

Trap Shooting: Risks and Recommendations

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Trap shooting is considered a high-risk activity, and though it can prove to be an exciting and popular interest for students, there are many items that a school or district must consider before starting a club. Remember this activity involves the use of firearms and must be highly supervised by qualified sponsors that are familiar with firearms and state laws.

Steps the school sponsor should adhere to before starting a trap shooting club:

1. Contact CSDSIP regarding coverage issues and potential additional premium considerations related to this activity.
2. Review your weapons policy for compliance.
3. Consider directing interested staff and students to The Colorado State High School Clay Target League to set up a club (<http://coclaytarget.com/>). Additional training for coaches can be found at: <http://www.usashooting.org/membership/coaches/coachacademy>
4. Consider passing the risk on to a third party and checking out if any local gun clubs have trap/skeet shooting teams already in place for interested students.

Did you know Colorado has a Colorado State High School Clay Target Leagues? Here are a few of their eligibility requirements for schools.

- Any public, private or parochial high schools in Colorado are invited to participate. Teams requirements include:
 - Approval from the school (School Board, Principal and/or activities/athletic director)
 - Use of the school's name
 - Knowledge of district policies on firearms possession and use and careful consideration of potential issues that may arise from having a shooting club affiliated with the school district. Note that there may be specific prohibitions on firearms already in place for a specific district.
 - School board support and involvement in decision-making.
 - Knowledge of the [USA High School policies & procedures](#)

Colorado State High School Clay Target League policies specifically state that all types of smooth-bore shotguns, including semi-automatics, may be used provided their caliber does not exceed 12 gauge. Athletes must supply their own shotgun. Shooting ranges may allow a shotgun to be borrowed or rented with parental approval. Some teams may also have shotguns for use. No rifles or pistols are allowed while participating in the club.

If your district decides to sponsor a trap shooting club, it is recommended that the district examine the following guidelines.

1. Review the Colorado State High School Clay Target League (<http://coclaytarget.com/>) recommendations on setting up clubs.
2. The permission slip should clearly indicate that the district is not responsible for firearms or ammunition.

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3. Firearms and ammunition are prohibited on school grounds and firearms should be safely and securely stored at the gun range.
4. Students should be fully conversant with Colorado gun laws.
5. Students must provide clear parental agreement evidenced by signed permission to participate. Consider an in-person parents/guardians meeting.
6. Guidelines governing transportation (students driving, staff transporting, picking up and transporting guns, etc.) must be clearly defined.
7. The district must create an outline of goals that relate this activity to student education.
8. All participants are required to pass
 - a. League Approved Firearm Safety Certification
 - b. State Approved Hunter Education Certification
 - c. Student Athlete Firearm Education (SAFE) Certification

Other Areas to Consider...

- Storage of firearms and ammunition.
- Proper training and use of personal protective equipment, including cleaning and storage, appropriate clothing, padded shooting vest, eye protection and hearing protection.
- Laws regarding transport of firearms, possession by minors, etc.
- Student to staff ratio.
- Actions to be taken by the district should a staff member or student bring a firearm to school.

Question the School Sponsor Should Answer

1. What are the educational benefits if this school district is sponsored?
2. Are there any issues of students having to drive home to pick up a firearm (assuming no storage at the club)? Discuss the possibility of multiple students in the same car and multiple stops for firearms.
3. What are the minimum qualifications the district will accept in an instructor, and does this decision impact coverage?
4. Are there health conditions that would create a concern (lead exposure, noise, eye care, etc.) and/ or is a medical release necessary?
5. Will the shooting range be able to accommodate all students including those on IEPs, 504 plans and does it accommodate individuals covered by the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)?
6. Do waivers include language about storage of guns and ammunition, travel to the gun range, health and safety considerations, release to call for emergency medical support, safety training and Colorado State gun laws?