

**Resolution on Gun Violence**

August 18, 2021

Introduced by: Lawrence Scott, Member-at-Large

**Sponsored by:** Board President Lou Petrucci, Park District  
Dr. Kathy Evans-Brown, East District and Vice President for Student Achievement  
Dr. Ann Rivera, Member-at-Large and Vice President of Executive Affairs  
Hope Jay, North District  
Jennifer Mecozzi, West District  
Terrance Heard, Member-at-Large  
Sharon Belton-Cottman, Ferry District  
Paulette Woods, Central District

**Whereas**, various branches of government have declared gun violence a public health crisis and emergency in Erie County;

**Whereas**, as of July 6, 2021, there had been 773 shootings and 895 victims in New York State (32% increase from 2020) and 177 people have been shot in Buffalo (64% increase over the 10-year average of 108), in 2021;

**Whereas**, many Buffalo youth, some as young as three years-old, have been victims of the gun violence, and countless others are enduring the trauma of witnessing gun violence and loss of loved ones from gun violence;

**Whereas**, one out of three Buffalo Public School students said they had witnessed someone being “shot, beaten, or stabbed” on the Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2019;

**Whereas**, a majority of gun crimes in New York State come from guns in other states with lax gun control laws;

**Whereas**, the late and honorable founder of Most Valuable Parents, Neal Dobbins, was a relentless advocate against gun violence and was committed to the repeal of the Tiahrt and Dickey Amendments, which hinder the tracking and pursuit of illegal gun trafficking and the study and reporting on gun violence trends by the Center for Disease and Control (CDC);

**Therefore, Be It Resolved**, the Buffalo Board of Education commits to a presentation and discussion on gun violence by the Erie County District Attorney’s Office in a BOE Work Session to begin the 2021-22 school year and holding at least one town hall meeting for the 2021-22 school year, incorporating the voices and experience of students, their families and community members to identify ways to end gun violence in our schools and our community;

**Further, Be It Resolved**, the Buffalo Board of Education is committed to providing the monetary resources necessary to address, reduce, and resolve gun violence in our community;

**Further, Be It Resolved**, the Buffalo Board of Education directs Buffalo Public Schools to implement the following:

1. Continue to identify and expand mental health, mentorship, and social-emotional programming, and restorative practices to support staff, students and their caregivers to de-escalate conflict in schools and in the community;
2. Professional development on the Code of Conduct with an emphasis on implementing restorative practices during the Superintendent Conference Days to begin the 2021-22 school year;
3. Panel discussions on gun violence in Buffalo Public Schools facilitated by the Erie County District Attorney's Office for the 2021-22 school year;
4. Identify data necessary to track, monitor, understand, and prevent gun violence in our schools through existing instruments such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey;

**Further, Be It Resolved**, the Buffalo Board of Education appeals for the following actions:

1. The Buffalo Board of Education directs our United States Congress to act to:
  - a. Repeal the Tiahrt and Dickey Amendments;
  - b. Ban assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines;
  - c. Enable the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to research gun violence as a public health issue;
  - d. Require background checks for all gun sales;
  - e. Amend legislation to prevent those convicted of domestic violence crimes from obtaining license to obtain firearms permanently;
  - f. Make extreme risk protection orders available in every state;
  - g. Support local violence prevention and intervention programs;
2. The Buffalo Board of Education requests our federal, state, county, and city governments to include the Buffalo Board of Education and Buffalo Public Schools in any task force or committee to address gun violence, which directly and indirectly impacts so many of our students and families;
3. The Buffalo Board of Education requests that our partners in government and community leaders invest in reforms that effectively address root causes of gun violence, including:
  - a. Comprehensive mental health supports and services;
  - b. Affordable housing;
  - c. Living wage jobs;
  - d. Community policing;
  - e. Revitalizing neighborhoods, parks, and recreational opportunities, and;

**Further, Be It Resolved**, that this resolution be submitted to all relevant federal, state, county, and city elected officials and leaders.