

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 1943 (Gipson)
As Amended March 23, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop a Secure Firearm Storage Notification that contains specified information. Requires the CDE and encourages local educational agencies (LEAs) to distribute the notification through specified means.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires the CDE to develop model language for a Secure Firearm Storage Notification by July 1, 2027, including formatting options for websites and social media. Requires the CDE to post the model language on its website and share annually with LEAs. Requires the Notification to include:
 - a) A description of the risks of children accessing unsecured firearms at home;
 - b) Information and resources regarding the importance of secure firearm storage for preventing youth from bringing firearms to school, as well as preventing youth suicide;
 - c) A plain-language summary of California's child access prevention laws, beginning with the preventative requirement in Penal Code (PC) 25145; and
 - d) The website address of the California Department of Justice's (DOJ) Roster of Firearm Safety Devices Certified for Sale.
- 2) Requires LEAs to distribute the Secure Firearm Storage Notification to parents or guardians of enrolled pupils in writing at the beginning of each school year, alongside the existing required firearm safety information, commencing with the 2027-2028 school year.
- 3) Encourages LEAs to share the Secure Firearm Storage Notification through their local websites, social media accounts, and other digital and nondigital communications.
- 4) Requires the CDE to encourage LEAs to distribute the Secure Firearm Storage Notification under additional conditions:
 - a) When providing advance notice of armed assailant drills to parents and guardians of enrolled pupils;
 - b) When providing notice to parents or guardians of disciplinary action or support that has been given to a pupil following threats against other pupils or threats of self-harm;
 - c) When school counselors distribute information about reducing access to lethal means to a pupil's family in the context of suicide prevention or reporting requirements related to pupil safety.
- 5) Repeals existing law made redundant by this bill, which instructs the CDE and LEAs on how to inform parents and guardians of firearm safety laws.

COMMENTS

Firearms are a significant threat to the safety of California youth. According to the Centers for Disease Control, firearms are the 3rd leading cause of death for Californians under 18. Each year, an average of 264 children and teenagers die by guns in California (EveryTown, 2026). The majority (75%) of these deaths are homicides, followed by suicides (21%). Californian youth who had access to firearms were twice as likely to attempt suicide in 2022, and suicide attempts by firearms are highly fatal (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2024). In incidents of school violence, national data from the Department of Homeland Security suggests that the majority of attackers acquire a firearm from the home of a parent or relative, nearly half of which are not securely stored (U.S. Secret Service, 2019). Multiple studies have shown that improper gun storage in a home significantly increases a child's risk of homicide, suicide, and accidental death (Grossman et. al. 2005, Monuteaux et. al. 2019, Cannon et al 2023).

Gun ownership rates vary across the state, but a 2021 report by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research found that 5.2 million Californian adults kept a gun in their home (Banawa & Tan, 2022). Of these, 8% were stored loaded and unlocked.

Secure gun laws in California. Currently, all firearms in California must be secured by a safety device or gun safe that has been approved by the state DOJ when not actively controlled by the legally authorized user.

The California Attorney General maintains a website with a list of approved gun safety devices and gun storage safes that meet DOJ safety requirements. The site is easy to navigate and regularly updated; safety devices can be searched for by name or by compatibility with various firearms. Providing a link to this website in the Secure Firearm Notification, as recommended by this bill, may help parents and guardians access secure firearm storage devices.

Schools' current role in promoting secure gun storage. Currently, schools must notify parents at the beginning of each school year of the current laws regarding safe gun storage and child access prevention. This notification is often included in the annual parent notification that is electronically distributed at the beginning of the year. This bill proposes adding additional information and plain-language summaries to the existing notification.

In 2025, the Superintendent of Public Instruction released a *Safe Storage of Firearms, School Safety and Security* letter urging school administrators to inform their communities about state laws regarding safe gun storage. The letter was accompanied by template notifications, in English and Spanish, for schools to adapt and distribute as they see fit. This template meets many but not all requirements for the Secure Firearm Notification created by this bill.

How schools notify parents of information. Federal and state laws require schools to annually notify parents or guardians of over 50 distinct items. These notifications include information on anti-discrimination laws, sun protection, school pesticide use, student laser pointers, and many other items. Although each cause is important, their cumulative effect may cause parents to skim information rather than digest it carefully. Future legislation may wish to consider the utility of these lengthy annual notifications, whether parents and guardians are able to absorb all the information they contain, and which topics are truly the school's responsibility to communicate.

This bill would also recommend schools distribute the Secure Firearm Notification when parents are informed of other relevant school activities. These include planned school shooter drills;

disciplinary actions following threats against other pupils; or support actions following threats of self-harm. Additionally, this bill recommends that school counselors receive the notification as an example of information that can be distributed to parents during consultations regarding suicide prevention or threats against other students. To the extent that school notifications are likely more impactful when delivered in relevant context, these recommendations may help ensure that the notification is regarded seriously when received by parents.

According to the Author

"AB 1943 strengthens and modernizes California's school-based secure firearm storage notifications, so they reflect our updated legal standards and focus on the very real risks of unsecured firearms. Too often, tragedies involving children—whether school shootings, unintentional shootings, or youth suicide—are preventable. Research shows that simply locking and securing firearms can significantly reduce these devastating outcomes. AB 1943 ensures that information provided through our schools is not only updated, but more visible and actionable for parents and caregivers. By expanding how schools share secure storage information, including posting it on district websites and digital platforms, we increase the likelihood that families will see and engage with these critical safety messages. Secure firearm storage is one of the most effective steps we can take to protect children and prevent avoidable tragedies. I introduced AB1943 because we know that secure firearm storage saves lives—and we must do more to ensure families have clear, accessible, and timely information about their responsibilities under the law."

Arguments in Support

Everytown for Gun Safety writes, "Ultimately, the goal of secure firearm storage notifications is not mere compliance with a statutory requirement to describe secure storage laws. Rather, the goal is that parents and caregivers review the information, think about whether there are unsecured guns in their home, and, where appropriate, become motivated and empowered to take action to reduce risk by properly securing gun(s). Notification content should be prepared with attention to that underlying goal."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, "Minor and absorbable costs to the CDE and the DOJ."

VOTES

ASM EDUCATION: 8-0-0

YES: Patel, Hoover, Alvarez, Bonta, Castillo, Garcia, Lowenthal, Zbur

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula

UPDATED

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