Guns on Campus?
Managing Staff and Student Safety

NMSBA 2018 Annual Convention – December 8, 2018
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Overview

• Are Schools Considering allowing guns on Campus?
• What laws apply?
• Best practices and practical considerations
• What we’ve learned in 2018
• Discussion/Questions
An armed security guard isn't in the school budget, so all teachers will have to take turns.
Are NM Schools Considering Guns on Campus?

- Modern active shooter protocols
- Urban and rural district/school differences
  - Access to law enforcement services
- Who carries the gun and how?
  - Administrators?
  - Teachers?
  - Security personnel?
  - Volunteers?
  - Students?
  - Parents?
• Overall Concern: Training and personal demeanor?
  • Administrator: What are primary roles in a crisis?
  • Teacher: What happens to the teacher’s class in a crisis?
  • Other staff or volunteer: Attendance, background?
• How is firearm carried and stored?
• How does law enforcement know who is carrying?
Teacher Duties
Federal Gun Free Zones Act (GFSZA)

18 USC § 922(q)(2)

- Unlawful to knowingly possess a firearm in a school zone. §922(q)(2)(A)
- Exceptions:
  - If licensed to carry a firearm on school premises
  - Unloaded and locked in a container or rack in a vehicle
  - Approved by the school for use in a program (i.e. ROTC)
  - Use pursuant to a contract with the school (individual or contractor)
  - Law enforcement acting in official capacity
  - Unloaded while crossing premises for accessing public/private hunting grounds (only with school permission)
Unlawful Carrying of a Deadly Weapon on School Premises

NMSA § 30-7-21

- Unlawful to carry a deadly weapon on school premises
- Premises includes buildings, grounds, fields, parking lots, school busses and non-school property where school-sanctioned activities are taking place
- Exceptions:
  - Peace officer
  - School security personnel
  - ROTC programs or state-authorized hunter safety training
  - School-approved program, class or other activity involving a deadly weapon
  - If older than 19, a weapon in a private vehicle, for lawful protection of property
- 4th degree felony
• **Staff Conduct**: Shall not bring firearms onto or possess on school property, **“except with proper authorization”**.

• **Volunteers**: no firearms or weapons on school property, **“except with proper authorization”**.

• **Employees**: No employee, other than one who has obtained **authorization from the appropriate school administrator**, shall carry a weapon on school grounds.

• **Questions for District Determination**:  
  • What is proper authorization?  
  • Who is the appropriate school administrator?
NMPSIA Mandatory Standards for School Security Personnel – Adopted March 8, 2018

- NMPSIA/POMS are neither promoting nor discouraging the arming of School Security Personnel

- Mandatory Standards establish a solid process with minimal liability exposure for the districts and their employees

- Failure to follow NMPSIA Mandatory Standards could lead to denial of coverage
NMPSIA Mandatory Standards for School Security Personnel

• Only 3 options for Districts and Charters “to be followed and implemented” in the following order:
  • **Option 1**: School Resource Officer (SRO)
    • Employed by a local law enforcement agency
  • **Option 2**: Licensed Private Security Guard
    • Contracted Security - Licensed through RLD, trained for students and campus setting
  • **Option 3**: School Security Personnel (SSP)
    • Employed by District, or appointed volunteer
    • If armed, Level 3 Security Guard License
    • Armed only if Options 1 & 2 impossible
    • No armed SSP until complete NMPSIA licensing, training and contracting requirements
    • SSP includes School District law enforcement/police department commissioned by local law enforcement
NMPSIA Mandatory Standards

- Level 3 Security License:
  - Criminal background check
  - Specific training curriculum
  - Must pass the exam
  - Firearm certification, endorsements, and other weapon training
  - Completion of a psychological evaluation for suitability to carry firearms

- School Site Specific Training – Working among middle schoolers, teenagers, small children, etc.

- Additional On-Going Training:
  - Firearm safety, operational tactics, legal responsibilities and duties
  - Crisis intervention training and certification
  - Non-violent crisis intervention certification
  - Continuing education training hours for license renewal

- Retired Law Enforcement Officer with up-to-date certification and training meeting NMPSIA standards
NMPSIA Mandatory Standards

- Board MUST adopt a policy reflecting NMPSIA requirements
- MOU with all applicable law enforcement agencies, approving:
  - presence of an armed employee on campus
  - standard operating procedures
- Provide all applicable law enforcement agencies with identification and pictures of persons on school grounds with firearms
- Follow standards for carrying and storing firearms on campus
What We’ve Learned in 2018

- How do you document consideration of options 1, 2, and 3?
- What’s wrong with a volunteer parent group that wants to be an armed security presence on my campus?
- Is a retired police officer a good candidate to be employed as my school’s armed security staff?
  - What about pre-employment background check, mental health exam, and updated training (including firearms training)?
- What about employing a retired military member?
- What should be included in your Board policies for school personnel?
  - Job requirements, training, screening, storage, specs for firearms and carrying?
  - Use of deadly force on a student?
- What should be the effect on insurance premiums for districts with armed security staff vs. no armed security staff?
Discussion and Questions

• Are we considering guns on campus?
• What laws, regulations, policies and insurance mandates apply?
• How do we implement NMPSIA mandatory standards?

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