

RESOLUTION No. 5606

Resolution on Gun Violence in our Schools

RECITALS

- A. There is a need for the nation's major city school systems to express their positions on school safety matters that affect their students and the children residing in their cities.
- B. Thousands of America's students have publicly expressed concern for their safety and well-being and have indicated that policymakers should act immediately to protect them in school and beyond.
- C. The leaders of Portland Public Schools respect the concerns of their students, and support the growing civic and social participation of high school students that was inspired by recent events.
- D. Since the school shooting in Columbine in 1999, there have been numerous other school shootings, including at Thurston High School in Springfield, Springwater Trail High School in Gresham, Reynolds High School in Troutdale, and Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, as well as in Red Lake (MN), Lancaster (PA), Blacksburg (VA), Chardon (OH), Cleveland (OH), Sandy Hook (CT), Broward County (FL), and many others that have taken scores of young lives.
- E. Too many of our young people are shot and killed on the streets of our major cities almost every day.
- F. Americans are 25 times more likely to be killed with a gun than people in other developed countries, including, on average, one Oregonian per day.
- G. Americans make up about 4.4 percent of the world's population but own some 42 percent of the world's guns.
- H. Teachers are not trained law enforcement officers, and should not be asked or incentivized to keep weapons accessible in their classrooms.
- I. There is no evidence based on any credible research to suggest that adding guns into a school setting or arming teachers would prevent these acts of violence.
- J. Schools across the country need considerable additional resources to plan for the possibility of such acts of violence, coordinate with law enforcement, and secure their buildings from intruders.
- K. Our schools lack the mental health counselors, psychologists, and social workers they need to identify and work with students showing warning signs for depression and violence.
- L. The nation's data collection on gun violence and gun ownership is inadequate to monitor, understand, or prevent these events from happening.
- M. The multiple school shootings that the nation has witnessed over the years have complex causes requiring multiple solutions.

RESOLUTION

1. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools stand with the students of Broward County Public Schools and the nation in demanding effective and comprehensive action from the federal government to protect schoolchildren.
2. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools calls on the Congress of the United States and the State of Oregon to ban the manufacture, sale, purchase, possession, and use of all semi-automatic weapons and large-capacity ammunition cartridges, except those needed by the military and law enforcement.
3. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools calls on the Congress of the United States and the State of Oregon to require and strengthen universal background checks to possess any type of firearm.
4. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools calls on the President of the United States to charge all agencies of the federal government with the task of reducing the number of gun-related injuries and deaths in America.

5. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools is opposed to the arming of teachers to protect schools and children.
6. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools calls on the Congress of the United States to extend the perimeter of Gun-Free School Zones.
7. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools calls on the Congress of the United States to appropriate adequate new funds to allow school districts across the nation to plan and coordinate school security efforts with law enforcement officials and make other building alterations that may be necessary to protect students, teachers, and staff.
8. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools calls on the Congress of the United States to appropriate adequate new funds to increase the numbers of counselors, mental health staff, psychologists, and social workers in our schools.
9. The Board of Education of Portland Public Schools calls on the Congress of the United States to rescind the Dickey Amendment that has prevented research into gun violence and to require that states and the federal government collect the data necessary to track, monitor, understand, and prevent the epidemic of gun violence in America.