



March 12, 2018

Dear Dover School District Community,

A national movement of solidarity by students is being organized across the country. The event on Wednesday, March 14 consists of a 17-minute walkout to call attention to violence in schools while also honoring those who died in the most recent school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida. There have been requests by some students to participate in the National Walkout.

The District recognizes there are different perspectives held by community members and families on how to resolve the issue of school violence. The District further recognizes these different perspectives are also represented in the student body as well as different levels of understanding developmentally at the elementary school, middle school, and high school level. This is a polarizing, sensitive topic which may impact individuals differently and it is important that students are afforded an opportunity to have their voices heard.

Though the Dover School District is not promoting the National School Walkout or any other political events, the safety and wellbeing of students should they choose to participate is the primary concern. In collaboration with the Dover Police Department, we are working to secure a safe location and environment for those individuals who elect to participate.

The students wishing to participate in the 17-minute National Walkout on March 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 10:17 a.m. may do so within the following established guidelines:

#### **Elementary Schools**

Elementary school students may or may not understand the issues related to school violence that occurred in Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. The District feels this must be a family decision to participate in the national walkout. If you wish to participate, you will be required to do so with your child, you may sign your child out-of-school, participate and return to school by signing your child back into school. Each school will have designated area for the walkout. The designated time nationally is Wednesday, March 14 from 10 a.m. to 10:17 a.m. During this time, school will remain in session. **No child will be released without a parent/guardian.**

#### **Gathering Area:**

- Garrison School – Front loop
- Horne Street School – Flag Pole
- Woodman Park School – Near Woodman Park at the entrance on Silver Street

#### **Middle School**

Middle school students may also have different levels of the understanding of the issues related to school violence what occurred in Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. The District feels this must be a family



decision to participate in the national walkout. If you wish to participate, you will be required to do so with your child, you may sign your child out-of-school, participate and return to school by signing your child back into school. **The middle school designated walkout area is vehicle loop for student drop off.** The designated time nationally is Wednesday, March 14 from 10 a.m. to 10:17 a.m. During this time, school will remain in session. **No child will be released without a parent/guardian.**

**High School**

Some Dover High School students have indicated their desire to be part of a student-led event on March 14, 2018 from 10:00 am to 10:17 am. All classes will continue during this time. The high school will provide a supervised location inside the building for students from 10:00 am to 10:17 am and will provide staff support as needed.

For the safety and security of our students, the high school highly recommends that students do not leave the building; however, we do understand this may occur. If your student is planning on walking out of the building on this day, the high school requests that students be dismissed from the building with a parent note or phone call by the end of the school day on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Please understand the high school will not be able to honor phone call dismissals on the day of the event, anticipating a high volume of calls to dismiss students.

For their safety, students who leave the building must stay within the school-designated and adult-supervised area during this event.

In addition, it is important to note that conduct that disrupts school operations is not acceptable and will be handled in accordance with the school handbook and past practice. The high school is proactively working with students, staff, counselors and local law enforcement to ensure any student-led efforts are conducted safely and respectfully.

Again, the District realizes this is a polarizing, sensitive topic which may impact individuals differently. It is important that students and families are afforded an opportunity to have their voices heard in a safe environment. If you have questions or need further clarification, please contact your school principal or me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William R. Harbron', is written over the word 'Respectfully,'.

William R. Harbron, Ed.D.  
Superintendent