

“My name is Fran Burns. My son, Luke... he took his own life this past fall. While writing out ‘thank you’ cards, I looked up the meaning of our school colors. Blue means trust, loyalty, wisdom, truth and faith. Gold means love, compassion, courage and passion. The world, as a whole, is a lot different than it used to be. Kids and adults alike are having a hard time coping, coexisting and communicating. Stress and depression are all at an all-time high. I believe that technology is a key component to this. It was made to make our lives better and easier, instead of hurting us. Bullying is everywhere. Some sort of bullying is in every home, every school and every job. Everybody judges everyone, because we are human. In our district, like many, we, the administration, the board of education, teachers and parents are trying to teach our children exactly what bullying does to children and people. Our district has been teaching our children that bullying through social media is there *forever*; that you never know what someone else is going through. I was glad to hear from kids in Luke’s class that Hearts for Heroes came and spoke to the kids about bullying and suicide; that the saying ‘sticks and stones may break my bones’ is incorrect, and it should say, ‘sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can kill me.’

Mr. McTigue, you hold an important position on our board of education. Your actions and words you displayed on social media have a lasting impression on our community as a whole; most significantly, our children. How can we lead by example when the vice president of the school board cannot do this?”

Fran Burns, mother of Luke, who took his life at age 11
Wayne Central School District
Ontario, NY
May 25, 2017