

Olympia School District

Resolution 572 Common Sense Gun Safety

A RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors of Olympia School District No. 111, Thurston County, Olympia, Washington to declare support for common sense gun safety legislation, declare opposition to efforts to arm educators and staff in our schools, declare support for increased mental health education and services, and declare support of the March for Our Lives at 10:00 a.m., March 24, 2018, on the Capitol Steps.

WHEREAS, the School Board and the Superintendent's highest priority is to ensure that all students receive an education, which, by definition, means providing learning environments that are safe, secure, and supportive; and

WHEREAS, gun violence is a danger to the students, families, educators, paraeducators, administrators, and support staff of the Olympia School District; and

WHEREAS, Washington state law (RCW 28A.600.420 and RCW 9.41.280) and Olympia School District policy (4210) already prohibit weapons and firearms on school properties; and

WHEREAS, since 2013, there have been 291 shootings on elementary, middle, and high school and college campuses in the United States which averages to about one per week,¹ and 168 of those shootings were at K-12 schools;² and

WHEREAS, in the past five years, eight school shootings have occurred in Washington state, four of which resulted in injury or death,³ and districts around Washington State have far too often been the scenes of gun violence and threats of gun violence; and

WHEREAS, in Washington, a military style assault weapon can be purchased with no state background check or waiting period;⁴ 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

¹Everytown for Gun Safety; School Shootings in America Since 2013. February 2018, <https://everytownresearch.org/school-shootings/>.

²Everytown for Gun Safety; Keep Guns Out of Elementary, Middle, and High Schools; February 2018; <https://everytownresearch.org/guns-in-elementary-middle-and-high-schools>.

³Everytown for Gun Safety; 291 School Shootings in America since 2013; <https://everytownresearch.org/schoolshootings/#2919>

⁴<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/washington-lawmakers-should-take-vote-on-assault-weapons-limits/>

⁵ <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hicrc/firearms-research/guns-and-death/>.

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

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WHEREAS, more guns result in more homicides,⁵ children of color are victims of homicide by firearms at a higher rate than white children, and our nation is now aware that persons of color are more likely to be wrongfully shot by persons in positions of power, leads to the conclusion that arming educators could have a disproportionately adverse and lethal impact on students of color;⁶ and

WHEREAS, students have seized the conscience of the nation, our state, and our district with their demand for strong action to reduce preventable gun violence and on March 24, 2018, a National March for Our Lives will be held by student leaders seeking to deliver an unmistakable message that now is the time to pass common sense gun safety laws; and

WHEREAS, sensible gun safety legislation will strengthen protections for our schools and students by preventing dangerous individuals from attaining firearms; and

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to increase available mental health resources for students and educators alike, as well as a need to expand restorative justice practices, and deepen our commitment to social and emotional learning; and

WHEREAS, it is the belief of the Board of Directors that Olympia and Washington State can and should be national leaders in confronting gun violence and expanding trauma-informed educational practices;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Olympia School Board supports sensible gun safety legislation to protect students and staff, such as:

- raising the age to purchase assault weapons to 21,
- implementing Enhanced Background Checks for Assault Weapons,
- banning the purchase and sale of “assault” or semi- automatic rifles and of any accessories designed to increase a gun’s rate of fire,
- establishing safety programs in schools that do NOT include arming educators or staff,
- eliminating private gun sale loopholes,
- providing funding for thorough gun violence research, including removing the prohibition on research and data collection by the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC);
- supporting prevention, intervention and community re-entry programs that reduce community and gun violence; and
- increased funding for programs, training, and school staffing, including but not limited to counselors, behavioral technicians, nurses, psychologists, and social worker, that support student and educator mental health, social and emotional learning, restorative justice, and combat bullying; and therefore be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Olympia School District supports legislation currently under consideration by the Washington State Legislature that would enact some of the above measures, including Senate Bill 6620 and House Bill 3004; as well as Engrossed Senate Bill 5992 and House Bill 1377, which currently await Governor Inslee’s signature, and therefore be it further

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RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Olympia School District wholly rejects arming school staff for any purpose, and will maintain existing regulation of firearms at school and will NOT support any effort to arm educators and staff; and therefore be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Olympia School District wholly endorses and will participate in the student led March for Our Lives on March 24, 2018.

ADOPTED this 5th day of March, 2018, by the Board of Directors of Olympia School District No. 111, Thurston County, Washington, at a meeting held thereof.

OLYMPIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 111
A municipal corporation of the State of Washington

Frank L. Wilson, President

Joellen Wilhelm, Vice President

Leslie Huff, Director

Hilary Seidel, Director

Scott Clifthorne, Director

Attest:

Patrick C. Murphy, Ed.D., Superintendent
Secretary to the Board of Directors