

SHALER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY 317.1

SECTION: ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES
 TITLE: WEAPONS
 ADOPTED: March 18, 1998
 REVISED:

317.1. WEAPONS

1. Purpose

Pursuant to the direction of the Board, the Superintendent of Schools of the Shaler Area School District hereby adopts this policy and plan for the ongoing protection of the educational community by prohibiting the possession of weapons on school property and at school-sponsored activities. This policy has been adopted in accordance with the Gun Free School Act of 1994, 20 U.S.C., Sec. 8921 et al., Section 1317.2 of the Pennsylvania School Code, 24 P.S. Sec. 1317.2, and Section 1301-A and 1309-A of the Pennsylvania School Code, 24 P.S. Sec. 1301-A and Sec. 13-1309-A.
2. Definition

Weapons are defined as, but not limited to: knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku stick, firearm, pellet guns, BB guns, shotgun, rifle, explosive device, any tool, Bowie knife, Dirk knife, lock-blade knife, hunting knife, chains, brass knuckles, night sticks, ax handles, metal knuckles, straight razors, poisons, noxious, irritating or poisonous gases (pepper spray, mace), razor, loaded cane, sword cane, machete, tazers, shockers, or any instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. The term weapon shall also include any instrument that can reasonably be considered a weapon (e.g., look-a-likes).

Possession a person is deemed to be in possession of a weapon under this policy when such items are found on the person of the student, or under his/her control (i.e., in his/her locker, gym bag, vehicle, etc.).

The term school property shall include all buildings and grounds owned and/or controlled by and/or utilized by the Shaler Area School District, and shall also include but not be limited to, school buses, other school vehicles, and any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity.

A school-sponsored activity shall mean any activity, regardless of the location, sponsored by the Shaler Area School District or a student or parent organization.

3. Guidelines

This policy prohibits any person, including school district personnel, from possessing a weapon on any school property, at a school-sponsored activity, or on any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or a school-sponsored activity.

Nothing in this policy is to be construed to interfere with certain activities necessary for the educational program. This could include but not be limited to items in shop class instruction, science instruction, home economics class and art room instruction.

Reporting Requirements

Any professional staff member or school employee who has indications that another professional staff member or employee is in violation of this policy shall immediately inform the principal who will conduct the complete investigation.

Upon just cause for suspicion of possession of a weapon, the principal will request the person to volunteer to be searched or have such areas under his/her control searched by a school official in the presence of a witness. If the person resists being searched or having any area under his/her control searched, the principal will immediately summon the police and request assistance.

Penalty

School district personnel in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to dismissal, as appropriate under the circumstances. School district personnel shall have all rights of due process under the Pennsylvania School Code in the event the Board or the Superintendent seeks discipline. School district personnel are permitted to possess weapons while in the confiscation process of dealing with a student having a weapon, or as part of a school-approved program by an individual who is participating in that program, provided the weapon is used in a lawful manner. If this policy is violated, the police will be responsible for filing criminal charges as appropriate.

Visitors or non-school personnel who violate this policy may be prosecuted as trespassers and may be subject to criminal charges for possession of a weapon on school property.

Weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel are permitted.

Publication

The Superintendent's plan to publicize the Board's policy regarding weapons will include signage at appropriate locations on the school campus.

When this policy is violated, the principal and Superintendent will develop a public statement as well as determine the most effective method for informing school personnel. The Superintendent will inform Board members as soon as measures have been taken to eliminate any danger associated with the incident.

Criminal

All persons, including students, personnel, and visitors, found guilty of weapon possession are in violation of, and may be prosecuted pursuant to, Section 912 of Title 18 (crimes and offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, which provides that possession of a weapon on school property constitutes a misdemeanor of the first degree.