From:	Kathy Hughes
To:	angie newsome; asheville citizen times; associated press; barbara blake; bill mcclement; bob hunter; charu kumarhia; cibo; cibo; clarke morrison; clear channel; dailey planet; dale neal; david forbes; dawa hitch; Don Yelton; ellen; Ellen Heywood; fox carolina; jake frankel; Jerry Rice (jerry1advocate@gmail.com); lavox; mark barrett; mountain x; russ bowen; tammy jones; wwnc radio
Subject:	Moment of Silence & Release From Local Officials
Date:	Thursday, December 20, 2012 2:30:00 PM

On behalf of the elected officials, first responders, school administrators and staff who gathered on Thursday morning, December 20, to review our own community's safety plan, **we urge all our citizens to join the nation in participating in a moment of silence at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, December 21** to collectively mourn the loss of 26 precious lives and to show that we stand with them in this time of grief.

As we join the nation in a moment of silence, we encourage the community to reflect on the importance of relationships. We recognize that strong relationships will be what is needed to heal the community of Newtown, CT and the country as a whole as we find a way to move through the terrible events that took place at Sandy Hook Elementary on Friday, Dec. 14.

The Buncombe County Sheriff, Police Chief, Fire Chief, City and County School Superintendents, SRO Leaders and AB Tech staff joined the Mayor, Commission Chairman and several County Commissioners in discussing our preparation for a critical incident in our community. As the incident in Newtown CT demonstrates, the potential threats to our schools and communities are constantly evolving.

While our current school safety plans and the practice of those plans demonstrate a high degree of readiness, those plans must evolve to address the changing threats. The group agreed to create a working group composed of members of public safety and the school systems to research and identify any best practices being used in other communities which could strengthen our own plans. Increasing the number of SROs at area schools is one component that is under consideration.

We are grateful to work in a region where the relationships between agencies are strong. We work together and train year round to ensure we will implement best practices for crisis response. We share the philosophy that strong relationships make for healthy communities and recognize that the relationships school and public officials, including our school resource officers, have with our community's youth are invaluable. Strong relationships make for healthy communities, places where our children can grow and prosper in the safest of environments.

Mayor Terry Bellamy
Commission Chairman David Gantt

For More Information:

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"Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle."