

Berkeley Unified School District
June 29, 2022

RESOLUTION NO. 22-053

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SCHOOL SAFETY:
PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN AND STAFF

WHEREAS, on May 24, 2022, 19 students, Alexandria Rubio (10), Alithia Ramierz (10), Amerie Jo Garza (10), Annabell Guadalupe Rodriguez (10), Eliahana Cruz Torres (10), Eliana Garcia (9), Jacklyn Cazares (10), Jailah Nicole Silguero (10), Jayce Luevanos (10), Jose Flores Jr. (10), Layla Salazar (10), Makenna Lee Elrod (10), Maite Rodriguez (10), Maranda Mathis (11), Nevaeh Bravo (10), Rojelio Torres (10), Tess Marie Mata (10), Uziyah Garcia (10), Xavier Lopez (10), and 2 educators, Eva Mireles (44) and Irma Garia were shot and killed by and 18-year old at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas, as well as injuring 16 other young students and adults; and

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2022, a mass shooting occurred at a Tops Supermarket in Buffalo, New York, where 10 people were killed and 3 wounded. The US Department of Justice is investigating this hate crime and an act of racially motivated violent extremism; and

WHEREAS, on November 30, 2021, 4 students were shot and killed by a fellow 15-year-old student at Oxford High School in Oxford Township, Michigan, and injuring 6 other students and a teacher; and

WHEREAS, May 26th, 2022 marked the one year anniversary of the tragic San Jose VTA shooting which claimed the lives of 9 members of the VTA community in a senseless act of violence; and

WHEREAS, our state has been impacted by the act of terrorism and mass shooting at the Gilroy Garlic Festival on July 28, 2019, which senselessly took the young lives of Stephen Romero (6), Keyla Salazar (13), and Trevor Irby (25); and

WHEREAS, on November 14, 2019, two students, Gracie Muehlberger (15) and Dominic Blackwell (14), were shot and killed by a fellow student gunman at Saugus High School in Santa Clarita, with three other young students injured as well, all in a matter of 16 seconds; and

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; and

WHEREAS, according to *Education Week*, from 2018 to the present, there have been 119 school shootings, with 27 school shootings with injuries or death this year so far (2022); and

WHEREAS, according to the Gun Violence Archive, there have been more than 200 mass shootings in the United States this year so far (231 as of June 1, 2022), with 693 mass shootings in 2021, 611 in 2020, and 417 in 2019; and

WHEREAS, according to the Everytown Gun Safety Support Fund, 73-80% of school shooters obtained the gun(s) from their home or the homes of relatives or friends and that every year, 18,000 children and teens are shot and killed or wounded and approximately 3 million are exposed to gun violence; additionally, "Researchers recently estimated that the number of children living in households with firearms in the United States increased to 30 million in 2021—up 7 million from 2015;" and

WHEREAS, unsecured guns pose a special risk to children - kids as young as three years old are strong enough to pull a trigger. Findings from the 2021 National Firearm survey indicates that approximately 4.6 million children lived in a home with loaded and unlocked firearms; and

WHEREAS, firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teens (ages 1 to 19) in the United States. Every year, 18,000 children and teens are shot and killed or wounded and approximately 3 million are exposed to gun violence. Furthermore, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that firearm homicide rates are highest among teens and young adults 15-34 years of age and among Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Hispanic or Latino populations; and

WHEREAS, in California, despite strong gun safety laws and a low gun death rate compared to other states, guns are the third-leading cause of death for California children ages 1–17. From 2013 to 2017, 3,278 people under age 25 were killed with a gun in California; and

WHEREAS, according to the *New England Journal of Medicine*, firearm-related injuries are now (as of 2020) the leading cause of death among children and adolescents, accompanied by a 29.5% increase in firearm-related deaths from 2019 to 2020, more than twice as high as the relative increase in the general population; and

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

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Unified School District strives to provide safe havens for our students and

school safety continues to be one of the District Governing Board's highest priorities; and

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

WHEREAS, these plans address violence prevention, emergency preparedness, traffic safety and crisis intervention; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Unified School District has committed to maximizing school safety through School Safety Plans at every school, implementing the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, and integrating emergency, crisis and threat assessment teams to ensure a safe school environments across the District; and

WHEREAS, keeping students, teachers and staff safe from the threat of gun violence is the responsibility of all adult stakeholders at each of our school sites and throughout our District; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley Unified School District takes regular steps to protect campus safety and ensure employees, students, and families are prepared for a variety of potential emergencies; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley Unified School District has recently entered into a comprehensive review of all school safety plans. Recognizing that ongoing safety assessment is a best practice for schools, the district has retained professional expertise to refresh the district's assessment of campus and facility safety; update safety documents; and train staff on safety event response and how to conduct effective school safety drills.

