

Procedure - Firearms

Purpose of These Procedures and General Principles

These procedures have been established by the Superintendent and published pursuant to Board Policy 6515 to explain the process for all identified security personnel for the carrying of firearms and use of force.

Definitions

NECESSARY: Means that no reasonably effective alternative to the use of force appeared to exist and that the amount of force used was reasonable to affect the lawful purpose intended.

DEADLY FORCE: Means the intentional application of force through the use of firearms or any other means reasonably likely to cause death or serious physical injury.

SCHOOL PROPERTY: All property owned and operated by the District may also include, by definition, school activities sponsored by the District and held off campus in a neutral location. Any school activities not on actual District-owned property does not legally cover armed employees. Any armed security activity would need a reciprocity agreement from the Superintendent of the District that employee member would be visiting.

PHYSICAL FORCE: Intentional application of force through the use of physical contact. This includes counter joints, hitting, kicking, and the use of pepper spray/oleoresin capsicum (OC), or any other use of force that results in injury or complaint of injury. This does not include routine handcuffing and escort techniques, not amounting to the conditions above.

BODILY/PHYSICAL INJURY/HARM: Physical pain or injury or an impairment of physical condition.

SUBSTANTIAL BODILY HARM: Bodily injury which involves a temporary but substantial disfigurement, or which causes a temporary but substantial loss, impairment of the function of any bodily part or organ, or causes a fracture of any bodily part.

GREAT BODILY HARM: Bodily injury, which creates the probability of death or causes significant permanent disfiguration, loss, or impairment of any part of an organ.

DEADLY WEAPON: Any explosive, firearm (loaded or unloaded), any other instrument, device, article, or substance, including vehicles, which under its use, is readily capable of causing death or substantial bodily harm.

Persons and Qualifications

All employees authorized by the Superintendent or designee to engage in school security activities that carry firearms, and other lethal or less-than-lethal weapons, shall undergo an extensive background check, including fingerprinting.

Retired or former law enforcement personnel who have been hired by the District, as part of their job function, will be carrying a firearm, shall be in possession of a Retired Commission Card issued by the State of Washington certified municipal law enforcement agency, sheriff's office or the state patrol. In lieu of a Retired Commission Card, a former or retired law enforcement officer must possess a valid and current Concealed Pistol License issued by a municipal police department or sheriff's office in the State of Washington or be eligible to obtain a license. A letter of agreement from the retired law enforcement officer's former agency police chief or sheriff may be required.

Employees who have been hired by the District, as part of their job function, will be carrying a firearm, who are not retired or former law enforcement shall have in his/her possession at the time of carrying a firearm on school property a valid Washington State Concealed Pistol License issued in the name of the person carrying the firearm.

The District will not be responsible for the cost of the Concealed Pistol License, any Retired Commission Card fee, or the renewal of either.

Reserve law enforcement officers or deputies with a Limited Commission Card and in good standing with their law enforcement agency may be employed by or used to provide security services in the District. This service shall require a letter of agreement or memorandum of understanding from their respective agency.

Use of Force

The District recognizes that employees, especially those engaged in school security activities, may be required to exercise control to restrain persons who pose harm to themselves or others, to quell disturbances, or for protective custody detainment. In most circumstances, the decision to use physical force to gain compliance will follow verbal persuasion, advisement, or warning.

This procedure is intended to guide employees who are approved to carry a firearm, or other authorized employees performing school security activities, in their decision to use reasonable force and consider alternative methods in the application of the force. The reasonableness of the force applied shall be evaluated against the facts and collective knowledge available to the employee at the time force is used.

When Force May Be Used

All District employees, administration, and/or volunteers, subject to the District's current policies, may use reasonable physical force when necessary to defend against an attack, restrain, remove, or disarm persons who present a threat of harm to themselves or others, property damage or theft, or who disrupt school activities.

Physical force may be necessary only after attempting other means of defense, restraint, removal, or disarmament that were ineffective or would likely be ineffective against the facts and collective knowledge available to the employee at the time force is used.

