

## **Superintendent Statement of Concern - Reducing Gun-Related Deaths of Youth**

As superintendents, we are deeply concerned about the dramatic increase in gun-related deaths among our youth. The safety and well-being of our students is our top priority, and we have an obligation towards preventing the tragic and senseless loss of life.

According to Johns Hopkins University, firearms are the leading cause of death for children ages 18 and under in the United States. Every year, 19,000 children and teens are shot and killed or wounded and approximately 3 million are exposed to gun violence. And since 2019, firearm related deaths in youth have increased by 50 percent.

We recognize that gun violence is a complex issue. There are no easy solutions. However, if we are to reverse these trends, it is essential we have meaningful conversations about gun control, mental health, and social and emotional learning.

These conversations must involve a diverse set of stakeholders, including parents and families, students, law enforcement, mental health professionals, and community organizations. Through greater training and education, enhanced safety protocols and common sense policy changes - we know we can make a difference.

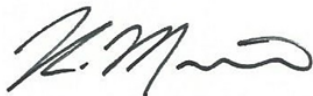
Only by working together, can we create safe and supportive environments for our children. Our children deserve no less.



Kevin Polston, Superintendent  
Kentwood Public Schools



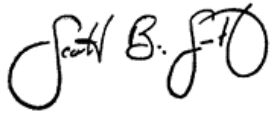
Jim Alston, Superintendent  
Kelloggsville Public Schools



Dr. Kevin Macina, Superintendent  
Byron Center Public Schools



Gerald Hopkins, Superintendent  
Kenowa Hills Public Schools



Scott Smith, Superintendent  
Cedar Springs Public Schools



Bill Crane, Superintendent  
Kent City Community Schools



Dr. Heidi Kattula, Superintendent  
East Grand Rapids Public Schools



Ron Koehler, Superintendent  
Kent Intermediate School District



Daniel Behm, Superintendent  
Forest Hills Public Schools



Nate Fowler, Superintendent  
Lowell Area Public Schools



Bill Fetterhoff, Superintendent  
Godwin Heights Public Schools



Dr. Steve Matthews, Superintendent  
Rockford Public Schools



Dr. Leadriane Roby, Superintendent  
Grand Rapids Public Schools



Joel Stoner, Superintendent  
Sparta Area Public Schools



Craig Hoekstra, Superintendent  
Wyoming Public Schools



Craig McCarthy, Superintendent  
Thornapple Kellogg Public Schools



Dr. Dedrick Martin, Superintendent  
Caledonia Community Schools



Al Cumings, Superintendent  
Tri-County Area Schools



Randy Lindquist, Superintendent  
Muskegon Area ISD



Steve Edwards, Superintendent  
Reeths-Puffer Schools



Bill O'Brien, Superintendent  
Mona Shores Public Schools



Dr. Jerry McDowell, Superintendent  
Whitehall District Schools



Jeff Johnson, Superintendent  
Montague Area Public Schools



Dr. Kyle Mayer, Superintendent  
Ottawa Area ISD



Dr. Adam Bayne, Superintendent  
Holton Public Schools



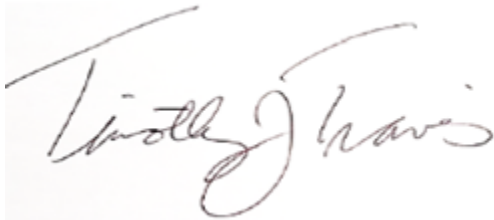
Scott Grimes, Superintendent  
Grand Haven Area Public Schools



Curt Babcock, Superintendent  
North Muskegon Public Schools



Dr. Doug VanderJagt, Superintendent  
Hudsonville Public Schools



Dr. Tim Travis, Superintendent  
Saugatuck Public Schools



Dennis Furton, Superintendent  
Spring Lake Public Schools



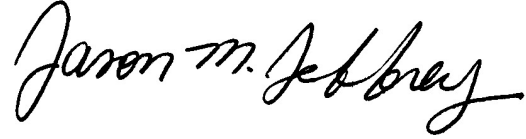
Tim Bearden, Superintendent  
West Ottawa Public Schools



William Brown, Superintendent  
Allegan Area ESA

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Gary Wood, Superintendent  
Hopkins Public Schools

Handwritten signature of Jason M. Jeffrey in black ink.

Dr. Jason Jeffrey  
West Shore Educational Service District