



Recent legislative changes effective January 1, 2016, make it lawful to openly carry firearms in the state of Texas under certain circumstances. The new open carry legislation is currently being reviewed and interpreted by various governmental entities, including but not limited to the Attorney General of Texas. Therefore, the interpretation and release of information concerning the application and effect of these laws with respect to public schools is ongoing.

Open Carry FAQ

1. Can handguns/firearms be carried openly or concealed into a school building?

No. Texas law prohibits open or concealed carry of handguns and other prohibited weapons on physical premises of a school or educational institution. The term “premises” is defined by law as a building or a portion of a building.

2. Can handguns/firearms be carried openly or concealed on school grounds and other buildings on school property?

Texas law also prohibits open or concealed carry of handguns and other prohibited weapons on any grounds or buildings on which an activity sponsored by a school or educational institution is being conducted. While Texas law does not define the terms “grounds” or “school sponsored activity,” Katy ISD interprets these terms to include all district property where students are regularly present during regular school hours, and other hours determined by individual campuses, including, but not limited to:

- Playground areas
- Practice fields
- Sidewalks and courtyards used by students that connect buildings and temporary buildings on school campuses
- Outdoor areas used for science experiments
- Areas of parking lots in which temporary buildings are located
- Parent drop off and pick up lanes and/or areas as determined by each campus [at a minimum one hour before the start of school and one hour after dismissal].
- Board meetings

3. Can handguns/firearms be carried openly or concealed in school parking lots, driveways, other parking areas?

Yes, but only during times when a school sponsored activity is not being conducted in the parking lot, driveway or other parking area. For example, if the school parking lot is used for band practice after school, handguns/firearms or other prohibited weapons cannot be carried openly or concealed on that parking lot when the band is practicing. However, during the time when the parking lot is used solely for vehicles, open and/or concealed carry by parents and other visitors is lawful in these areas.

4. Can handguns/firearms be carried openly or concealed on public sidewalks or walkway surrounding school campuses?

Yes, as long as no school sponsored event or activity is being conducted.

5. Can handguns/firearms be carried openly or concealed at school sponsored activities or event?

Texas law prohibits open or concealed carry of handguns and other prohibited weapons at school-sponsored events or activities regardless of whether the events or activities occur on or off school property.

6. Are Katy ISD campuses required to post signage regarding the prohibition against open carry in school buildings?

At this time, Katy ISD will not be requiring campuses to post any signage to address open carry, because the law expressly prohibits the carrying of handguns (openly or concealed) inside school buildings, any grounds or building where a school-sponsored event/activity is taking place, in school district passenger vehicles, and at Board meetings without posted signage.

7. Are Katy ISD employees allowed to possess and/or carry handguns (openly or concealed) on district property?

Katy ISD Police Officers whether in uniform or plain clothes normally carry firearms. State law does provide an option for the District to have marshals who would be specially trained members of staff to also carry firearms. The District will not confirm or deny the presence of armed marshals at campuses or facilities. Board policy ***prohibits employees*** from bringing firearms onto District property.