

WHAT'S ON

your mind

After the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary, educators from around the country posted their condolences at nea.org/safeschools. Here is an edited selection of their messages to the Newtown, Connecticut community.



My heartfelt condolences go out to you with my prayers. Please don't forget that we are all supporting you, now and in the future.

KATHY HAYES

As a school lunch lady for 24 years, there is nothing more prized than innocent little children. My heart is heavy and my prayers are many to each and every family member.

May God watch over all of you and your little angels.

VIKKI FRAGA

I promise to always remember those sweet little souls that were taken from you...from us, your wonderful principal and the other caring teachers and staff who put the children first. We cannot and will not forget.

MARTINA ARNOLD

Your community has shown the nation an incredible model of love, unity, strength, and courage. I shall keep each of those lost in my heart forever. The educators and first responders are true heroes and reflect what is best about our country.

PATRICIA BENAVIDEZ

I think about you all every time I look at my kindergartners! As a parent my heart breaks for all parents involved. As a teacher, the staff at Sandy Hook are my heroes. My promise to you and the memory of your loved ones lost is to love my children even more and do my job to the best of my ability.

HEATHER WOOD

I could not believe the lengths that your teachers and staff took to keep your little ones safe. I can only hope that I could be as brave as they were. They are truly heroes.

MERILEE STONE

I taught in the public schools for 32 years, and I cannot even begin to fathom going through such a tragedy. I do feel pain for your loss and will continue to do so for some time. But when the pain passes, I will feel anger, even bitterness, that such a tragedy happened at all.

JACK PFLUG

I don't have any words that can make this horrific time any better, except to echo the words of President Obama, "You are not alone." I know there will come times when you will feel alone in your grief. But, please remember that thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of us stand with you.

KATHY GREELEY

In a profession that is already very stressful, I cannot imagine the added stress of such a tragedy. I know I am only one of millions of people who are holding you all in our hearts and praying like crazy for the healing of the families who lost loved ones and for your beloved school to find a way back to the laughter and joy that is the heart of an elementary school.

CATHY GRIGSBY

I, as well as everybody else in the world, am thinking about your town. I really hope that this tragedy will never happen anywhere again, especially at an elementary school.

JAMES ZAMBOS

As a first grade teacher also, I looked upon the sweet little faces of your students who were lost, and thought how like my students they are. The cute toothless smiles, the freckly faces, the eyes full of happiness and wonder are the faces of all our kids. The loss of one of these beautiful children is far too many. Your amazing staff is truly heroic in their efforts to protect your students.

We grieve with you also, for the colleagues you lost. They truly represented the best in all of us who love and work with children.

KAREN HASKELL

There are no words to express my sincere sorrow. I am a teacher and I hope this will open the eyes of those who think we have an easy job. You were all courageous and I am proud to be part of your national group.

MARY CLAIN

I am touched by the support and love your community has had for one another through this tragic event. Amongst all of the sadness, your community is a shining example of how human beings can come together in the face of crisis and truly embrace one another.

REBECCA CAYS

You all showed such grace and commitment under an extreme situation. May the days, weeks, and months ahead bring you more and more comfort and may the faces of young children bring back joy to your heart.

CATHY BANSMER

As a parent of young boys, as a teacher, as a New Englander, and as a human being, I am shocked to the core. The photographs and stories of the lives of your beautiful children and your dedicated educators tear at me. I wish there was some way I could ease your pain. Please know that the lives of your loved ones are treasured by millions of people like me all across the world.

JOHN DEVER