



**SHEPHERD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
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December 2, 2021

Dear Students, Parents, Staff and Community Members,

As the news of the latest school shooting floods the media, we again see the faces of children, parents and school staff shocked by another school tragedy. We see images of terrified children and watch the events unfold as teens capture it live on social media. We cannot accept these tragedies as a normal part of life in America.

As Superintendents of the public schools in Gratiot and Isabella Counties, we believe it is important for you to know we are diligently working to prevent school shootings and other types of violence in our schools. Our schools continue to participate in multiple trainings and build strong and supportive relationships with law enforcement and other first responders. They have advised us on how to better secure our schools in a variety of ways. For example, across our counties, we have limited access to buildings, secure entries, and a strong network of security cameras. We know that students learn best in safe and secure environments.

We cannot keep our schools safe without the help and support of our entire community. We urge you to learn about the warning signs connected with school shooters in the United States. They include violent fantasies, anger problems, fascination with weapons, being a loner, suicidal or homicidal ideation, stalking, interest in previous shootings, paranoia, violence and cruelty, acting out, police contact, mental health issues, use of alcohol and drugs and unusual interest in police, military and terrorist activities. Experts say a single warning sign by itself might not be significant, but a cluster of warning signs is much more serious.

Please make sure your child knows they must tell a trusted adult immediately if they feel their school is threatened in any way. This includes sharing information about weapons and/or threatening acts of violence in person or online.

Finally, we need your support in helping our children cope with the painful feelings that may be triggered by this week's tragedy in Oxford, Michigan. The National Association of School Psychologists have created the resource [Talking to Children about Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#). Help your child express their feelings by making the time to ask them questions, listen and help them process by pointing out safeguards and what to do during an emergency.

Across Gratiot and Isabella Counties, please know that we stand united as a community against all acts of violence. We are stronger and safer when we work together as students, parents, staff and community members.

Sincerely,

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Shepherd MI 48883  
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Winn Elementary  
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Winn MI 48896  
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