



Open Letter To President-Elect Trump About Recent Acts Of Hatred in Schools

Below is an open letter from Stand for Children on behalf of the 30,000-plus people from all walks of life who have signed a [petition](#) calling on President-elect Trump to strongly denounce hatred in schools:

President-elect Trump,

Since you were elected as our next president, there has been an alarming surge of incidents of bullying and intimidation in our nation's schools. Students, and even teachers, have been the victims of acts of hatred, and too often, the perpetrators have made clear that they had been emboldened to act this way by your victory and your harsh rhetoric.

Schools are supposed to be a safe haven for our children, not a place where anyone should have to live in fear. Diversity is part of what makes this nation strong; schools put enormous energy into protecting students from bullying and intimidation because of the lasting damage it can do to children and their education. We trust that this is not the vision you have for this nation, and that you would be deeply troubled by bullies lashing out in your name.

While we appreciate your call on perpetrators to "stop" such acts in your recent 60 Minutes interview, it was troubling to hear you dismiss this problem as "a very small amount" and "one or two" incidents. The Southern Poverty Law Center alone has received more than 700 [reports](#) of such incidents, inside and outside of schools. Education journalists have been "inundated" with more than 430 [reports](#) of incidents of bullying and violence in schools. And the numbers continue to grow.

Here are just a handful of examples of what's happening to our children:

- In York, Pennsylvania, a [crisis team was dispatched](#) to a high school after a student holding a Trump sign was filmed chanting "White Power!" and multiple students reported being the victims of threats and racial epithets in the wake of the election.
- In Ladue, Missouri, African-American high school students [were told to move](#) to the back of the bus by two white students chanting "Trump, Trump, Trump". Two days later,

a black student at the same school was burned by a fellow student with a hot glue gun.

- In the Twin Cities, a high school bathroom [was vandalized with the phrase](#) “Trump train” and horrendous messages like “All you N***** go back to Africa.” Students said they were terrified, and no longer felt comfortable at the school.
- In Georgia, a Muslim high school teacher [received a letter](#) saying her “head scarf isn’t allowed anymore” and encouraged her to hang herself by her hijab. She bemoaned that “children feel safe making comments that are racist or sexist because of [Trump].”
- In Bucks County, Pennsylvania, a superintendent was forced to [send a letter to parents](#) stating that post-election harassment would not be tolerated after a handful of separate incidents including a Latina girl who was told to go back to Mexico, graffiti of swastikas, derogatory graffiti about LGBT people alongside the words “I love Trump,” and threats like, “If Trump wins, watch out!”
- At a junior high school in Dewitt, Michigan, a group of boys [blocked a Latina student](#) from getting to her locker, chanting things like “Donald Trump for president” and “you need to go back to Mexico.” The girl’s mother said she was “petrified” to go back to school. It was just one of three racially charged incidents officials were investigating at the school.
- In Los Angeles, a [teacher taunted Latino sixth graders](#) about the election. When an 11-year-old student tried to stand up for herself, the teacher said her parents would be deported.
- In Royal Oak, Michigan, [middle schoolers chanted](#) “Build the wall” at Latino students in the school’s cafeteria. A Mexican-American student said “Tears were running down my face. I was so upset. A friend went to the bathroom crying.”
- At UPenn, a group of black freshmen were “[added to a chat group](#) that subjected them to racial slurs and threats of lynching.” These threats left the young students afraid to attend classes.
- In North Bend, Oregon, [a superintendent reported](#) multiple incidents of racism at a local middle school and attributed them to the election, including a student who had been bullied and told to go back to Mexico. The student’s mother was “heartbroken and afraid for her son.”
- A Muslim-American student at the University of Michigan was [threatened with being set on fire](#) if she did not remove her hijab. A student in San Diego [was attacked](#) the day after the election by someone who grabbed her hijab from behind, leaving her gasping for air.

- A slew of graffiti, including swastikas, and horrifying racial and homophobic epithets [was found scrawled](#) across a wall at Reed College, alongside “TRUMP” and the acronym MAGA (Make America Great Again).
- In Minnesota, a note reading “Trump hates N*****” [was left on a whiteboard](#) outside a black student’s dorm room.
- At SUNY Geneseo in New York, a [residence hall was spray painted](#) with “Trump” and a swastika. The president of the university said "It is clear that many on our campus now feel unsettled, distressed, or even unsafe."
- In Dallas, Texas, a high school English teacher was heard [telling her classes](#) that she voted for Trump because she hopes they get deported.

Sadly, this list of attacks represents only a small fraction of the hundreds of horrifying incidents like this that have been reported over the last two weeks.

This is a national crisis, one that threatens all of our children, and we must do everything in our power to immediately put an end to it. As the president-elect – and in the minds of the perpetrators, the inspiration for these hateful acts – you have a solemn responsibility and unique capacity to condemn this behavior in the strongest of terms.

This is not a partisan issue. Democrats and Republicans can all agree that this cannot stand; Americans of good conscience object to acts of hate against children. This is simply a moral plea. Your predecessors in both parties have [stood up](#) to use the singular voice of the presidency to make a compelling case against bullying and intimidation based on race, religion and sexual orientation. We’re asking you to do the same. The President sets a national example, and students will take cues from that.

All of America has seen how powerful your voice is, how skillfully you use tools of communication, and how much sway you have over your many supporters. So, please, use that voice to unequivocally denounce these acts of hatred and help us put an end to this appalling trend once and for all.