WHEREAS, BUSD School Safety Plans currently include instructions on the use of the "ALICE Protocols" for violent/armed intruder incidents. These responses aren't meant to be sequential, but to be used dynamically depending on the situation.

A- Alert

Use plain and specific language to alert others to danger, including 911 calls and communications to individuals on site. Use any means necessary to provide the alert including the public address system, bull horn, phone, and two-way radio.

L – Lockdown

Students and staff go into classrooms/buildings or Safe Staging Areas, lockdown and barricade the room, cover windows, turn off lights, and prepare to evacuate or counter, if needed.

I – Inform

Communicate the violent intruder's location and direction in real time utilizing all means available, including 911 calls, PA system, and surveillance video.

C- Counter

Create noise, movement, distance, and distraction to reduce the intruder's ability to shoot accurately. Counter is not fighting.

E – Evacuate

When possible and safe to do so, remove yourself from the danger zone, run in a zig-zag pattern or other motion, as appropriate, to avoid becoming a target. In an active shooter incident, this can include evacuating with arms in the air, so as not to be mistaken for the shooter.

WHEREAS, Starting in 2018, BUSD initiated a project to upgrade all K-12 schools to include special "Columbine" locks on all classroom doors. This project has been completed. These locks allow interior classroom doors to be locked from inside without a key. All schools also have cameras, lights, alarms and public address systems.

WHEREAS, In this year's budget cycle, BUSD staff have proposed and the Board of Education has approved the creation of a new full time Safety Coordinator role. The Safety Coordinator role is imagined as a means of reinforcing the district's existing safety practices.

WHEREAS, On November 3, BHS held a lockdown drill. During this drill, all students and staff practiced the procedure for locking down classrooms and offices and sheltering in place. This included viewing a student-developed safety drill video which demonstrated what to do in the event of an armed intruder or other dangerous individual on campus, a script read to all students prior to the drill that explained how the drill would work and offered support to any student who may have felt triggered or in need of support after the drill, and then an announcement on the PA to begin the drill.

WHEREAS, in order to continue with preventative measures to increase school safety, we must act now; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Governing Board of the Berkeley Unified School District adopts this resolution and directs the Superintendent to assist school administrators in continuing to update their School Safety Plans to include the most current materials and training on the prevention and response to acts of violence in all form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governing Board directs the Superintendent to update the Student Handbook to include the most current information about caregivers' legal duties to safely store firearms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governing Board and the Superintendent will continue to work with City and County agencies, health agencies and nonprofits to collaborate and increase efforts to inform District caregivers of their duty to safely store firearms in their homes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governing Board will direct the Superintendent to send out a yearly notification to all District parents and staff on safe firearm storage and the District's commitment to school safety; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Superintendent will make a recommendation to the Governing Board during the 22-23 school year as to whether to establish a district-wide Safety Committee or Safety Task Force to conduct additional holistic review and needs assessment of safety gaps and concerns at both the site and District level throughout the 2022-23 school year. The composition of this body, may consist of staff (classified staff, certificated staff, classified/certificated/district-level management), two members of the Governing Board, parents, and students (one student per middle school/high school), with at least one parent or teacher representative from each school site; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governing Board supports current district efforts to assess and improve campus safety, and to provide training to administrators, safety workers, and all other staff in order to maximize the district's preparedness for a range of safety-related concerns.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Unified School District will not support the arming of certificated and classified school and District staff members with guns; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Governing Board recognizes the importance of youth activism and student voice, and therefore supports the discussion on the national implementation of A Peace Plan For A Safer America, developed by the students organizing March for Our Lives to "GENERATE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS: The federal and state government should fully fund targeted interventions addressing the intersectional dimensions of gun violence, including community-based urban violence reduction programs, suicide prevention programs, domestic violence prevention programs, mental and behavioral health service programs, and programs to address police violence in our communities;" and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governing Board urges the United States Congress to prioritize the protection of students and school system employees by passing common sense gun control reform that would help protect students from gun violence, including

implementing universal background checks, implementing Extreme Risk Laws also known as 'Red Flag Laws, reinstating the federal assault gun ban, and prohibiting sales of guns to violent criminals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governing Board urges the United States Congress to not only continue but to increase funding for gun violence research by the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Institute of Health (NIH) to learn how best to protect American families and communities from the devastation of gun violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governing Board calls upon the State Legislature to increase K-12 funding for wraparound services to prevent bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence in our schools and to provide funding for programs and staff such as counselors, nurses, psychologists, and social workers that support students' mental, physical and emotional health; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to our Congress Representatives, State Legislators, State Superintendent, State Attorney General and the Governor of the State of California.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Governing Board of the Berkeley Unified School District this June 29, 2022 by the following vote:

AYES: 5
NOES: 0
ABSENT: 0
ABSTAIN: 0

Ana Vasudeo

Ana Vasudeo, Clerk