

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1943
Author: Gipson (D), et al.
Amended: 8/20/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/3/26

AYES: Pérez, Ochoa Bogh, Cabaldon, Choi, Cortese, Gonzalez, Reyes

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 71-0, 5/11/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Pupil safety: notifications: firearms

SOURCE: Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund

DIGEST: This bill recasts, updates, and expands existing annual notice requirements related to safe firearms storage by requiring the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop and post model language for a Secure Firearm Storage Notification to be issued annually by local educational agencies (LEAs) to the parents and guardians of enrolled pupils.

Senate floor amendments of 8/20/26 address chaptering out issues with an overlapping section of SB 685 (Cortese of 2026) and rename the Secure Firearm Storage Notice to instead be the Safe Firearm Storage Notification.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Provides that a person is guilty of criminal storage of a firearm if the person keeps a loaded firearm within any premises with knowledge that a child is likely to gain access to the firearm. (Penal Code (PC) § 25100)

- 2) Makes it a crime to keep a firearm within any premises with knowledge that a child is likely to gain access, if the child obtains access to the handgun and carries it off the premises. (PC § 25200)
- 3) Requires a person to ensure that any firearm the person possesses in a residence is securely stored, as specified, whenever the firearm is not being carried or readily controlled by the person or another lawful authorized user. (PC § 25145)
- 4) Requires LEAs, at the beginning of the first semester or quarter of the regular school term, to send several specified notifications to parents or guardians. (Education Code (EC) § 48980)
- 5) Requires LEAs to annually provide parents or guardians of enrolled pupils with information related to state laws on firearm storage and child access prevention, as developed by the CDE. Additionally, establishes immunity from civil liability for LEAs, private schools, and the CDE for any damages arising out of these notifications. (EC § 48986)
- 6) Requires the CDE to develop and maintain several resources on their public-facing website, including best practices pertaining to school shooter or other armed assailant drills. (EC § 32298.6)
- 7) Requires each school district or county office of education to be responsible for the overall development of all comprehensive school safety plans (CSSP) for its schools operating kindergarten or any of grades 1 through 12. Requires that the CSSP include, among other things, strategies, policies, and procedures to prevent and respond to potential incidents involving emergencies, natural and other disasters, hate crimes, violence, active assailants/intruders, bullying and cyberbullying, discrimination and harassment, child abuse and neglect, discipline, suspension and expulsion, and other safety aspects. (EC § 32281 and 32282)

This bill:

- 1) Requires the CDE, in consultation with the Department of Justice (DOJ), on or before July 1, 2027, to develop and post on its internet website, model language for a Secure Firearm Storage Notification. Requires that the notice contain the following information:
 - a) A description of the risks of children accessing unsecured firearms in the home.

- b) Information and resources about the importance of secure firearm storage for preventing youth firearm suicide and preventing children and teens from accessing guns and bringing them to school.
 - c) A plain language summary of California's child access prevention laws and laws relating to the secure storage of firearms, as specified.
 - d) The internet website address for the DOJ's Roster of Firearm Safety Devices Certified for Sale.
- 2) Requires LEAs to inform the parents or guardians of each enrolled pupil of the importance of practicing secure firearm storage in all homes in which firearms are present by annually issuing the Secure Firearm Storage Notification noted above.
 - 3) Requires the CDE, in consultation with the DOJ, on or before July 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, to update the model language developed pursuant to #1 above as necessary to reflect any change in law or Uniform Resource Locators (URLs).
 - 4) Requires the CDE, on or before July 1, 2027, to provide formatting and content options for LEAs to post the notice developed pursuant to 1) above on their respective internet websites and for posting other relevant information and resources about secure firearm storage using other internet-based communication, as specified.
 - 5) Encourages School districts, county offices of education, and charter schools to share information within the Secure Firearm Storage Notification with school communities through easily accessible mediums, including but not limited to internet-based communications such as the LEA's internet website, any social media used by the LEA, and other digital and non-digital communications.
 - 6) Requires the CDE to encourage each LEA to adopt a policy and practice of providing the Secure Firearm Storage Notification to parents, guardians, and caregivers when otherwise providing notice to parents, guardians, or caregivers of disciplinary actions or supports given related to threats against other pupils or threats of self-harm.
 - 7) Requires the CDE to update existing best practices materials developed for use by LEAs pertaining to school shooter or other armed assailant drills, to additionally include the distribution of the Secure Firearm Storage Notification when providing advanced notice of a drill to parents and guardians of pupils.