In determining whether the use of physical force is reasonable and necessary, circumstances should be considered, including without limitation: the person's age, physical size and strength, sex, maturity, previous history, the seriousness of the problem, the threat posed by the person, and the availability and use of other means of defense, restraint, removal, or disarmament not involving the use of physical force.

Examples of force that could be reasonable and necessary include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Using reasonable and necessary force to quell a disturbance or prevent an act that threatens physical injury to any person;
- Using reasonable and necessary force to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object within a person's control;
- Using reasonable and necessary force for self-defense or the defense of others;
- Using reasonable and necessary force for the protection of property;
- Using reasonable and necessary force to remove a disruptive student from a classroom or school premises, motor vehicle or school bus, or from school-sponsored activities;

- Using reasonable and necessary force to prevent a person from inflicting harm on himself or herself;
- Using reasonable and necessary force to protect the safety of others;
- Using incidental, minor or reasonable physical contact designed to maintain order and control, protect or defend; or
- Using reasonable force in physical activities associated with athletics.

When, in the judgement of the employee, physical force is no longer necessary, it shall be discontinued as soon as reasonably safe to do so.

Any use of force against students must comply with District policies and procedures, including but not limited to Policy 3241—Student Discipline, and Policy 3246—Restraint, Isolation and Other Uses of Reasonable Force, and with applicable federal and/or state law.

Student Discipline

The primary responsibility for maintaining proper order and conduct in the schools resides with school principals and/or their designee, with the support of other school employees. Principals and/or their designee maintain order and handle all student discipline matters consistent with Policy 3241 – Student Discipline and Policy 3246 – Restraint, Isolation and Other Uses of Reasonable Force.

School Security Officers may investigate situations related to school safety and security, but are prohibited from administering formal school discipline.

Request for Intervention (Students)

District administrators may require a School Security Officer or other authorized personnel to intervene if a student's presence poses an immediate and continuing danger to others or an immediate and continuing threat of material and substantial disruption of the educational process or in other emergency circumstances consistent with Policy 3432 –Emergencies. A School Security Officer or other authorized personnel do not need to be asked before intervening in emergencies.

Use of Deadly Force

1. All District employees, administration, and/or volunteers, subject to the District's current policies, may use any force necessary to stop a potentially deadly threat or great personal injury to any persons on school property, based on training, so long as the District employees, administration, and/or volunteers comply with current Washington State Laws regarding the use of deadly force.
2. All District employees, administration, and/or volunteers, upon the arrival of Law Enforcement, shall follow the instruction of Law Enforcement while at the scene, including stopping with the current security functions, assisting the officer(s) at the scene, or any other reasonable request issued by an officer(s).

Use of Force Continuum

1. **Passive Aggression** - A person refuses to leave when told to but is not physically or verbally aggressive. The person is non-compliant and refusing the direction of the District School Security Officer or other designated employee. The School Security Officer or other designated employee shall exhaust all means to diffuse the situation verbally and at the lowest level of force possible. If refusal continues, Law Enforcement may be called.

2. **Active Aggression** – A person is not hurting anyone, but the risk of potential harm has increased due to throwing objects or making direct verbal threats. After all reasonable verbal de-escalation attempts have been exhausted, the School Security Officer or other designated employee may use simple, non-lethal control techniques to avoid potential injuries to students, employees, or any others in the vicinity. Law Enforcement may be called.
3. **Physical** - A person has now initiated behavior that immediately threatens the safety of students, employees, or other persons in the vicinity. Examples include, but are not limited to, punching, kicking, pushing, spitting, pulling hair, throwing objects directly at a person, and other methods of physical harm to another person. A School Security Officer or other designated employee may use restraint techniques and reasonable force necessary, but not limited to strikes or kicks, to protect them-self or anyone in their vicinity from injury. Law Enforcement may be called.
4. **Life Threatening** - A person who is in the act of causing life-threatening injuries, produces serious bodily injury, or in the acts and/or verbal articulation of such acts to a person or a group of persons and has the means and ability to carry out this threat. A School Security Officer or other designated employee may use any force necessary to protect the lives of students, employees, or others in their presence. Law Enforcement shall be called.

Caring for Injured Due to Use of Force

Should an employee use force where injury results, said employee will call for appropriate medical aid when reasonably safe to do so. Law enforcement may be called for investigation depending upon the severity of the injury.

