

**AUSTIN SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Welcoming Statement**

It has long been the tradition at Austin Public Schools to be a welcoming, safe and accepting place for students, staff and the families we serve. Students and staff are recognized and celebrated for who they are, given a voice in their personal development and encouraged to explore avenues that foster academic growth, mental well-being and self-realization. We hold that everyone who passes through our doors has both value and dignity. To believe anything less is unacceptable.

Recently, some of those cherished ideals have been literally turned upside down. The safe havens of school, work and home have become, for many, places of tension and, at times, dread. A sense of unease prevails.

Increasing numbers of our students have decided not to attend school, workers remain sequestered at home, forfeiting crucial paychecks, and many people find it impossible to engage in the routines of everyday life. Feelings of anxiety and fear have spread among various groups in the Austin community. We are deeply concerned and saddened by this turn of events.

To those of you who may be frightened or feel threatened, each member of the Austin School Board wants to make it clear to you that we genuinely share your pain. Further, we recognize your humanity and pledge to do everything in our power to give you the assurance that we stand together in these difficult, often chaotic, times. We make a promise to you to remain vigilant in promoting your well-being.

Both the community of Austin and its public schools have been, historically, safe, welcoming environments. It is our intention that they remain as such. Rest assured that we take our role in protecting your safety and security with the utmost seriousness.

We are stronger together.

Sincerely,

Members of the Austin School Board  
February 9, 2026

Carolyn Dube



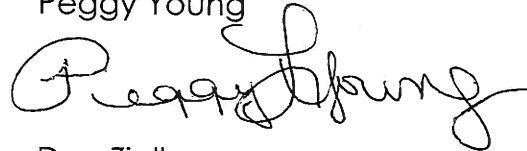
Carol McAlister



Robert Hartman



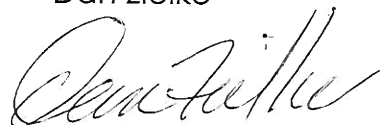
Peggy Young



Cece Kroc



Dan Zielke



Don Leathers

