

Mr. Schmerelson- Protecting Our Children from Preventable Gun Violence (Res-046-18/19) (For Action June 18, 2019)

Whereas, The Los Angeles Unified School District is the second largest school district in the nation, enrolling approximately 625,000 Pre-K – 12 students at approximately 1,100 school sites;

Whereas, District schools continue to be safe havens for our students and school safety continues to be one of the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District's highest priorities;

Whereas, School shootings have become an all-too-frequent occurrence in modern America. From 2012 and the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School which claimed the lives of 20 first graders, through 2017, the Gun Violence Archive counted 251 shootings at K-12 schools in the United States. In that time, over 350 people were shot and 120 died;

Whereas, Unsecured guns pose a special risk to children - kids as young as three years old are strong enough to pull a trigger. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that from 1999 through 2017 (the most recent year available), an average of 65 children less than 15 years of age were unintentionally shot and killed each year in the U.S.;

Whereas, In California, from 1999 through 2017, each year an average of 27 children under the age of 18 have died by suicide with a gun. Most often the gun used in youth suicide belongs to a parent or family member;

Whereas, The Children's Firearm Safety Alliance, which tracks incidents of children under the age of 18 who have unintentionally shot themselves or others, found that in 2017 in the U.S., 364 children under the age of 18 unintentionally pulled the trigger of a gun, injuring themselves or someone else; 132 children died as a result of their injury and 16 of those shot were adults. Year to-date (as of April 22, 2019), children under the age of 18 unintentionally injured or killed 70 people with a gun;

Whereas, Nearly 70 percent of student shooters gained access to a lawfully purchased gun from their residence or the residence of a relative; 87 percent of kids know where their parents' guns are kept and 60 percent have handled them; over 80 percent of teens who commit suicide with a gun used one that belonged to someone in their home; and guns are the third leading cause of death for kids;

Whereas, District schools are required to comply with California Education Code Section 32280-9, which mandates the preparation of school safety plans;

Whereas, These plans address violence prevention, emergency preparedness, traffic safety and crisis intervention;

Whereas, The District has committed to maximizing school safety by Integrated Safe School Plans at every school, creating the School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) Task Force and integrating emergency, crisis and threat assessment teams to ensure a safe school environment at every school site;

Whereas, Keeping students, teachers and staff safe from the threat of gun violence should be the responsibility of all adult stakeholders at each of our school sites;

Whereas, In light of the mass shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer assembled a Blue Ribbon Panel on School Safety that was charged with examining, evaluating, and recommending ways to enhance the significant efforts by the District to keep students safe from violence, particularly gun violence;

Whereas, The Blue Ribbon Panel, composed of experts and leaders from a wide array of fields, discussed access to firearms, student mental health on and off campus, the reporting and investigation of threats, safety in the neighborhoods surrounding schools, school security procedures and the design of safe schools among other issues;

Whereas, Approximately 20 percent of adults in California possess a firearm, and state and local law criminalizes unsafe storage of firearms where minors may be present, and gun stores are required to post flyers that set forth safe storage requirements, there are no dedicated resources for educating adults about safe storage of firearms;

Whereas, A major recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Panel is for the District to establish policies and practices to better educate parents and guardians about gun storage requirements and the enforcement of gun storage laws; and

Whereas, In order to continue with preventative measures to increase school safety we must act now; now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District directs the Superintendent and staff to assist school administrators in updating their Integrated Safe School Plan to include materials and training videos on detection and prevention of gun violence and safe gun storage;

Resolved further, That the Board directs the Superintendent and staff to update the Student Handbook to include information about parents' legal duties to safely store firearms;

Resolved further, That the Board directs the Superintendent to create an appropriate letter, in English and Spanish, to parents and guardians that explains the importance of safe gun storage and the legal obligations to protect minors from negligent gun storage, to be included in annual registration materials at each school site, and requiring a signature acknowledging awareness of safe gun storage responsibilities; and, be it finally

Resolved, That the Board and the Superintendent will continue to work with local law enforcement agencies, health agencies and non-profits to collaborate and increase efforts to inform District parents of their duty to safely store firearms in their homes.