



GAVIN NEWSOM
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

November 21, 2016

Mary Jane Burke, Superintendent
Marin County Office of Education
P.O. Box 4925
San Rafael, CA 94913

Dear County Superintendent:

The election has stoked legitimate fears among our students in the K-12 public education system, placing our teachers on the front line of reassuring our kids that they are safe. With the recent surge of hate crimes, racial targeting, and bullying in our schools, it is imperative that we address and combat this uptick plaguing the very classrooms that should be safe havens.

My wife and I struggled with how to explain the hateful rhetoric spewed during the campaign to our four young children. Like so many parents across the nation, we reinforced the values of empathy, compassion and kindness. Now, more than ever, it is incumbent upon us to translate those values into concrete action to protect California's children. We must establish a zero-tolerance policy for hate in our schools.

I am calling on each of you, in partnership with your local educational stakeholders, to act immediately. County Offices of Education can and should take the lead on: creating a clearinghouse to report hate and bullying, developing action plans with teachers and administrators, and measuring school climate as part of the new school accountability system. We need to send the signal that there is simply no place for racism, hate or bullying on our campuses.

Last week, I urged the University of California, California State University and California Community Colleges to shield undocumented students in particular from potential abuse by the federal government. I propose that local K-12 districts similarly conduct reviews to determine how they can legally protect students. Our undocumented students deserve the right to pursue their dreams without living in fear of deportation.

As some call for a physical wall, it's time for us to build a moral wall, because in California, we don't tolerate our diversity – we celebrate it. I stand ready to assist you in the important work ahead of creating inclusive environments where every child knows he or she belongs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", written over a white background.

GAVIN NEWSOM
California Lieutenant Governor

