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

COWICHAN VALLEY School District

Threat Assessment **Fair Notice**

When situations warrant, the Cowichan Valley School District will engage in threat assessment processes to ensure the safety of students, staff and community.

What do parents and students need to know.

- Any threats must be reported to the school principal.
- Investigations may involve the school counsellor, police, or other community agencies.
- Investigation may involve locker or property searches.
- Interviews will be held with the person of concern and other students or adults who may have information about the threat.
- Parents of students who are directly involved will be notified.
- Threatening behaviour may result in disciplinary action.
- An intervention plan may be developed for the student making the threat and support plan developed for any individuals targeted by threats.

What behaviours could initiate a threat assessment?

Threat Assessments will be initiated for behaviours including, but not limited to:

- serious violence or violence with intent to harm or kill,
- verbal/written threats to harm or kill others,
- online threats to harm or kill others,
- possession of weapons (including replicas),
- bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices),
- fire setting,
- sexual intimidation or assault and
- gang-related intimidation and violence.

What is a threat?

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be verbal, written, drawn, posted on social media platforms or made by gesture. Threats must be taken seriously, investigated and responded to.

Duty to report

To keep school communities safe and caring, staff, parents/guardians, students and community members must report all threat-related behaviours.

What is a Threat Assessment Team

Each school has a Threat Assessment Team. The team may include the principal, teachers, counsellor(s) and a member of the local police agency.

Can I refuse to participate?

It is important for all parties to engage in the process. However, if the subject of concern or parent/guardian is reluctant to participate, the threat assessment process will continue.

Collection Notice:

Schools and school districts are subject to personal information privacy laws and will undertake the collection of this information in compliance with the requirements of such laws. This will include limiting the collection to information that is relevant and necessary to address a risk or threat and ensuring that information collected from an online source is only obtained from open-source sites. Schools and school districts will not collect information as part of a threat assessment unless there is reason to believe that a risk exists. Information collected as part of a threat assessment may be provided to police agencies in appropriate circumstances. Information collected will be retained and handled within current records management procedures and guidelines.

Updated:

This Threat Assessment Fair Notice was updated Fall 2026