

Urge Your School Board to Keep Schools Safe

Evidence strongly suggests that secure firearm storage is an essential component to any effective strategy to keep schools, students and communities safe. Parents, students, school faculty and gun safety advocates can contribute to school safety in their district or individual school by following these steps to demand their school board passes a secure storage resolution and sends letters about secure storage home to parents. Read more about how to keep schools safe in Everytown's School Safety [Fact Sheet](#) and [Report](#).

Steps to Pass a Resolution

Learn your school or district's process. Every school and school district has a different system for enacting resolutions. Teachers and administrators should be knowledgeable about your specific school's processes for enacting change. Some schools follow a two meeting process, where advocates will present at one meeting and the board will vote on the next, while others may hear arguments and vote on the same day. Make sure you understand the process of passing resolutions and the structure of the meetings in advance of your turn to advocate for change.

Get on the agenda. Once you understand the processes for making change, contact the necessary parties to secure a spot on the upcoming agenda. Check the school district's website or contact administrators at the school to identify contact information for your school's committee that votes on resolutions or the district school board.

Know the facts. In the time leading up to the school board meeting, educate yourself and any supporters about the impact and importance of secure firearm storage as it relates to school safety, firearm suicide, and unintentional shootings. If you have contacts on the school board (or contacts that do), reach out to them to get a feel for their position on the issue or to see if they can share other helpful context.

Everytown For Gun Safety's Be SMART campaign raises awareness that responsible gun storage can save children's lives. The five steps of the program are:

- 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
- Tell** your peers to be SMART

Use the [School Safety and Secure Firearm Storage Fact Sheet](#) to support your claim that secure storage reduces the risk of gun violence in schools and increases safety at home for children. Provide the [Be SMART flier about secure storage practices](#) to show just how simple potentially life-saving measures can be. As of December 2021, [more than two million students nationwide attend schools with firearm storage awareness policies](#).

Do the research and present the correct resolution. This toolkit contains two resolutions, one for [states without pre-existing secure storage laws](#) and one (which has three versions) [for states with differing degrees of secure storage laws](#). Both resolutions list the states for which they are applicable at the top. Make sure you present the correct resolution for your state in your meeting and contact your Organizing Manager if you have any questions about which resolution to use.

Identify Stakeholders. As advocates and members of your community, you are key stakeholders in the fight to pass secure storage resolutions. It may be helpful to identify additional credible messengers who are able to speak at the school board meeting to support your point of view. Some examples of key stakeholders may be survivors of gun violence, school faculty, child psychologists, and pediatricians who share information about secure storage with their patients.

Make your case. There are different ways to present your case to the school or district's governing body, including individual verbal testimonies, group testimony, distributing fact sheets to the board, or a group presentation with a slide deck of the facts and your argument. In advance of the meeting, your group should be well prepared and anyone presenting should know their role.

If the resolution passes: Great job! You will have played a huge part in keeping students, your community, and your school safe! Next Steps:

Provide your school or the governing body that passed the resolution with the model [Secure Storage Notification Acknowledgement Letter](#) to distribute to each household. You can edit this letter to make it more relevant to your state or community using resources such as [EveryStat](#), the [#NotAnAccident Index](#) and EveryStat's [Firearm Suicide Congressional District Index](#). When modifying the letter, you can also include relevant information about the time of year the letter is being sent home.

Offer to help distribute the final letters. Your role in distribution can range from stuffing envelopes to passing the correct number of letters to each classroom. This can be a time-consuming job, especially at a big school, and they should appreciate any help you can offer!

If the resolution doesn't pass: KEEP GOING! Maybe there's a different governing body you can influence. If you didn't succeed at the district level, try your individual school or vice versa. Sometimes, school boards will be open to sending a letter home one time, without passing the resolution, and you can try to pass the resolution again the next semester.

If your school is interested in secure storage but not ready for a resolution or presentation, they can stay informed about Be SMART by signing up here: <https://besmartforkids.org/join/>.

Share your progress. Share your hard work by posting updates and images on social media, tagging [@momsdemand](#) or [@studentsdemand](#) and using the hashtag [#SecureStorageSavesLives](#).

Resources

[School Safety and Secure Firearm Storage Fact Sheet](#)

[Be SMART Flier \(English\)](#)

[Be SMART Flier \(Spanish\)](#)

[Secure Storage Resolution for States with Safe Storage or Child Access Prevention Laws](#)

[Secure Storage Resolution for States without Secure Storage or Child Access Prevention](#)

[Laws Sample Secure Storage Notification Acknowledgement Letter](#)