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STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Charter Schools  
Administrative Office

May 22, 2008

To: Complex Area Superintendents, School Principals, District Educational Specialists, and School Renewal Specialists

From: *Patricia Hamamoto*  
Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Subject: Hawaii Gun-Free Schools Act Reminder Flyer and Parent Letter Distribution

The purposes of this memorandum are to:

- 1) acknowledge and thank school administrators for annually distributing the "Be Cool! Don't Be a Fool in School!" flyer to their students and families as a reminder of the Hawaii Gun-Free Schools Act. Between school years 2005-06 and 2006-07, there was a significant decrease in the total number of incidents, incidents by schools, and incidents by individuals. The total number of incidents decreased by 39%, the number of incidents by schools by 28% and the number of incidents by individuals by 44%; and
- 2) inform school administrators that they will be receiving copies of the 2008 "Be Cool! Don't Be A Fool In School!" flyers and posters from the Reprographic Section beginning the week of July 1, 2008. Schools are asked to send home with every student a copy of the flyer along with the parent letter no later than August 29, 2008. The form parent letter is to be duplicated on your school letterhead. Schools will receive copies of the flyers for individual classroom posting and office displays. Attached are the 2008 flyer and the form parent letter.

"Firearm," as defined by Chapter 19 Student Misconduct, Discipline, School Searches and Seizures, Reporting Offenses, Police Interviews and Arrests, and Restitution for Vandalism and Negligence (Hawaii Administrative Rules), includes air guns. Air guns are defined as any gun, rifle, or pistol which expel pellets or BB shots by the action of compressed air or gas or by action of a spring classic. Included in this category are BB guns, pellet guns, and paint ball guns.

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Students and families need to be continually reminded that bringing air guns to school is not allowed as it is a potentially dangerous issue, and that a safe learning environment is essential for successful teaching and learning.

Should you have any further questions, please contact your respective Complex Area Superintendent, Mr. Clayton Fujie, Deputy Superintendent, at (808) 586-3316 or Ms. Jean Nakasato, Educational Specialist, Student Support Section, at (808) 735-6225.

Thank you for your continued actions in maintaining safe and nurturing school environments.

PH:JN:jh

#### Attachments

c: Deputy Superintendent  
Assistant Superintendents  
Superintendent's Office Directors  
Charter Schools Administrative Office  
Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support

[School Letterhead]

July xx, 2008

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Thank you for supporting the Department of Education's "Be Cool! Don't Be A Fool In School!" annual campaign. Since the campaign began in 2005, the total number of firearm-related incidents involving Hawaii public school students has decreased significantly.

This campaign serves to remind students and families about the consequences for bringing a firearm, including air guns, to school. Air guns (BB guns, pellet guns, and paintball guns) shoot plastic pellets and often have the appearance, feel, and sound of a "real handgun."

Any student who violates the Hawaii Gun-Free Schools Act by bringing a firearm to school "shall be excluded from attending school for not less than one calendar year." Only the Superintendent, on a case-by-case basis, may modify the exclusion of the student. If the decision is appealed, then due process procedures will be implemented. Schools must provide alternative education or other appropriate assistance when a child is excluded.

For your child's safety and well-being, please speak with your son/daughter about firearms, school and personal safety, and the consequences for violating the Hawaii Gun Free Schools Act. Review the attached flyer, as necessary, and always be aware of what your child is bringing to school in his/her backpack.

Thank you for your attention to this important school safety issue.

Sincerely,

Principal



# BE COOL!

**DON'T BE A FOOL IN SCHOOL!**



BB guns/shotguns



handguns/airguns



paintball guns

**If I bring my BB gun, air gun, or paintball gun to school... I shall be dismissed and won't be able to attend school for at least one calendar year. Only the Superintendent of Education, on a case-by-case basis, may modify my exclusion.**

**Hawaii Gun-Free Schools Act**