

# NASSP POLICY & ADVOCACY CENTER

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Policy & Advocacy Center presents an exclusive education and school safety panel:



## PROTECTING OUR SCHOOLS FROM GUN VIOLENCE

Tuesday, April 17th • 8:30–10:00am  
U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Room HVC-201, Washington, D.C.

In the wake of one of the deadliest school shootings in American history at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, the need to improve school safety and protect our communities from gun violence has never been more apparent. During this special event, you will hear directly from school leaders who have experienced these tragedies firsthand and their recommendations for policy solutions to prevent future violence.

As thousands of students around the country continue to lead calls for change, this event presents an opportunity for you to learn where educators and survivors stand on the issues and how legislative decisions will affect their future ability to keep schools safe.

NASSP and the NASSP Student Leadership Advisory Committee are proud to present this opportunity for school leaders, students, and survivors to make their voices heard.

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### REMARKS

**JoAnn Bartoletti**  
NASSP Executive Director

**Rep. Ted Deutch (FL-22)**

**Billy Wermuth**  
11th-grade student at North Penn High School and NASSP Student Leadership Advisory Committee member  
Lansdale, PA

**Devlin Andrews**  
11th-grade student at Coventry High School and NASSP Student Leadership Advisory Committee member,  
Coventry, RI

### PANELISTS

**Dr. Warman Hall**  
Principal,  
Aztec High School,  
Aztec, NM

**George Roberts**  
Former principal, Perry Hall High School, Baltimore, MD

**Dr. Dale Marsden**  
Superintendent, San Bernardino City Unified School District  
San Bernardino, CA

### MODERATOR

**Chelsea Parsons**  
Vice President,  
Gun Violence Prevention,  
Center for American Progress



## CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING: PROTECTING OUR SCHOOLS FROM GUN VIOLENCE

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### SPEAKERS

#### **JoAnn D. Bartoletti—Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals**

JoAnn D. Bartoletti is executive director and CEO of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the leading organization of and national voice for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and all school leaders from across the United States and more than 36 countries around the world.

Prior to assuming the leadership of NASSP in 2011, Bartoletti was the executive director of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA) for 20 years. Prior to her tenure at NJPSA, Bartoletti spent 15 years as assistant principal and principal at West Windsor-Plainsboro High School, which was ranked as one of the top 10 schools in New Jersey. She serves on the Board of Directors of the National Student Clearinghouse, the Learning First Alliance, and the National Policy Board for Education Administration.

#### **Representative Ted Deutch (D-FL)**

Congressman Ted Deutch represents Florida's 22nd district in South Florida. Now serving his fifth term in the 115th Congress, he is the ranking Democrat of the House Ethics Committee and a senior member of the House Judiciary Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where he serves as the ranking Democrat on the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee. He represents Parkland, Florida, where the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School took place, and he has been a leading voice for gun violence prevention and legislative reform since the tragedy in his district.

#### **Billy Wermuth—Student, North Penn High School, Lansdale, PA**

Billy Wermuth is a junior at North Penn High School in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. He serves on NASSP's Student Leadership Advisory Committee, where his student voice is promoted and heard. He was recently elected president of the National Honor Society chapter at his school and the Region F Representative on the Pennsylvania Association of Student Councils. He plays on the volleyball team and

plays trumpet in the jazz band and wind ensemble. Billy is also active in his community, volunteering for special needs programs and tutoring opportunities.

#### **Devlin Andrews—Student, Coventry High School, Coventry, RI**

Devlin Andrews is a junior at Coventry High School in Coventry, Rhode Island. He serves as the National Honor Society president in his school. As president, he works with dedicated students striving to make a difference through initiatives including food drives, winter jacket drives, and community outreach programs to build relationships with senior citizens. He also serves as part of NASSP's Student Leadership Advisory Committee, which in part advocates for education policy that will benefit America's youth.

### PANELISTS

#### **Dr. Warman Hall—Principal, Aztec High School, Aztec, NM**

Warman Hall has been in leadership at Aztec High School for ten years, serving the last eight years as the lead building principal. He graduated from high school in neighboring Bloomfield, NM, in 1991. Dr. Hall earned his bachelor's degree from Fort Lewis College in history in 1995. His master's degree in history and EdD in school leadership are both from the University of New Mexico. Dr. Hall has served as an educator in New Mexico for 20 years, including various leadership roles in addition to teaching history. His research interests are tacit knowledge acquisition and knowledge transfer in school leadership.

