



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

March 7, 2018

Dear Sheriffs, Chiefs of Police, School Superintendents, Charter & Independent School Officials:

We are shocked and saddened as we learn more about the school shooting in Parkland, Florida last month. This was a senseless act of violence. We mourn for the lives lost, their families and friends, and pray for the community at large as they deal with this tragedy. But thoughts and prayers alone will not prevent this from happening again. We must work together to ensure that our schools are safe places for children to grow and learn.

As state leaders, law enforcement and education professionals it's up to us to join with community leaders to develop effective solutions to prevent another tragedy. Strong partnerships are essential to identifying potential threats, ensuring access to services for those who need them, implementing common sense gun policy, and providing a coordinated response if the unthinkable happens. This requires well-trained personnel who have the necessary tools and support.

School administrators should include local law enforcement and emergency management agencies in their annual school-wide preparedness drills. These drills provide important opportunities to discuss simulated emergency situations in a low-stress environment helping ensure Risk Management Plans are updated and clear.

Educators, families and students should share information regarding threats or potential threats with school leaders and local law enforcement. Reporting suspicious or criminal activity can be done anonymously. Reluctance to report threats can delay response, while sharing information can prevent a tragic event. If you see or hear something, say something.

Finally, I encourage you to take advantage of the guidance issued in two reports that I commissioned while serving as North Carolina's Attorney General: The [Keeping North Carolina Schools Safe and Secure](#) and the [Campus Safety Task Force](#) report. They highlight the need for training, counseling, assessments, strategic use of technology, and other practices to do all we can to keep our students and everyone in our schools safe.

The enclosed letter includes important information from my Secretary of Public Safety Erik Hooks about what we can and should be doing to support our students, schools, and communities and keep them safe. I will also be coming forward with other specific recommendations soon.

I am thankful for the work that you do each day for North Carolina and especially grateful for the work you do to serve and protect our students. We must work together to allow our state's children to learn and live productive lives.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Cooper".
Roy Cooper