

**MERCER ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400
RESOLUTION NO. 665**

SCHOOL SAFETY AND PREVENTION OF GUN VIOLENCE

A Resolution of the Board of Directors regarding school safety and the prevention of gun violence.

WHEREAS, in light of the recent shooting at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, the Board of Directors (“Board”) of the Mercer Island School District No. 400 (“District”) would like to reaffirm its commitment to preserving school safety for the District’s students and staff; and

WHEREAS, more than 150,000 students attending more than 170 primary and secondary schools have experienced a shooting on campus since the Columbine High School massacre in 1999;¹ and

WHEREAS, firearms are the 3rd leading cause of death of children age 17 and younger in the United States due to homicide, suicide and accidental shootings;² and

WHEREAS, the profiles of persons who have engaged in school shootings illustrate the need for a thorough examination of the identification, care and treatment of the mentally ill, the vulnerable, and the disenfranchised students; and

WHEREAS, a prerequisite to student growth, learning, well-being and success is a safe and secure school environment; and

WHEREAS, children throughout the nation have been negatively affected directly and indirectly by violent crimes including firearms; and Washington school children are required to spend time participating in lock-down and active shooter drills, detracting from time spent on critical classroom learning and invoking significant anxiety and fear among students and staff that impedes learning; and

WHEREAS, school shootings continue to occur in the United States. Survivors from this latest event in Parkland, Florida, and students around the country are looking to adults and elected officials to develop a solution that addresses the problem and puts a stop to further acts of violence; and

WHEREAS, we are locally elected officials charged with ensuring, in collaboration with parents and the community, the education, health, and safety of each student in our schools, and therefore cannot accept the status quo that fails to prevent guns from being accessed and used for violence and harm to students; and

WHEREAS, the Board realizes the responsibility for preventing gun violence cannot be relegated to school districts alone. We are aware that there is a complex interaction of risk factors, warning signs, barriers, and mental states that leads to violence, but we believe that the health and safety of our students and employees is our highest priority and that they will thrive in a vibrant, healthful, safe, enriching, and respectful environment; and

¹ Rozsa, Lori et al. (2018, February 15). “A horrific, horrific day”: At least 17 killed in Florida school shooting. The Washington Post. Retrieved from www.washingtonpost.com/news/education/wp/2018/02/14/school-shooting-reported-at-florida-high-school/.

² Fowler KA, et al. Childhood Firearm Injuries in the United States. Pediatrics (2017).

WHEREAS, the Board supports policies that take a holistic approach to decreasing the potential for further violence on any school campus or at school-related events, and to improving mental health support; safety precautions; and education to prevent gun violence;

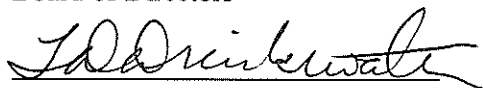
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board as follows:

1. the Board requests the United States Congress and state legislatures, including the Washington State Legislature, to prioritize the protection of students and local government employees by passing legislation that:
 - more effectively regulates access to firearms in the interest of public safety;
 - funds public health research on firearms-related issues;
 - advances mental health support; and
 - classifies and funds social/emotional learning as basic education.³
2. the Board shall continue to regularly review the topic of gun violence prevention and school safety, with input from the District and other community agencies, such as the Mercer Island Police Department and the Mercer Island Youth and Family Services, to ensure best practices for school safety and emergency preparedness that are inclusive of the individual and specific needs of each student.
3. the Board will support efforts to reduce violence in schools and communities that include strategies for eliminating inappropriate youth access to firearms, and strategies to keep guns out of the hands of those who would harm students; and continue to enforce policies that ensure that the only armed persons at schools are licensed law enforcement personnel, in accordance with Washington state law (RCW 28A.600.420; RCW 9.41.280) and the District’s policy 4210A, *Regulation of Dangerous Weapons on School Premises*.
4. the Board shall advocate that Mercer Island City Council enact legislation that will provide dedicated long-term funding to sustain the full-time Mercer Island Youth and Family Services mental health counselors in each of the District’s schools.

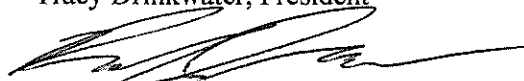
With gratitude to the students of Mercer Island who have spoken out on this issue, we make this resolution in support of their voices. We urge our legislators to immediately and swiftly act to further protect the health and safety of our nation’s children.

Dated this 22nd day of March, 2018, at a regular meeting of the Board of Directors, Mercer Island School District No. 400.

MERCER ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400
Board of Directors



Tracy Drinkwater, President


Ralph Jorgenson, Vice President

³ Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence. Call for Action to Prevent Gun Violence in the United States of America. *University of Virginia – Curry School of Education*. February 28, 2018.

David D'Souza

David D'Souza, Director

Brian Giannini Upton

Brian Giannini Upton, Director

Deborah Lurie

Deborah Lurie, Director

Attest:

Donna Colosky

Donna Colosky, Secretary to the Board