Friday, October 30, 2026

Fair Notice for Parents/Guardians – Middle and Secondary Schools

Starting October 1, 2026, new laws and regulations under the Firearm Violence Prevention Act (FVPA) are coming into effect in B.C. The legislation is intended to address unsafe firearm use and firearm-related violence. The FVPA complements and further strengthens existing legislation and school and district policies banning firearms on school property by providing law enforcement with additional tools to address and enforce firearm-related public safety risks. The FVPA does this by establishing a clear and consistent province-wide prohibition on firearms, low-velocity firearms (such as BB, pellet, gel, airsoft and paintball guns) and imitation firearms (such as lighters designed to closely resemble firearms) on all K-12 school properties. The goal of these new laws is to promote greater public safety by keeping firearms and objects that look like firearms out of schools.

Some schools regularly support and authorize a wide range of educational, community and special events on school property, including activities that occur outside regular school hours, on evenings, and on weekends. The legislation includes narrow exemptions for certain safe and legitimate activities using firearms, low-velocity or imitation firearms. Examples of activities that may be eligible for an exemption include:

- Cadet programs
- Biathlon demonstrations or events
- Cinematic, theatrical, film, or artistic activities or performances
- Educational activities (e.g., firearms safety training)

In addition, individuals who are safely transporting firearms, low-velocity firearms, or imitation firearms in a vehicle are exempted as long as applicable requirements in the regulations and all other relevant firearms laws are followed (e.g., firearms remain unloaded and safely stored in a locked trunk or container).

Anyone who illegally possesses a firearm, low-velocity firearm, or imitation firearm on school property without a valid exemption may have these items confiscated, forfeited and disposed of by law enforcement, and if convicted of an offence, may face fines and serious penalties under the FVPA.

For information on existing policies in the school or district that ban firearms, please refer to Cowichan Valley School District Administrative Procedure (AP) 104 – District Code of Conduct, AP 357 – Weapons and AP 353 – Searches of Students. For more information on the Firearm Violence Prevention Act and regulations, visit: Firearm Violence Prevention Act (FVPA) - Province of British Columbia.

Thank you