



Resolution Against Gun Violence

Whereas, in school communities from Columbine to Virginia Tech to Sandy Hook to Parkland, the lives of hundreds of students and school employees have been lost to the epidemic of gun violence; and,

Whereas, Alexandria City has not been immune to this violent epidemic as members of our community have been lost to gun violence and a mass shooting has taken place on our City's recreational fields; and

Whereas, more than 153,000 students attending more than 171 primary and secondary schools have experienced a shooting on campus since the Columbine High School massacre in 1999; and,

Whereas, hundreds of thousands of parents, guardians and school employees have been impacted by the mental health toll of caring for children who have experienced gun violence in their schools; and

Whereas, on an average day, 96 people including at least 7 children and teens, are killed in the United States by guns and at least two more are injured in each of those incidents; and,

Whereas, on average there are nearly 13,000 gun deaths per year in the United States; and,

Whereas, 62% of guns in the United States are used to commit suicide, often affecting families with school aged children, and of those suicides, at least 4,600 are children between the ages of 10 and 24; and,

Whereas, suicide is the third leading cause of death among the 15-24 age group, after gun related deaths, which account for 46 percent of deaths in that age group; and,

Whereas, the United States has more than 300 million firearms in circulation and 34% of school-aged children live in homes with one or more of those firearms, compelling communities to increase education efforts about responsible gun ownership and the ASK (Asking Saves Kids) movement ; and,

Whereas, Alexandria City Public Schools believes that the health and safety of our more than 15,000 students and 2,500 employees is our highest priority and that a vibrant, healthful, safe, enriching, and equitable school environment is vital to ensure every student succeeds; and

Whereas, Alexandria City Public Schools, in alignment with the Health and Wellness Goal in its ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan, has amended policies and budgets to prioritize improving mental health supports and has executed security steps and training to provide safe and secure school environments; and,

Whereas, the prevention of incidents of gun violence cannot be relegated to local school divisions alone and the ongoing political inaction is failing our children;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alexandria City School Board calls upon the United States Congress and the Virginia General Assembly to prioritize the protection of students and school division employees by passing sensible legislation that:

1. More effectively regulates access to firearms in the interest of public safety;
2. Increases education efforts regarding gun ownership, signs of potential gun violence and ASK efforts;
3. Declares gun violence a public health crisis to then be able to fund public-health research on gun violence issues; and
4. Examines and strengthens mental health supports in our communities.

Adopted at the February 22, 2018 School Board Meeting

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