



WEAPONS AND VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

This notice is to be included, annually, in all FALL building newsletters.

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

Safety and security remain a high priority for Farmington Public Schools. We maintain strong and collaborative relationships among our schools, our local law enforcement agencies and our emergency responders. Weapons and violence in schools is a topic that has increasingly concerned parents/guardians, students and educators. Thus, as reminders to our students, we ask that you review this letter, age-appropriately, as a family.

As a District, we place a high priority on maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment. Please impress upon your students the importance of responsible and respectful behavior as well as positive decision-making. Remind your students that we will not tolerate verbal or written, inappropriate or threatening, statements of violence, even jokingly, that may frighten or disturb others. These kinds of statements also burden a tremendous number of resources, within law enforcement, as well as within the schools and our community.

Additionally, since our Electronic Communication Devices Policy was revised, now allowing students to bring cell phones and other technological devices to school, larcenies in school buildings have increased. Many of these larcenies are "crimes of opportunity" as students are NOT responsibly caring for valuable possessions. Thus, please discuss the importance of securing valuable personal items or keeping them at home.

Weapons, to include any dangerous instruments, are never permitted to be at school, at any school-related activity, or on school grounds or school transportation vehicles. Penalties for this may include permanent expulsion from school. In addition, our Student Code of Conduct permits expulsions for other misbehaviors.

"Weapons" include but are not limited to, firearms, starter guns, BB guns and pellet guns, paintball guns, air soft guns, any instrument propelling a dangerous projectile by spring, gas or air, knives or pocket knives. "Dangerous instruments" are defined as any device intended to cause injury or bodily harm, or used in a threatening manner to cause bodily harm, or that are primarily used for self-protection.

Thus, please remind your students of the importance of not bringing ANY item to school which may risk the safety and welfare of others to include "dangerous instruments/weapons." We want our schools to be safe places with an environment that is conducive to learning. Weapons and violence have no place within Farmington Public Schools.

Additionally, the Michigan Legislature (MCL 380.1311 and 1313) has also mandated expulsions for the following offenses. Schools have no discretion for the following offenses meeting the expulsion standard, as defined by state law.

1. Dangerous weapons, defined by Michigan law as a knife with a blade measuring over 3 inches in length, firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, pocketknife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar or brass knuckles.
2. Intentionally committing arson within a school building.
3. Criminal Sexual Conduct, which includes any touching of another's private areas (defined as Sexual Assault within our Student Code of Conduct).
4. Physically Assaulting an Employee.

In closing, I wish to commend, you, as parents/guardians and our school community for diligence and commitment to safety and security within our schools. Please know that if there is even a shred of safety/threat to our school building, or within our community, immediate action will be taken and safety and security protocols are always followed. **Your children are of paramount priority and nothing will ever jeopardize that.**

Lastly, we commend Farmington's Department of Public Safety and the Farmington Hills Police and Fire Departments for their exemplary response and support to maintain safety and security within Farmington Public Schools.