Two students were killed at Aztec High School on December 7, 2017, when a former student entered the school and fired gunshots at random. Principal Hall regards the tragedy as a watershed moment in his life and career, saying "The loss of two precious lives in our school due to a horrific violent act is something that will always stay with the staff, students, and community of Aztec. This tragedy was also followed by some of the best displays of humanity, as our local schools and students came together to support one another, and the entire region reached out to us in loving support."



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### **George Roberts—Former Principal, Perry Hall High School, Baltimore, MD**

Mr. Roberts currently serves as a community superintendent for Baltimore County Public Schools and has held this position since July 2016. As community superintendent, Mr. Roberts and his team supervise 46 schools and programs consisting of over 25,000 students and 2,000 teachers. Prior to serving as community superintendent, Mr. Roberts was the senior executive director of curriculum operations in the division of curriculum and instruction for Baltimore County Public Schools. Before coming to the division of curriculum and instruction, Mr. Roberts held the principal position of Perry Hall High School in Baltimore County.

On August 22, 2012, Perry Hall High School experienced a day filled with horror, anxiety, and tears. At 10:43 a.m., as over 500 students settled into the first lunch shift of the day and began sharing first day stories with old and new friends alike, two shotgun blasts echoed in the cafeteria and shattered the innocence of an entire school community. This brief act of violence forever changed the Perry Hall High School community and required the defining of a “new normal” for everyone involved. As the principal of Perry Hall High School, Mr. Roberts not only had to respond to this school shooting emergency as it unfolded, but he also had to lead a school community through recovery efforts. Mr. Roberts has willingly shared his story for the past six years in the hope of helping others become acutely aware of not only the impact of school shootings, but providing them the tools necessary to handle and cope with the effects of such a tragic event.

### **Dr. Dale Marsden—Superintendent, San Bernardino City Unified School District, San Bernardino, CA**

Dale Marsden is the superintendent of the San Bernardino Unified School District, California’s ninth largest urban public school district. Dr. Marsden is a 20-year veteran educator and has a proven track record of transforming educational systems by focusing on a broad-based community engagement approach. Dr. Marsden was recently recognized as one of *Education Week’s* 2018 National Leaders to Learn From for leadership in school climate and safety for one of California’s largest urban

districts. He is an emerging expert in high reliability organizations and has studied the effects of volatile and high-threat environments on adults and children alike. His most recent TEDx talk at La Sierra University was titled, “Culture Eats Schools for Lunch, and How Lessons from High Reliability Organizations May Help U.S. Schools Thrive.” Dr. Marsden is also a veteran who served as a non-commissioned officer in the United States Air Force as part of combat-ready security forces in Europe’s Strategic Air Command.

Dr. Marsden has dealt with gun violence on two separate occasions in the San Bernardino community. He led his school district successfully through response to the December 2, 2015, terrorist attack that took the lives of 14 people at the neighboring Inland Regional Center, causing a manhunt that threatened the safety of several of the district’s 76 schools. He led his district again, following the April 10, 2017, school shooting at North Park Elementary School when an estranged husband took the lives of his former spouse—special education teacher Karen Smith—and special education student Jonathan Martinez. He also critically wounded another student, 9-year-old Nolan Brandy. Despite these tragic incidents, Dr. Marsden continues pursuing policies that ensure the safety of all individuals in his district by building a culture that focuses on student’s emotional wellness as well as their physical safety.

## **MODERATOR**

### **Chelsea Parsons—Vice President, Gun Violence Prevention, Center for American Progress**

Chelsea Parsons focuses on advocating for laws and policies relating to gun violence prevention and the criminal justice system at the federal, state, and local levels. In this role, she has helped develop measures to strengthen gun laws and reduce gun violence that have been included in federal and state legislation and as part of President Obama’s January 2016 executive action announcement on gun violence prevention. She was previously general counsel to the New York City criminal justice coordinator, a role in which she helped develop and implement criminal justice initiatives and legislation in



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areas including human trafficking, sexual assault, family violence, firearms, identity theft, indigent defense, and justice system improvements. She also previously served as an assistant New York state attorney general and a staff attorney law clerk for the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Parsons is recognized as a national expert on gun laws and policy and has appeared on CNN, MSNBC, and NPR. She has been cited in publications including *USA Today*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Economist*.