

September 2, 2022

NKC Schools Staff & Families:

As we begin an exciting school year, it is important that we take a moment to share critical safety information with you. The safety, security and well-being of our more than 21,500 students is our top priority. Earlier this spring, the North Kansas City Schools Board of Education passed a resolution affirming a commitment to communication regarding secure firearm storage. In that commitment, we are sharing this important information with all families during this back-to-school period.

School safety is the responsibility of everyone. At home, we urge you to take simple, key steps to protect our community.

We are all aware of incidents of gun violence in our region and across the nation. Studies of all types of school-based gun violence across decades all point to the same significant point of intervention – **addressing students' unauthorized access to guns in the home**. A Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center study of targeted school violence incidents from 2008 to 2017 found that 76 percent of the firearms were obtained from the home of a parent or close relative.

Unsecured guns in the home pose a risk to students beyond gun violence in schools. Every year, nearly 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else. That's roughly one unintentional shooting per day. Almost 1,200 children die by gun suicide each year. In the overwhelming majority of these incidents, the gun used was one that belonged to someone in their home.

We strongly encourage you to help protect our community by ensuring any firearms in your home are stored safely. One study found that 87 percent of kids know where their parents' guns are kept, and 60 percent have handled them. Research shows that secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens. **Storing firearms securely by locking both weapons and ammunition in separate locations, protects children at home and throughout our community.**

At our schools, a comprehensive system of layered security measures is in place across each building, including but not limited to:

- All school buildings and sites have secure entrances with controlled access. Visitors are required to identify themselves and provide a photo ID that is scanned and checked against law enforcement databases.
- All high schools have command centers with monitored cameras covering all schools within the high school's feeder pattern.

- North Kansas City Schools employs 19 experienced school resource deputies who serve across all of our schools. At the secondary level, 15 campus supervisors patrol halls on a continual basis. We appreciate their diligence in building relationships with students while providing for their safety.
- Lockdown procedures are practiced multiple times each year by staff and students. All employees receive training annually.
- We continually monitor social media in partnership with law enforcement agencies to assess potential concerns.
- A [confidential tip line](#), along with other reporting options, is available for all schools.

The safety of our students is our top priority, but your partnership is essential. Thank you for your support in maintaining safe school environments for all of the students we serve.

If you have questions, you can [visit our website here](#) to learn more. We appreciate your support as we begin the school year together.

North Kansas City Schools