

Betsy H. Kaplan, Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT TO INCLUDE MANDATORY CHILD SAFETY LOCKS ON GUNS IN THE 2001 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS.

Every day, firearms claim the lives of too many children. Every two hours a child is killed by a gun. Firearms cause 12 percent of fatalities among American children and teens, and one of every four deaths of teenagers ages 15 to 19. These numbers represent not only violent crimes, but also tragic gun accidents. Today, firearms are the fourth leading cause of accidental deaths among children ages 5 to 14. Moreover, firearms have become the primary method by which young people commit suicide. According to the New England Journal of Medicine, the presence of a gun in the home increases the likelihood of a homicide by almost threefold and suicide fivefold.

Gun violence is deadly, costly and preventable. Simple, preventable measures, such as requiring child-proof safety locks, would reduce the risk of death or injury to our children. Safety lock devices will help to reduce the unauthorized use of handguns by a child at play or a teen who wants to commit a crime. Just as important, safety lock devices can also help deter gun theft.

The School Board has an interest and a responsibility to ensure that guns do not fall into the hands of our children. Therefore, it is recommended that the School Board direct the Superintendent to include mandatory child-proof safety locks on all guns in our 2001 State and Federal Legislative Programs.

ACTION PROPOSED

BY BETSY H. KAPLAN: That the Superintendent of Schools include in the Board's 2001 State and Federal Legislative Programs mandatory child-proof safety locks on all guns.

BHK:mm

REPLACEMENT
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