



Keeping Wisconsin Schools and Campuses Safe

February 2017

Current Wisconsin law helps ensure that schools remain safe places of learning for students, faculty, and other personnel by limiting the ability of individuals to carry loaded, concealed guns on K-12 school grounds and inside college buildings, such as dorms and classrooms. These laws are commonsense measures that have the support of a majority of Wisconsin voters.

For 25 years, Wisconsin has helped ensure safe spaces for learning by restricting guns on school grounds

- Wisconsin is among the vast majority of states that restrict gun carrying on K-12 school property. Thirty-nine states and the District of Columbia prohibit the possession of guns on school property, even by individuals with a valid concealed carry permit.¹
- A 2016 poll found that 65 percent of registered Wisconsin voters oppose allowing concealed-carry permit holders to carry guns on school grounds.²
- In 2014, and again in 2017, the Wisconsin Association of School Boards passed a resolution opposing any legislative efforts to allow individuals to carry guns in Wisconsin schools.³

Allowing concealed-carry permit holders to carry concealed, loaded guns in Wisconsin schools would not protect student safety and would potentially endanger the entire school community

- Wisconsin has extremely minimal safety training requirements for obtaining a concealed carry permit. In fact, people can obtain a permit even if they have never fired, touched, or seen a gun.⁴
- Allowing permit holders to carry guns in schools has resulted in dangerous incidents in a number of states:
 - In September 2016, a teacher in Pennsylvania accidentally left her gun in a school bathroom. Children ages 6 to 8 used that same bathroom before the gun was discovered.⁵
 - In September 2014, a Utah elementary school teacher accidentally shot herself in the school's bathroom.⁶
 - In November 2016, a high school resource officer in Michigan accidentally discharged his gun and struck a teacher in the neck.⁷



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- Previous legislative efforts to reduce violent crime in Wisconsin by expanding gun carrying have failed to live up to that promise. The enactment of a 2011 law allowing Wisconsinites to obtain concealed weapons permits and carry concealed guns in the community has not resulted in a reduction of violent crime.⁸
 - The rate of gun homicides from 2012 to 2015 was 42 percent higher than the rate from 2008 to 2011⁹, and the annual average rate of violent crimes from 2012 to 2015 was 14 percent higher than the average rate from 2008 to 2011.¹⁰

Weakening current law to allow guns in Wisconsin dorms, classrooms, and other college buildings would create safety risks for the campus community

- Researchers at The Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health found that a number of factors associated with college-age students and college life make allowing guns in a college or university environment particularly dangerous. These factors include proclivity for risky behavior, alcohol abuse, and increased risk of depression and suicide for this age group.¹¹
- There have been a number of recent examples of the risks of allowing guns to be carried on college campuses.
 - In October 2016, an altercation at a fraternity at Northern Arizona University became fatal when a student shot four classmates, killing one and wounding the others.¹²
 - In August 2016, a student from Georgia Southern University accidentally shot and killed a fellow student while under the influence of alcohol.¹³
 - Two months after Idaho allowed guns on college campuses in 2014, a professor with a concealed carry permit accidentally shot himself during a class at Idaho State University.¹⁴
- College and university communities across the country widely oppose allowing guns on college campuses.
 - 95 percent of university presidents oppose gun-carrying on campus.¹⁵
 - 78 percent of undergraduate students from public midwestern universities oppose concealed carrying on campuses.¹⁶

Schools and other locations where guns are prohibited are not at a heightened risk for mass gun violence

- Only 13 percent of mass shootings that occurred in the United States between January 2009 and July 2015 occurred in a public place that restricted gun carrying.¹⁷
- Of the 111 mass shootings that occurred in the United States from 1966 to 2015 in which 6 or more people were fatally shot, only 18 took place in places where gun carrying by civilians was restricted.^{18*}
- Mass shootings are actually more likely to occur in the home, rather than in a public place. Between 2009 and 2015, 70 percent of mass shootings in the United States occurred in the home and 57 percent involved an intimate partner or a family member.¹⁹

**Correction, February 21, 2017: This fact sheet has been corrected to more accurately describe the cited research on mass shootings.*