Notifying Law Enforcement

Law enforcement may be notified in situations where the use of force results in bodily injury. Law enforcement shall be notified immediately in situations where the use of force results in substantial or great bodily harm and/or death.

Use of Force Requires a Report

A written report shall be made to the District Superintendent and/or designee within five (5) school days of any use of force.

Any use of force against a student shall require the filing of an Incident Report under Procedure 3246— Restraint, Isolation and Other Uses of Reasonable Force.

Use of Force Training

Any person employed by the District who are approved to carry firearms, or other employees that will be engaged in security activities or where there is a reasonable expectation that use of force will be a part of their job function, shall receive training regarding use of reasonable and necessary force.

Equipment

Equipment used for school safety and security and carried by the School Security Officer or other personnel engaged in school security activities may be supplied by the District. If the individual chooses to supply their own equipment, the cost of such equipment will be borne by the individual. Regardless of who provides the equipment, including firearms, all equipment must be approved by the District. All security employees carrying firearms and other equipment will be trained to properly use such equipment.

Carrying Equipment

The decision to carry and use equipment will be made by the District. The equipment listed below are options for the District to consider and authorize. All equipment that is used will be approved by Superintendent or designee and meet law enforcement standards.

- District handheld radio
- Ballistic vest
- Handcuffs
- Other equipment as needed

Authorized Firearms

1. The authorized firearm for authorized personnel will be a 9mm pistol. No shotguns or long gun type firearm will be authorized for carry.
2. No. 1911 style or "single action only" firearm will be authorized without special authorization by the Superintendent or designee. All firearms shall be double action striker-fired configuration only or hammerless revolvers, and only centerfire cartridges will be allowed.
3. All firearms must have a minimum 5-round capacity, whether cylinder or magazine. There is no limit to the capacity of the cylinder or magazine so long as the carrier of the firearm is in compliance with current Washington State Law regarding magazine capacity.
4. All pistols shall be a minimum 3" barrel length and no longer than a 6" barrel length. All firearm barrels shall have modern rifling inside the barrel to ensure bullet stability, accuracy, and muzzle velocity when fired.
5. All employees selected to carry a firearm on the District property shall pass a firearms training course at least one time each year.
6. If an employee is under disciplinary investigation or action by the District, the employee shall immediately cease to carry a firearm on school property until further written notice by the Superintendent or designee. Employees shall be subject to current Washington State laws regarding the carrying of firearms on school property. Employees may be subject to District disciplinary actions and or charged with a crime if he/she carries a firearm on District property without the expressed permission of the Superintendent or designee.

Storage and/or Transportation of Firearms

Employees engaged in school security activities approved to carry firearms shall store firearms at home and transport their weapons to and from home and school. Transportation and carrying of firearms will be done in a manner, which is safe, and in accordance with District policy and state law.

Care and Maintenance of Firearms

All employees engaged in school security activities approved to carry firearms will be responsible for maintaining their firearm's working integrity. Any firearm malfunction shall be reported to the Superintendent or designee. The firearm may be removed from service depending on the severity of the malfunction until appropriate repairs can be made by a licensed and certified gunsmith or the manufacturer.

Modifications to Firearms

No modifications from factory settings shall be made to any firearms carried by employees engaged in school security activities without the prior permission of the Superintendent or designee.

Identification

If an employee is ever required to draw a firearm to confront an active shooter in the school, it will be important for them to be easily identified when law enforcement arrives on campus to avoid a “friendly fire” situation. Therefore, the District will work with local law enforcement personnel to determine procedures for easy identification.

Firearms Training

All firearms training for employees who are approved to carry firearms will meet Grant Country Sheriff’s Office firearms standards.

To every extent possible, the District will have the Grant Country Sheriff’s Office provide a certified instructor to train such employees. The Firearms Instructor shall be either current Law Enforcement Firearms instructor and/or someone credentialed to do so.

Firearms qualification training records for such employees will be kept on file by the District and with the Grant Country Sheriff’s Office.

Employees engaged in school security activities who are approved to carry firearms will not be allowed to carry a firearm if they are not actively qualified to do so.