By LARRY PHILLIPS

• Leader & Times

University of Kansas officials and the Kansas Board of Regents have reacted strongly to statements tweeted by KU Associate Professor of Journalism David Guth.

His exact Tweet went: “#NavyYardShooting The blood is on the hands of the #NRA. Next time, let it be YOUR sons and daughters. Shame on you. May God damn you.”

Condemnations and demands for his firing hit KU and the board of Regents immediately after the story broke in an article in the Campus Reform.

Especially when the paper asked Guth if he regretted his tweet.

“Hell no, hell no, I do not regret that Tweet, I don’t take it back one bit,” Guth answered.

Several KU officials released statements on Thursday, including Ann Brill, dean of the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

“While the First Amendment allows anyone to express an opinion, that privilege is not absolute and must be balanced with the rights of others. That’s vital to civil discourse,” Brill said. “Professor Guth’s views do not represent our school, and we do not advocate violence directed against any group or individuals.”

KU vice chancellor for public affairs Timothy C. Caboni chimed in:

“The contents of Professor Guth’s tweet were repugnant and in no way represent the views or opinions of the University of Kansas. Like all Americans, he has the right under the First Amendment to express his personal views and is protected in that regard. But it is truly disgraceful that these views were expressed in such a callous and uncaring way. We expect all members of the university community to engage in civil discourse and not make inflammatory and offensive comments.”

On Friday, KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little issued the following statement regarding Guth:

“In order to prevent disruptions to the learning environment for students, the School of Journalism and the university, I have directed Provost Jeffrey Vitter to place Associate Professor Guth on indefinite administrative leave pending a review of the entire situation. Professor Guth’s classes will be taught by other faculty members.”

KU Office of Public Affairs’ Jack Martin confirmed Saturday morning “the administrative leave is with pay pending the review.”

Shortly after Gray-Little’s statement, the Board of Regents issued the following press release:

“Following an Executive Session meeting of the Kansas Board of Regents on Friday, Sept.

20th, Andy Tompkins, president and CEO of the Board of Regents, issued the following statement on behalf of the Board with regard to the controversial social media comments made by David Guth, an associate professor at the University of Kansas:

“The Board of Regents expresses its disgust and offense at the statement made by David Guth. The Board also notes that these views in no way represent the views of the university or the Board of Regents. The Board wishes to reiterate the statement made by Dean Ann Brill when she said that ‘while the First Amendment allows anyone to express an opinion, that privilege is not absolute and must be balanced with the rights of others.’ The Board realizes that this matter is a legal and personnel issue for the University of Kansas and is being kept informed of the actions taken by the university. The Board expresses its appreciation for the immediate response by the Chancellor to the situation and expresses its confidence in her leadership.”