



Public Comment <publiccomment@pps.net>

Testimony in support of prohibiting guns on school property

1 message

Ivy Major-McDowall <ivy@ourchildrenoregon.org>
To: schoolboard@pps.net, publiccomment@pps.net
Cc: Jenifer Wagley <jenifer@ourchildrenoregon.org>

Tue, Jun 14, 2022 at 1:50 PM

Dear Board Chair Michelle DePass, Members of the Board, and Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero,

Attached below is [Our Children Oregon's](#) letter of support to prohibit guns on school property.

In solidarity with our partners Moms Demand Action and Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, **we urge the Portland School Board to enact Senate Bill 554 prohibiting guns on school property.** We also ask the district to notify parents of the new policy and include information about the importance of secure gun storage and the requirements of Oregon’s new secure storage law.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Ivy Major-McDowall

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Ivy Major-McDowall
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OCO Letter of Support, Prohibiting Guns on School Property.pdf
152K



VOICES UNITED.
OPPORTUNITY REIMAGINED.

June 14, 2022

Portland School Board of Education
501 N. Dixon St
Portland, OR 97227

Dear Board Chair Michelle DePass, Members of the Board, and Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero,

Our Children Oregon (OCO) is advancing equitable policymaking and whole-child advocacy statewide to ensure our children and youth have what they need, regardless of their race, their ability, or where they live, to thrive by activating meaningful change for children and families. We write in solidarity with our partners, Moms Demand Action and Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, to ask you to use your power under Oregon's new gun safety law to keep the school community safer from gun violence.

We ask the Portland School Board to enact Senate Bill 554 prohibiting guns on school property. SB 554, which went into effect in September 2021, allows universities and K-12 schools to prohibit firearms on school property, regardless of whether someone has a concealed handgun license (CHL). Current law already prohibits firearms on school property, but there is an exception for individuals with CHLs. Now that SB 554 is in effect, districts can choose to adopt a new policy prohibiting all firearms on school property — regardless of who carries them.

Studies have shown that the presence of guns in schools does not make anyone safer; on the contrary, it puts teachers, students, and staff at greater risk. In 2018, according to the Associated Press, more than 30 publicly reported mishaps were reported involving firearms brought onto school grounds. Guns went off by mistake; were fired by “curious or unruly students,”; or were left unattended in bathroom stalls, locker rooms, and elsewhere on school grounds.¹ The new law also requires gun owners to store their firearms securely while not under their control.

We urge the Portland School Board to use their ability under the new law to enact a policy prohibiting guns on school property. We also ask the district to notify parents of the new policy and include information about the importance of secure gun storage and the requirements of Oregon's new secure storage law.

Now is the time for the district to use all available tools at their disposal to

¹ [OregonLive.com](https://www.oregonlive.com), May 5, 2018: “Adults misplaced, mistakenly fired guns taken to school, AP finds”

**Our
Children
Oregon**

*activates
meaningful
change statewide
to ensure
children
statewide have
what they need to
thrive, regardless
of their race, their
ability, or where
they live. We do
this through
policy, advocacy,
research, and
engagement
activities.*



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keep the school community safer as we return to full-time in-person instruction. Our schools should be safe spaces for our children to learn, build relationships, and grow towards a thriving future. We ask that you pass effective legislation to reduce and eradicate gun violence. Our educators deserve better. Our communities deserve better. Our children deserve better.

We want to thank you for your past efforts and your present consideration.

From the Our Children Oregon Team,

Jenifer Wagley, Executive Director
Ivy Major-McDowall, Policy and Advocacy Manager