



On behalf of the entire Town of Stonington, our thoughts and prayers go out to the Newtown community, the victims, families, friends and first responders. This tragedy has touched all of us as we attempt to understand and process this unthinkable crime. Please join members of our Community as we gather together on Sunday December 23, 2012 at 6:00 PM as the Stonington Community Center's hosts a Community Vigil in honor of the victims at Owen's Field in Stonington.

In light of this incident, many communities across this Country are taking the opportunity to examine their safety plans, physical characteristics of schools, community resources and technology assets. Stonington is no different and there are plans underway to establish a *Prevention and Response to School Violence Task Force*. The purpose of this group will be to examine our safety plans, critical infrastructures, identify community partners that can assist in times of crisis, and identify potential technology upgrades at schools that could assist Law Enforcement if an incident ever occurs. Starting this week, a team of school officials and Law Enforcement professionals will start to visit each school and start the process of evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each facility to report back to this Task Force in hopes of starting a positive dialog on remaining vigilant on matters of safety.

The investigation into the circumstances and contributing factors to this devastating event will continue for some time. What is clear and the advice we can give at this time to all members of this community is that we must look out and care for one another moving forward. The Town of Stonington has various resources available to assist families and individuals in need through mental health counseling services, not only for students and families in each of the public and private schools, but adults and children through our Human Services Department. The Stonington Police Department will also assist any family with concerns on violence and they continue to train Officers in crisis intervention strategies. They also stand ready to assist anyone with questions on proper and safe storage of firearms and they also continue to have a supply of free gunlocks available to anyone who asks.

As a Community, we stand united today in our continuing commitment for the safety of all our children and the security of all in our schools. We're working together today and in the days and weeks ahead with focus and urgency to review all current

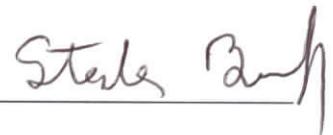
plans and consider future actions. Sandy Hook has forced us to examine what is most important to us-our children. We will be working diligently with this process with the overriding goal on our children and their safety.

Respectfully and Sincerely,



*Dr. Van Riley*

Superintendent Stonington Schools



*Stephen Bennhoff*

Head, Pine Point School



*Chief Darren Stewart*

Chief of Police



*Doris Messina*

Principal



*Edward Haberek Jr.*

First Selectman