- 8) Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to include the Secure Firearm Storage Notification model language in its existing annual notice to LEAs encouraging middle, junior high, and high schools to provide suicide prevention training to each school counselor at least one time while employed as a counselor, as specified.
- 9) 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

Need for the bill. 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.”

Risks associated with child access to firearms. A systematic review of research on the effects of child access prevention laws conducted by the RAND Gun Policy in America Initiative has highlighted the following:

- a) Data from the National Fatality Review Case Reporting System from 2004 to 2015 showed that, among firearm suicides by children ages 10 through 18 for which storage practices could be identified, more than three-fourths involved the use of a gun that had been stored loaded and unlocked (Schnitzer et al., 2019). An earlier study (Grossman et al., 2005) also found that cases of unintentional firearm-related injury or death were less likely to occur in households where guns were stored unloaded or locked or where guns and ammunition were stored separately.
- b) Some data suggest that parents who own firearms often underestimate the risk of their child gaining access to the household firearm. A survey of 280 parent-

child pairs found that in homes where parents believed that their child could not access a firearm, 22% of their children stated that they could access a firearm within five minutes, and an additional 15% stated that they could access a firearm within one hour (Salhi et al., 2021).

California laws on secure firearms storage and child access prevention. In California, all firearm owners are required to ensure that their firearms are stored securely in their residences whenever the firearms are not being carried or readily controlled by the owner or another authorized user. A firearm is considered securely stored if it is maintained within, locked by, or disabled using a DOJ-certified firearm safety device or a secure gun safe.

California law also makes it a crime for a person to negligently store or leave a firearm on their premises in a location where the person knows, or reasonably should know, that a child under the age of 18 is likely to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian.

California's existing safe firearm storage notice requirements for schools. In 2022, the Legislature passed AB 452 (Friedman, Chapter 199, Statutes of 2022) and SB 906 (Portantino, Chapter 144, Statutes of 2022), which worked in tandem to establish the landscape for annual parental notices and best practices related to safe firearm storage and child firearm access prevention.

According to proponents of this bill, while AB 452 and SB 906 served as an important foundation, the implementation of the laws has provided key insights on how to enhance their effectiveness and accessibility. The following issues, among others, have been noted in a letter submitted by the bill's sponsor coalition, comprised of Everytown for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, and Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America:

- a) The current "Template Memoranda for Safe Firearms Storage" developed by the CDE includes several sentences with statistics about youth suicides and children knowing where their parents' firearms are stored, but the bulk of the text is a summary of California laws and criminal liability. The complexity of this material may reduce the likelihood of a parent engaging with the necessary information.
- b) The current safe firearm storage and child firearm access prevention notices are included alongside other existing annual notices at the beginning of the school year. As a result, parents and guardians may feel overwhelmed and be less likely to engage with the material.

- c) Resources found on CDE's violence prevention webpage contain inoperative links, which may derail an engaged parent from seeking further information and resources.

This bill establishes a standardized and streamlined pathway for LEAs to meet these notice requirements by requiring the CDE to provide model language for a Secure Firearm Storage Notification that is written in plain language and provides updated information on resources parents and guardians can use to help prevent youth firearm suicide and prevent children and teens from accessing guns and bringing them to school.

It also diversifies the channels through which the notice can be shared with families by requiring the CDE to develop and provide formatting and content options for LEAs to post the Secure Firearm Storage Notification and related resources through other means, such as social media.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The CDE estimates annual General Fund costs of \$177,000 and one new position to comply with the bill's requirements. Any costs to the Department of Justice are likely to be minor and absorbable within existing resources.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/19/26)

Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund (source)

Alameda County Office of Education

Brady California

Brady United Against Gun Violence

California Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

California Academy of Preventive Medicine

California Teachers Association

CFT – A Union of Educators & Classified Professionals, AFT, AFL-CIO

City of Alameda

Giffords

Los Angeles County Office of Education

Los Angeles Unified School District

Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/19/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 71-0, 5/11/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Macedo, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Ramos, Ransom, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Gallagher, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Quirk-Silva, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Solache, Soria

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8/24/26 14:03:01

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