

RESOLUTION URGING ACTION TO PROTECT YOUTH FROM GUN VIOLENCE

SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

RESOLUTION No. 2319-5

WHEREAS, the month of June is nationally recognized as gun violence awareness month and the first Friday is recognized as National Gun Violence Day; and

WHEREAS, Moms Demand Action, a group dedicated to discussing the issue of gun violence, in conjunction with Everytown for Gun Safety, a similar group that conducts gun violence studies, are hosting a “Wear Orange Weekend” from June 2nd to June 4th to raise awareness on the issue of gun violence in the United States; and

WHEREAS, gun violence is now the number one cause of death for children and teenagers, surpassing car accidents, and is a public health crisis; 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, since the 1999 Columbine school shooting more than 300,000 students have experienced gun violence at their schools. As of April 11, 2023, there have been 46 school shootings in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the first four months of 2023 has seen more school shootings than any year since the Columbine incident; and

WHEREAS, there have been over 375 school shootings nationwide since Columbine. At least 199 children, educators, and others have been killed in a school shooting and at least 425 have been injured; and

WHEREAS, since Columbine, in school shooting cases where the source of the involved gun could be determined, 86 percent were found in homes of friends, relatives, or parents; and

WHEREAS, there is a disproportionate impact of school shootings on children of color. Hispanic students are twice as likely as their white peers to encounter campus gun violence and Black students are three times as likely; and

WHEREAS, *The Washington Post* reports out that the median age of school shooters is 16; and

WHEREAS, according to the K-12 School Shooting Database from the Center of Homeland Defense and Security, California ranks number one in school shootings with 164 incidents reported. Every state in America has experienced at least one school shooting.; and

WHEREAS, according to Nationwide Children’s Hospital almost 1,300 youth younger than 18 years old die from shootings every year. They found that one in three families with a youth in the household has at least one gun in the home. Which means approximately 22 million youth live in homes with guns. Youth aged 11-14 years old account for almost 40 percent of all unintentional shooting deaths; and

WHEREAS, the [Be Smart for Kids](#) non-profit sponsors the Be S.M.A.R.T. Campaign, launched in 2015 by Everytown for Gun Safety, which is an initiative to bring awareness to safe gun storage. The S.M.A.R.T. acronym stands for: Securing all firearms, Model appropriate and safe behavior around firearms, Asking questions about unsecured firearms in homes other than your own, Recognizing the relationship between firearms and suicide, Telling others to be S-M-A-R-T with gun ownership; and

WHEREAS, the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) identifies gun violence as a public health epidemic that is preventable using clinical and public health approaches that combine sensible policy, improved surveillance, research to identify best practices, and evidence-informed cross-sectoral primary prevention and intervention efforts; and

WHEREAS, in 2022 the Santa Clara County Public Health Department conducted a study on the cost of gun violence in the county. This study found firearm violence cost 1.2 billion dollars during 2016-2020. 50 percent of the total costs were related to firearm assault/homicide and 38 percent related to self-inflicted injuries and suicide; and

WHEREAS, the SCCOE sponsored Senate Bill 906 which was approved by Governor Newsom in July 2022. The bill went into effect January 1, 2023 adding Sections 49390 through 49395 to the California Education Code. The bill requires “school officials” of any school district, county office of education, or charter school to immediately report homicidal threats, or perceived homicidal threats, they have observed or been alerted to law enforcement. This obligation applies only to local educational agencies that serve pupils in any grades from 6-12 as part of a middle school or high school; and

WHEREAS, upon receiving notification of a threat by a school official, law enforcement must conduct an investigation and threat assessment. The investigation and threat assessment must include a review of the Department of Justice’s firearm registry and a search conducted at the school site, but “only if the search is justified by a reasonable suspicion that it would produce evidence related to the threat or perceived threat”; and

WHEREAS, local educational agencies (LEAs) support law enforcement with investigating the threat and conducting a threat assessment; and

WHEREAS, beginning in the 2023–24 school year, all LEAs (regardless of grade level served) must include information about the safe storage of firearms in the annual notifications that LEAs are obligated to send to parents as noted in Assembly Bill 452 which was signed by Governor Newsom in August 2022; and

WHEREAS, the California Department of Education (CDE) will create and distribute model content by July 1, 2023 for LEAs to include in their parental notice; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Board of Education (SCCBOE) and County Superintendent of Schools urge that collaboration amongst communities, schools, health experts, policymakers and families to prevent firearm injuries and deaths; so

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Santa Clara County Board of Education and County Superintendent of Schools strongly support continued advocacy highlighting the need for proactive measures to ensure safe schools and communities and for the safe and proper storage of firearms.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Santa Clara County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools strongly urge Congress to take proactive measures to ensure safe schools and communities and to prevent gun violence.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the County Board of Education at a meeting held on May 17, 2023, by the following vote:

AYES: President Chon, Vice President Sreekrishnan, and Trustees Berta, Di Salvo, Lari, Mah, and Rocha

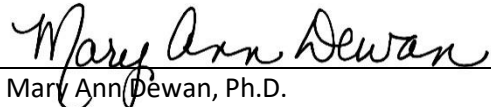
NOES: none

ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: none



Victoria Chon, President
Santa Clara County Board of Education



Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.
County Superintendent of Schools