



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

ANDREW M. CUOMO
GOVERNOR

November 18, 2016

Commissioner MaryEllen Elia
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Commissioner Elia:

Over the course of the past week, schools in New York State have reported increased incidents of hate speech, bullying and discrimination against students. In some cases, schools have reported that these incidents included statements referring to last week's national election. I am greatly disturbed by these events and saddened by the tone that our electoral process has set for our youth. Our children are watching what we do, and how we react to discord. New York will continue to be the example that we are all one nation, not divided, but united. We will not stand for hate, discrimination or intolerance.

To address the issue of prejudice statewide, I am reminding New Yorkers of the state resources available to victims of discrimination – including a state hotline – as well as directing multi-agency investigations into recent hate crimes reported in the state.

In addition to these measures, I am hereby requesting that the State Education Department direct schools throughout the state to immediately hold trainings for both staff and students addressing discriminatory behavior that is prohibited under our laws, as well as behavior prohibited under schools' codes of conduct. It is imperative that schools review these laws and policies to make every staff member and student aware of their role in preventing discrimination and how to report such incidents.

I know that our students, teachers and school personnel take this issue very seriously and I appreciate their efforts in addressing discriminatory behavior.

Together, we must take a firm stance against the growing incidence of hate and intolerance and address the issue in our schools head-on. I am counting on you to assist in this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew M. Cuomo', written in a cursive style.

ANDREW M. CUOMO

Cc: Chancellor Betty Rosa
New York State Board of Regents