**SPEECH TREK CONTEST TOPIC FOR 2018-2019: page 2**

***HOW CAN WE ELIMINATE VIOLENCE AIMED AT OUR SCHOOLS?***

To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice in a diverse society, AAUW advocates many issues--including freedom from violence, fear of violence and hate crimes--in homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Unfortunately, American students are not free from violence. Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif) pointed out a disturbing trend in our schools: “Since Sandy Hook (Dec. 14, 2012), around 250 schools have experienced a shooting. That’s an average of around 50 a year, or one school shooting every week,” she said. “It’s astonishing that so many schools and so many children have suffered. Active shooter drills shouldn’t be a wayof life for our children, but sadly they are.”

Singer Kelly Clarkson has also expressed sadness at the escalating level of violence in our schools, and stated that the time for ‘moments of silence’ is over. “Why don’t we do a moment of action?” she asked. “Why don’t we do a moment of change?”

In February, 2018, after their tragedy, the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, seized a moment for change. They created “March For Our Lives” and launched a national movement.

Three months later, another deadly school shooting took place, this time in Texas.

***How can we--students, parents, faculty, our communities, and organizations such as AAUW--eliminate violence aimed at our schools? What actions can we take to prevent another tragedy from taking place?***

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