

June 5, 2020

Dear Chairman Anderson, Dr. Hutchings, and Distinguished Members of the ACPS School Board,

In honor of National Gun Violence Awareness Day, we write to renew our commitment to the Community Partnership between ACPS and Parents for Safe Alexandria Schools and to our shared goal of a safer community for our children.

As you know, firearms remain the leading cause of death for American children and teens. In the era of COVID-19, children are distance learning outside school and families as a whole are spending much more time at home under an unusually high level of stress. The last thing we would want to see is the tremendous uncertainty for Alexandria's families and the current increase in gun sales leading to more tragedy during a pandemic.

Last year, the School Board recognized National Gun Violence Awareness Day and Wear Orange weekend by wearing orange, speaking about gun violence in our community, asking for a moment of silence for the victims of the Virginia Beach mass shooting, reading the ACPS Resolution Against Gun Violence (<http://www.acpsk12.org/news/?p=8694>) and announcing the Wear Orange Rally in Market Square. ACPS also generously agreed to be a 2019 Wear Orange Community Partner and wrote an ACPS Express article about the event (<https://www.acpsk12.org/news/?p=13536>).

This year, as with most activities, Wear Orange events across the country will be held virtually from June 5-7. For more information on those events and how we can all come together to take a stand against the deadly mix of guns, white supremacy and racism, please visit here: <https://wearorange.org>

Our hope is that you will continue to share your support of this important issue with our community, as well as information about the Be SMART program for safe gun storage. With your powerful collective voice, you can help us encourage ACPS families to take five simple steps (Secure, Model, Ask, Recognize and Tell), normalize conversations about gun safety, and take responsible actions at home that will prevent child gun deaths and injuries. More information on Be SMART can be found here: <https://besmartforkids.org/>

We were thrilled to see the Wear Orange article in the June 3rd ACPS Express (<http://www.acpsk12.org/news/?p=16590>) and we very much look forward to hearing Chairman Anderson's related remarks at the June 5th meeting of the Board.

Thank you so much for your continued support and leadership on this important issue!

Best Wishes,

Missy Estabrook, Jodi Zand, Catherine Estes and Bridget Baker-White
(Co-Founders of Parents for Safe Alexandria Schools & Parents of Children at GW, Maury, George Mason, and Charles Barrett)