



Statement by Ray Hart, Executive Director, Council of the Great City Schools
On the
Mass Shootings in Uvalde, Texas

Today the Council of the Great City Schools and all of its member urban school districts mourn alongside the citizens and families of Uvalde, Texas. But it is not just today. And it is not just Texas. This takes place in the wake of the Buffalo tragedy we are still mourning. It's New York, Florida, Colorado, South Carolina, Nevada, Illinois, California, Indiana, Oregon, and Michigan, just to name a few. It's a grocery store, an elementary school, a concert, a shopping mall, a movie theater, a health care clinic. And it's nearly every week and month of every year.

As educators, we rise each day tasked with keeping our nation's children safe from harm and instilling in them a sense of empowerment and commitment to this great country. But we know we can't protect them from the bullets of a gun, from the murderous intentions of individuals with unchecked access to weapons. And we can't give them a sound reason why their government has failed to pass the most basic, common-sense gun laws to protect its citizens, when so many other nations have stepped up and put an end to the kinds of mass shootings and other gun violence that all too often dominate our headlines.

Far too many of our students and staff share the trauma and experience of gun violence and its impact on their families and friends, coworkers and colleagues, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, fathers and mothers. The tragedy at Robb Elementary School is the nation's 27th school shooting of 2022. Yet instead of limiting access to guns and assault weapons, there are states that are banning discussions and resources aimed at addressing the social-emotional needs of students. Our nation's schoolchildren and citizens need more social-emotional and mental health support, not less. And they need more political action-- not more active shooter drills and moments of silence.

So today, our thoughts and prayers are with the Uvalde and Buffalo communities as they mourn these horrific losses. Today, we call on politicians to enact sensible gun control legislation. Today, we reaffirm our commitment to supporting our students, staff, and communities as they grieve and process the senseless loss of life. And we hope that tomorrow, America's leaders will find the voice and courage to prevent another tragedy like this from happening to yet another school and community.