

**Statement from Debbie Long,
President of the Washington State School Directors' Association**

Our thoughts are with the friends and family of the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. I know that our entire state grieves alongside those who have lost so much in Connecticut.

I would like to thank the many districts across our state who have taken steps to reach out to and reassure parents and students that our schools are safe. I know that many are already reviewing the security measures and policies that they have worked so hard to develop during the past few years.

When this great pain begins to ease, I hope that all of us -- parents, school directors, educators, principals, school staff, first responders and others -- can be part of a larger national discussion.

Our citizens will look to all elected officials, whether they are from a small town or the nation's capital, to take the lead in this effort to protect and nurture our children. There is nothing that is more important.