



RESOLUTION:

Advocating for Gun Violence Prevention Measures

Adopted by Seattle Council PTSA Board of Directors on March 5, 2018

Whereas, since the December 2012 mass shooting in Sandy Hook Elementary School, there have been more than 1,600 mass shootings in America, with at least 1,829 people killed and 6,447 wounded as of February 2018¹, and more than 400 people have been shot in over 200 school shootings²; and

Whereas, in the past five years, eight school shootings have occurred in Washington state, four of which resulted in injury or death³, and facilities in the Seattle School District, and districts around Washington State, have far too often been the scenes of gun violence and threats of gun violence; and

Whereas, gun violence presents a clear and present danger to the students, parents, educators, paraeducators, administrators, and support staff of the Seattle School District; and

Whereas, more guns means more gun violence, children of color are victims of homicide by firearms at a higher rate than white children in King County⁴ and we must increase gun safety throughout all communities, and, people of color are more likely to be the victims of wrongful shootings by those in positions of power, making it likely that arming educators would have a disproportionately adverse and lethal impact on students of color⁵; and

Whereas, the National PTA has advocated for a variety of measures to address gun violence, including mental health education, early intervention, prevention and access to school and community-based mental health personnel and services, measures to educate students, educators and community members on firearm safety and violence prevention, as well as laws and regulations in the areas of gun safety and violence prevention; and

Whereas, a National School Walkout has been organized for March 14th at 10AM, and on March 24th, a National March for Our Lives will be held by student leaders to bring attention to this important issue and to demand action from our legislators; and

Whereas, gun violence, and threats of gun violence, in schools undermine the sense of security that all students should have in their learning environments; and

Whereas, we believe that every child deserves to learn in an environment that is safe and to have the opportunity to grow into a happy and healthy adult.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Seattle Council PTSA Board joins the National PTA⁶ in its demands that Washington State and federal governments adopt legislation to accomplish the following policy goals:

- **Require universal background checks and a license to purchase a firearm.**
- **Re-enact a federal ban on the sale and possession of military-style assault weapons.**
- **Lift any ban on research that studies the causes and effects of gun violence; and**

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Seattle Council PTSA Board also supports laws and regulations that would accomplish the following:

- Increase the Federal minimum purchase age to 21 for all long-guns (rifles) to match current federal regulations for handguns.
- Implement Enhanced Background Checks and waiting periods for assault weapons.
- Ban the purchase and sale of any accessories designed to increase a gun's rate of fire.
- Eliminate private gun sale loopholes.
- Restrict non-Washington state residents from purchasing any firearms in Washington state
- Require firearm safety training prior to the purchase of a firearm.
- Develop a state registry that allows one to voluntarily opt-out of the ability to purchase a firearm.
- Support prevention, intervention and community re-entry programs that reduce community and gun violence.
- Increase funding for programs and school staffing that support student mental health, social and emotional learning, and bullying.
- Establish safety programs in schools that do not include arming educators or staff; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Seattle Council PTSA Board wholly rejects the misguided suggestion by local, state or federal officials, organizations or individuals that it is either desirable or appropriate to arm teachers in schools for any purpose, and supports existing prohibitions of firearms in Seattle schools and will not support any effort to arm educators or staff; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Seattle Council PTSA Board supports legislation currently under consideration by the Washington State Legislature that would enact some of the above measures, including but not limited to Engrossed Senate Bill 5992, Senate Bill 6620 and House Bill 3004; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Seattle Council PTSA Board wholly endorses the National School Walkout and the National March for Our Lives.

Sebrena Burr, SCPTSA President

Date: March 5, 2018

Eliza Rankin, SCPTSA Legislative Chair – District Issues

Heidi B. Bennett, SCPTSA Legislative Chair – State Issues

Contact: Legchair@scptsa.org

Footnotes

1. <https://www.vox.com/a/mass-shootings-sandy-hook>.

2. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/02/15/us/school-shootings-sandy-hook-parkland.html>.

3. <https://everytownresearch.org/school-shootings/#2919>

4. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hicrc/firearms-research/guns-and-death/>

5. According to a November 25, 2013 report from Public Health – Seattle & King County, available at

[https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/violence-injury-prevention/violenceprevention/~media/depts/health/violence-injury-prevention/documents/impact-firearms-children-report.ashx](https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/violence-injury-prevention/violenceprevention/~/media/depts/health/violence-injury-prevention/documents/impact-firearms-children-report.ashx)

6. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/posteverything/wp/2018/02/27/arming-teachers-would-put-black-and-latino-kids-in-danger/?utm_term=.1aa6bc969c00