

Statement from Ellen Ives, President, East Lansing High School Parent Council  
March 13, 2018

On this eve of the National School Walkout in honor and memory of the students and staff killed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School last month, a number of East Lansing school affiliated organizations have signed on to the following:

#### JOINT STATEMENT ON GUN VIOLENCE AND SCHOOL SAFETY

"In the wake of yet another school shooting, and outraged and grieving with all those affected by this and all other similar incidents, the East Lansing Board of Education, East Lansing High School Parent Council Board, East Lansing District Parent Council, East Lansing High School Student Council and East Lansing Education Association release this joint statement:

School safety is critical for a safe and positive environment which supports student learning and achievement. Parents, educators and school administrators, students and community members must make every attempt to promote programs, policies and laws aimed at reducing violence, especially incidents that involve firearms.

We call on the school district to maintain and enhance strategies to identify and support students at-risk for violence, as well as to work with local law enforcement to identify and use best practices for responding to crisis situations. We call on students to seek out opportunities to create an inclusive school atmosphere, reach out to trusted adults with concerns, and raise their voices in leadership on these issues. We call on students, parents and community members to demand that the Michigan State Board of Education and local, state and national legislators support and advocate for sensible legislation and public policies in the areas of gun safety and violence prevention, juvenile justice, and mental health.

Examples of ways to improve youth safety and to restrict guns to only responsible owners include advocating for the following:

- opposition to all guns in East Lansing Public Schools, other than those carried by trained law enforcement
- specifically, opposition to proposed Michigan legislation (Senate Bills 584 and 586) which would allow concealed carry in schools and prohibit local jurisdictions and school boards from taking action to disallow such activity gun safety locks and other safety devices to prevent young children from accidentally discharging a gun
- alternative educational settings for youth who have brought a firearm to school, along with appropriate evaluation and counseling
- restricted sale, purchase and use of automatic and semi-automatic weapons and components
- reviewing and enforcing federal and state minimum age requirements for handgun purchase

- increased funding for mental health services
- mandatory waiting periods of at least three business days to conduct background checks
- universal background checks (for both licensed and non-licensed dealers) and completion of proper paperwork so that guns can be traced
- cohesive, integrated education programs to teach students, parents, and community members about gun safety and violence prevention
- enhanced criteria for the legal purchase of guns, including preventing purchase of guns by those who have committed violent crimes, either as juveniles or adults
- support of state and federal funding initiatives for the research of the causes and effects of gun violence

Examples adapted, in part, from the National PTA:

<https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/position-statements/gun-safety-and-violence-prevention-ps.pdf>"

Ellen Ives, President

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