



GOVERNOR OF MISSOURI

JEFFERSON CITY

65102

JEREMIAH W. (JAY) NIXON
GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 720
(573) 751-3222

December 24, 2012

Dear Superintendent:

Ten days ago, a heavily armed man shot his way into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut and took the lives of 20 innocent children and six brave adults. I am sure that, as superintendents and administrators, you and your colleagues have been particularly affected by this heartbreaking tragedy.

Now, as we come together to mourn the loss of these precious lives, we must also come together to ensure we are doing all we can to protect our communities, and especially our schools, from these types of heinous acts.

As Governor, and as the former chief law enforcement officer of our state, keeping Missourians – and especially children – safe is my solemn obligation and a top priority of my administration. Fortunately, here in Missouri we have a strong framework of laws to protect students and educators, such as the Missouri Safe Schools Act, which passed with broad bipartisan support in 1996. Current law also allows local school boards to prohibit guns in their classrooms. This is a time-tested and solid foundation that we should reinforce, not undermine.

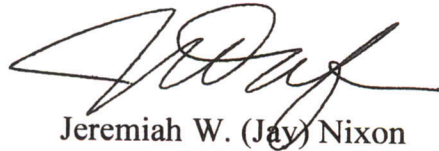
That is why I have serious concerns about recently introduced legislation that proposes not only to arm teachers, but to do so by taking away the authority of local school districts to keep guns out of classrooms. More can and should be done to enhance school safety, but this legislation would put our children at risk and limit the ability of local school districts to keep their schools safe. Putting loaded weapons in classrooms is quite simply the wrong approach to a serious issue that demands careful analysis and thoughtful solutions.

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In the days and weeks ahead, I will engage with Missourians to find common sense solutions to keep our schools safe. Public education in a safe learning environment is a value we all share. I thank you for your commitment to the schoolchildren in your district and throughout our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Nixon", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor