



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 17, 2013

Contact:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

CITY COUNCIL PASSES ORDINANCE TO PROTECT STUDENTS FROM GUN VIOLENCE

Increases Gun Penalties Along Safe Passage Routes, Around Schools and Parks

The City Council today approved a measure introduced by Mayor Rahm Emanuel to increase penalties for serious weapon and gun-related offenses in “student safety zones” along Safe Passage routes, in schools buses and around schools and some parks in an ordinance introduced on Wednesday.

“Safe passage to schools is a key component of ensuring each and every one of our children has access to a quality public education. This ordinance helps ensure our children can focus on their studies and not their safety while fulfilling their educational dreams,” Mayor Rahm Emanuel said. “Not only does this ordinance send the message that we will not tolerate gun violence around our students, it also creates serious consequences for offenders who are threats to our communities.”

The ordinance creates Student Safety Zones that will include:

- Safe passage routes during designated operating hours (Operating hours are 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. If there is a school activity after 7 p.m., the associated safe passage route will be in effect until 60 minutes after the school activity ends)
- School buildings during designated operating hours (Operating hours are 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. If there is a school activity after 7 p.m., the zone will be in effect until 60 minutes after the school activity ends)
 - Within 1000 feet of school buildings
 - Public parks, where any portion of the park is within 1000 feet of a school building
- School buses

The ordinance will also increase penalties for gun and weapons crimes that put our students at greatest risk. If a person is convicted of , possession of an illegal gun or other dangerous weapon, the offender would be subject to the following enhanced penalties:

1st Tier Crimes: Assault weapons and high capacity magazines

- First offense: 120 days to 6 months jail time, with a fine range of \$1,000-\$5,000
- Second offense: 150 day to 6 months jail time, with a fine range of \$5,000-\$15,000
- Third offense or more: Mandatory 6 months jail time, with a fine range of \$10,000-\$20,000

2nd Tier Crimes: Possession of silencer/laser sight accessory for a firearm

- First offense: 30 days to 6 months jail time, with a fine range of. \$1,000-\$5,000
- Second offense: 90 days to 6 months jail time, with a fine range of \$5,000-\$15,000
- Third offense: Mandatory 6 months jail time, with a fine range of \$10,000-\$20,000

3rd Tier Crimes: Dangerous weapons other than firearm

- First offense: 30 days to 6 months jail time, with a fine range of \$500-\$1,000
- Second offense: 90 days to 6 months jail time, with a fine range of \$1,000-\$2,000
- Third offense: Mandatory 6 month jail time, with a fine range of \$2,000-\$5,000

"This ordinance is a key step in ensuring our children's safety," said Ald. Maldonado. "Our residents, parents, faith leaders, and the students themselves have a role to play in a positive education. I am pleased that we have taken a step towards greater safety and a better education for our students."

"Children are more likely to be victims of violence during the hours just after school ends. We have to use every tool at our disposal to help create a violence free environment for them. This ordinance is another deterrent to picking up a gun to resolve an issue," said Ald. Thomas, Chairman of the Committee on Education.

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