



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 1999¹; 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 schools²; and

Whereas, there are more than 33,000 gun deaths per year in the United States³; and

Whereas, nearly 1,300 American children age 0-17 die from shootings every year and 5,790 are treated for gunshot wounds every year⁴; and

Whereas, suicide and homicide are the second and third leading causes of death among the 15-24 age group, and of these deaths, more than 65% are attributed to a firearm⁵; and

Whereas, the United States is estimated to have more than 300 million firearms in circulation⁶ and 34% of school-aged children live in homes with one or more of those firearms⁷, 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 legislation that:

1. More effectively regulates access to firearms in the interest of public safety by:
 - a) Establishing universal background checks to purchase a firearm,
 - b) Reenacting the federal ban on the sale and possession of military-style assault weapons,
 - c) Banning large capacity ammunition magazines, and
 - d) Enactment of gun violence restraining order laws;
2. Increases education efforts regarding gun ownership, signs of potential gun violence and Asking Saves Kids (ASK) efforts;
3. Declares gun violence a public health crisis and removes all barriers to funding of public health research; and
4. Examines, strengthens and funds mental health supports in our communities.

Adopted at the June 6, 2019 School Board Meeting:

Meagan L. Alderton

Veronica R. Nolan

Cindy M. Anderson

Michelle Rief

Ramee A. Gentry

Christopher A. Suarez

Jacinta Greene

Heather Thornton

Margaret Lorber

¹ Grabar, Henry. (2018, February 15). 150,000 American Students Have Experienced a School Shooting. Slate. Retrieved from <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/02/150-000-american-students-have-experienced-a-school-shooting.html>.

² Ibid.

³ Hauser, Christine. (2017, November 4). Gun Death Rate Rose Again in 2016, CDC Says. New York Times. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/04/us/gun-death-rates.html>.

⁴ Fowler, Katherine A. et al. (2017, July 1). Childhood Firearm Injuries in the United States. Pediatrics. Volume 140 (Issue 1). Retrieved from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/140/1/e20163486..info>.

⁵ Center for Disease Control (2017) 10 Leading Causes of Injury Deaths by Age Group Highlighting Violence-Related Injury Deaths, United States-2015. Retrieved from

https://www.cdc.gov/injury/images/lc-charts/leading_causes_of_injury_deaths_violence_2015_1050w760h.gif

⁶ Horsley, Scott. (2016, January 5). Guns in America, by the Numbers. NPR. Retrieved from

<https://www.npr.org/2016/01/05/462017461/guns-in-america-by-the-numbers>.

⁷ Schuster, Mark A., Franke, Todd M., Bastian, Amy M., Sor, Sinaroth, and Halfon, Neal. (2000, April). Firearm Storage Patterns in US Homes With Children. American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 90, No. 4.

Retrieved from https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reprints/2005/RAND_RP890.pdf.