

CHAIR
MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI

VICE CHAIR
RACHEL B. WEINSTEIN


SCHOOL COMMITTEE
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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
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MEMBERS
ALFRED B. FANTINI
CAROLINE HUNTER
JOSÉ LUIS ROJAS
DAVID J. WEINSTEIN
AYESHA M. WILSON

March 21, 2023

ORDERED:

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools prioritizes the safety of our students, staff, and everyone in our school communities; and

WHEREAS: Keeping our schools safe from gun violence is a responsibility of all adult stakeholders in each of our school communities; and

WHEREAS: In the United States, gun violence is the leading cause of death in children and teens.¹ An estimated 4.6 million American children live in households with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm² and every year, roughly 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else;³ and

WHEREAS: 1200 children and teens die by gun suicide each year,⁵ and over 80 percent of children under age 18 who died by firearm suicide used a gun belonging to a family member;⁶ and

WHEREAS: Research shows that secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to a 78 percent reduction in the risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries and up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens;⁷ and

WHEREAS: In incidents of gun violence on school grounds, the US Secret Service found that 76 percent of shooters under age 18 acquired their firearm from the home of a caregiver, or that of relatives or friends;⁸ and

WHEREAS: Evidence strongly suggests that secure firearm storage is an essential component of any effective strategy to keep schools and students safe; and

WHEREAS: The US Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center recommends the importance of appropriate storage of weapons because many school attackers used firearms acquired from their homes; and

WHEREAS: Across the country, lawmakers, community members, and local leaders are working together to implement public awareness campaigns, such as the Be SMART Program, which is endorsed by the National PTA and encourages secure gun storage practices and highlights the public safety risks of unsecured guns; and


WHEREAS: Secure storage of firearms is a legal requirement in Massachusetts pursuant to G.L. Chapter 140, sections 131L and 131C, and failure to comply with secure storage laws can lead to criminal prosecution, jail time, fines, and/or revocation of FID card or license, depending on the offense; and

WHEREAS: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends storing firearms unloaded and locked, with ammunition locked separately to reduce risks of injury to children; ⁹ and

WHEREAS: The epidemic of school shootings and mass shootings requires more preventative measures in order to increase student and school safety; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED: That the Cambridge Public Schools will update the Student Handbook for SY24-25 and all following years to include information about caregivers' legal obligations regarding the secure storage of firearms; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent will send an appropriate communication to caregivers that explains the importance of secure firearm storage to protect children and teens from unauthorized access to unsecured firearms, and their legal obligations consistent with Massachusetts safe storage law. Notification will be included on the district website and in annual registration materials at each school site.

A true copy:

Ariel B. Kennebrew
Attest:
Ariel B. Kennebrew
Executive Secretary to the Cambridge School Committee

Motion #23-058

cc:
Vice Chair Rachel
Mayor Siddiqui
Member Wilson
Superintendent