



Office of the Mayor
City of Seattle
Bruce Harrell, Mayor

Executive Order 2024-01 Addressing Gun Violence in Schools and Protecting Youth

WHEREAS, gun violence is a national epidemic, with very real impacts felt across our cities, our communities, and in our schools. In an average year, 44,341 people die by guns in the United States, a rate of 13.3 deaths per 100,000 people. In an average year, 96,935 people are wounded by guns, a rate of 29.2 injuries per 100,000 people;¹ and

WHEREAS, every year, thousands of young people in the United States gain access to guns and use them for harm to themselves or others – creating tragedy after tragedy. In 2023, there were at least 158 incidents of gunfire on school grounds, resulting in 45 deaths and 106 injuries nationally,² and

WHEREAS, shootings and shots-fired incidents have increased in Seattle by 11.1% this year through June 7 compared to the same period last year, from 282 to 313 incidents. These shootings have resulted in 14 deaths and 90 persons being wounded; and

WHEREAS, reported crimes at or immediately adjacent to public and private schools in Seattle are up 14.7% through June 10 this year compared to the same period last year, and

WHEREAS, there have been instances of gun violence happening at or around our schools. These incidents include but are not limited to:

On November 8, 2022, a 17-year-old student was shot and killed at Ingraham High School.

On May 18, 2023, a 19-year-old was found with gunshot wounds at the Garfield Teen Life Center parking lot.

On January 23, 2024, a 15-year-old student at West Seattle’s Chief Sealth High School was fatally shot at the Teen Life Center adjacent to the school.

On March 13, 2024, a 17-year-old student was shot in the leg at a bus stop across the street from Garfield High School.

On June 6, 2024, a 17-year-old student was killed at Garfield High School after being shot multiple times during the lunch period, and;

WHEREAS, these tragic incidents and other crime events impact students’ perceptions of safety within their schools. The [2023 Healthy Youth Survey](#) reveals that 19% of Seattle 10th grade students report feeling unsafe at school; and

¹ EveryStat, a research tool of Everytown for Gun Safety: <https://everystat.org/>. Accessed June 13, 2024.

² Everytown for Gun Safety: <https://everytownresearch.org/maps/gunfire-on-school-grounds/>. Accessed June 13, 2024.

WHEREAS, this year, the City conducted research and spoke with students, educators, providers, parents, and community organizations to better understand mental health needs. Students at schools with higher rates of violence identified a need for more preventive measures, better communication, coordination, and support during and after incidents to feel safe; and

WHEREAS, these studies and interviews demonstrate the inextricable link between school safety and the mental health and well-being of students. Fifty percent of Seattle Public Schools 8th graders and 71% percent of 12th graders reported feelings of anxiety and 30% of 12th graders reported feelings of depression, which impacts their ability to learn; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to preventing violence and ensuring that every young person has access to opportunities that allow them to reach their full potential. The City invests \$36,900,000 annually in violence interruption and community-based upstream services to address the root causes of violence, as well as in youth enrichment programs like mentorship, academic support, sports activities, leadership skills, and teen life centers; and

WHEREAS, today, the City released a strategy to address youth mental health in schools, including investments to improve access to enrichment programs, connect children to nature and the outdoors, de-stigmatize mental health for students and families, provide early intervention training, expand proactive mental health screening in high schools, and increase access to therapy; and

WHEREAS, the prevention of gun violence and a reduction in the availability of and accessibility to guns must be prioritized by our community leaders and elected officials, and be addressed both through collaboration with our community-led solutions, public health, and law enforcement partners and through legislative changes to put into action effective, long-term solutions to prevent and eliminate gun violence in our communities; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor will be hosting Cities United for its 11th annual national convention in October. Cities United is an organization that works with mayors, community leaders, and young people nationwide to reduce homicides and shootings among young Black men and boys by 50%, and build safe, healthy, and hopeful communities; and

WHEREAS, the City will host a One Seattle Youth Summit that brings together City and external resources and programming such as mentoring, recreational programming, internships, and career exploration, to support youth and lead them on a path to a healthy life; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to providing people within Seattle with timely, accurate, and trustworthy alerts and information during public safety or other emergencies through notifications from systems such as Alert Seattle and the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA). A coordinated notification and information sharing system is particularly important in the context of safety incidents involving youth and students; and

WHEREAS, addressing youth gun violence requires a multi-pronged approach that includes community-led programs and investments, law enforcement, mental health and school-based initiatives, and the innovative use of data, which are all critical components of the City's collaborative approach to reducing harm and increasing public safety; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor of Seattle, order the following actions to address these concerns, to increase safety at and adjacent to schools, and to protect our children from gun violence:

- A. The City will continue taking immediate action to enhance the safety of students, faculty, and other staff members at Garfield High School by stationing police officers outside of the school and expanding patrols in the surrounding neighborhood for the remainder of the school year. The City will evaluate the continuation of these patrols for the upcoming school year.
- B. Because of continued gun violence at and adjacent to Garfield High School, the City will, in collaboration with community, take steps to add CCTV cameras to the streets surrounding the school. These cameras will augment the existing school property cameras and record activity only on public streets and sidewalks.
- C. The City will partner with King County's Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention in planning and activating a joint regional "100 Days of Action" focused campaign to prevent violence between youth during the summer, convening Public Health – Seattle & King County, the Regional Peacekeepers Collective, community-based organizations, the Seattle Police Department, and the King County Sheriff's Office.
- D. The City will issue a gun trace data report to track firearms, conduct qualitative research into how illegal firearms are trafficked into community, and expand federal partnerships focused on addressing violence and other related criminal acts, in partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).
- E. The Mayor's Policy Team and the Seattle Human Services Department (HSD) will convene school personnel, City and County partners, violence interruption and intervention providers, and other stakeholders to develop recommendations to improve safety outcomes for our young people and the school community. The Mayor will propose \$2 million in funding for programs including:
 - (1) A plan to reduce youth gun violence for the 2024-2025 school year; and
 - (2) A coordinated process for identifying students at the highest risk of being directly impacted by violence and providing immediate wrap-around services such as mental health support, connections to violence interruption programs, and other resources.
- F. HSD, Seattle Parks & Recreation, and the Department of Education and Early Learning will expand on current initiatives to support safe passage for students coming to and leaving their schools and participating in afterschool and late-night programs at City facilities.
- G. The Mayor's Communications Team and the Office of Emergency Management will convene City departments to help community members receive timely and accurate information during incidents of gun violence or other public safety emergencies and develop a promotion plan to increase signups for the Alert Seattle notification system.

- H. The Mayor's Innovation and Performance team will explore the potential for new partnerships between students, schools, community members, law enforcement, and diversified response teams to address safety and a safety presence in schools. This will include conducting research on the positive and adverse impacts of current school-based programs and engaging with SPS leadership, parents, students, teachers, and others to inform innovative solutions.
- I. The City will seek partnerships with State legislators and other jurisdictions and will pursue an aggressive state legislative agenda to reduce gun violence by supporting supply-side intervention policies, including, but not limited to, establishing a permit-to-purchase system, restricting bulk purchases of weapons, requiring the safe storage of firearms, particularly in vehicles, repealing statewide preemption of local gun laws, and prohibiting weapons in public spaces and other spaces where children are present such as parks and community centers.

This Executive Order will be in effect until rescinded by the mayor.

Any questions regarding this Executive Order should be directed to Natalie Walton-Anderson, Director of Public Safety Office of the Mayor.

Dated this 14th day of June, 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce A. Harrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bruce A. Harrell
Mayor of Seattle