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Endnotes

- 1 Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, "Guns in Schools," available at <http://smartgunlaws.org/gun-laws/policy-areas/firearms-in-public-places/guns-in-schools/> (last accessed February 2017).
- 2 Marquette University Law School Poll, "New Marquette Law School Poll Finds Tight Races in Wisconsin Presidential Primaries," Press release, January 28, 2016, available at <https://law.marquette.edu/poll/2016/01/28/new-marquette-law-school-poll-finds-tight-races-in-wisconsin-presidential-primaries/>.
- 3 Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Inc., "Proposed Resolutions for the January 22, 2014 Delegate Assembly meeting" (2013), available at <https://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5610/c/238/images/WASB%20weapon%20resolution%202014.pdf>; Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Inc., "Report to the Membership on 2017 Resolutions" (2016), available at http://www.wasb.org/websites/advoc_gov_relations/File/delegate_assembly/final_report_to_membership_on_proposed_2017_resolutions.pdf.
- 4 Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, "Concealed Weapons Permitting in Wisconsin," available at <http://smartgunlaws.org/concealed-weapons-permitting-in-wisconsin/> (last accessed February 2017).
- 5 Crimesider Staff, "Cops: Elementary kids find loaded gun teacher left in Pa. school bathroom," CBS News, September 13, 2016, available at <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/cops-teacher-left-gun-in-bathroom-elementary-kids-found-it/>
- 6 Nicole Flatow, "This is the Second Week in a Row that An American Teacher Accidentally Shot Themselves at School," Think Progress, September 12, 2014, available at <https://thinkprogress.org/this-is-the-second-week-in-a-row-that-an-american-teacher-accidentally-shot-themselves-at-school-d62e619c8fc9#.44560zqrj>.
- 7 Brianna Owczarzak and Andrew Keller, "Police: Firearm discharged at high school, hit teacher in neck," WNEM, November 15, 2016, available at <http://www.wnem.com/story/33691674/police-firearm-discharged-at-high-school>.
- 8 Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, "Concealed Weapons Permitting in Wisconsin." Wisconsin's Concealed Carry Law became effective on November 1, 2011.
- 9 Center for American Progress analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Injury Prevention & Control: Data & Statistics (WISQARS): Fatal Injury Data," available at http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal_injury_reports.html (last accessed January 2017). While the rate of gun homicides from 2008 to 2011 was 1.72 per every 100,000 people, the rate of gun homicides increased to 2.44 from 2012 to 2015.
- 10 Center for American Progress analysis of Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Crime in the United States," Uniform Crime Reporting, available at <https://ucr.fbi.gov/ucr-publications> (last accessed February 2017). Violent crimes are composed of murder, non-negligent manslaughter, robbery, and aggravated assault.
- 11 Daniel W. Webster and others, "Firearms on College Campuses: Research Evidence and Policy Implications" (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2016), available at http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-gun-policy-and-research/_pdfs/GunsOnCampus.pdf.
- 12 The Associate Press, "Fight with frat members led to deadly Arizona shooting, suspect says," CBS News, October 9, 2015, available at <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/fight-with-frat-members-led-to-northern-arizona-shooting-suspect-steven-jones-says/>.
- 13 Savannah Morning News, "Sheriff: Georgia Southern student shot, killed in drunken gun incident," August 31, 2016, available at <http://savannahnow.com/crime-courts-news/2016-08-31/sheriff-georgia-southern-student-shot-killed-drunken-gun-incident>.
- 14 Hunter Schwarz, "Idaho professor shoots himself in foot two months after state legalizes guns on campuses," *The Washington Post*, September 5, 2014, available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/govbeat/wp/2014/09/05/idaho-professor-shoots-himself-in-foot-two-months-after-state-legalizes-guns-on-campuses/?utm_term=.520b694a1a5f.
- 15 J.H. Price and others, "University presidents' perceptions and practice regarding the carrying of concealed handguns on college campuses," *Journal of American College Health* 62 (7) (2014): 461-469, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24810834>.
- 16 A. Thompson and others, "Student perceptions and practices regarding carrying concealed handguns on university campuses," *Journal of American College Health* 61 (5) (2013): 243-253, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23768222>.
- 17 Everytown for Gun Safety, "Analysis of Mass Shootings" (2015), available at <http://everytownresearch.org/reports/mass-shootings-analysis/>. Mass shooting is defined in this research as incidents in which four or more individuals are killed with a gun.
- 18 Louis Klarevas, *Rampage Nation: Securing America from Mass Shootings* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2016).
- 19 Melissa Jeltsen, "We're Missing The Big Picture On Mass Shootings," *The Huffington Post*, August 25, 2015, available at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/mass-shootings-domestic-violence-women_us_55d3806ce4b07adccb44542a; Everytown for Gun Safety, "The Real Story of Mass Shootings in America," available at <http://everytownresearch.org/mass-shootings/> (last accessed February 2016).