



March 7, 2018

Dear Families,

Following the tragic shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, students around the country are planning a 17-minute walkout on Wednesday, March 14 to protest school violence. Some of our high school and middle school students have expressed interest in participating in this event to remember the victims and their families, and bring attention to an important issue that is weighing heavily on many of us.

While the school district does not endorse the activity or its disruption to the school day, we understand that some students have strong emotions associated with the recent tragedy. We are proud that students want to exercise their First Amendment rights to express their views, and we are proud of all the young people who are driving the national conversation around school safety. We also recognize that some students may not want to participate in the event and would prefer to stay in class. Our objective is to ensure that all students feel safe and respected, no matter what they choose to do.

The high school and middle school principals have met with student leaders regarding the civic action planned for next Wednesday. Together, they have agreed upon parameters to make the experience respectful, meaningful, and safe for those who participate. Some key points:

- The student-led activity may look different at each middle and high school. There is nothing planned at the elementary schools.
- Students who choose to do so will assemble in a pre-determined space on school grounds. In the case of bad weather, students may assemble in the school gym.
- School administrators as well as faculty and staff volunteers will attend the event to ensure sufficient supervision and student safety.
- Teachers are responsible for supervising their students, as usual, during class time. They will continue to do so even if the majority of their students leave class to participate in the activity.
- School Liaison Officers will visit each MS/HS Wednesday morning prior to the planned event.
- We ask that parents not attend.
- Students who participate in the 17-minute peaceful protest will not be disciplined but are expected to remain on school property and return to class after the event. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary consequences.

We encourage you to have conversations with your children about their expectations and participation in non-school sponsored activities. Please reach out to me or your school principal with any questions or concerns related to this issue.

Sincerely,

Scott G. Martzloff, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools