS/FCS students that explains the importance of secure firearm storage as a strategy to help protect its students from accessing irresponsibly stored guns; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education and the Superintendent is committed to working with local law enforcement agencies, health agencies and other non-profits to collaborate and increase efforts to inform parents of the risks associated with improper storage of firearms.

Adopted by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education this the ____ day of _____ in the year 2023.

By: _____
Deanna Kaplan, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Tricia McManus, Superintendent

¹Matthew Miller and Deborah Azrael, “Firearm Storage in US Households with Children: Findings from the 2021 National Firearm Survey,” JAMA Network Open 5, no. 2 (2022): e2148823, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.48823>

²Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, “#NotAnAccident Index,” <https://everytownresearch.org/maps/notanaccident/>

³Centers 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: 2016 to 2020. Children defined as aged 0 to 17.

⁴New York City Police Department, “Active Shooter: Recommendations and Analysis for Risk Mitigation,” 2016, <https://on.nyc.gov/2nWHM4O>

⁵National Threat Assessment Center et al., “Protecting America’s Schools: A US Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence” (US Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security, 2019), <https://bit.ly/2U7vnwa>

⁶David C. Grossman et al., “Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries,” JAMA 293, no. 6 (2005): 707–14, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.293.6.707>

⁷<https://besmartforkids.org/>

⁸Some of the larger school districts that have passed secure storage notification resolutions include the Los Angeles Unified School District, San Diego Unified School District, Clark County School District, Phoenix Union High School District, Tucson Unified School District, and Denver Public Schools and County School District.