

{District or School Name Here} **Statement on Student Walkouts**

CITY HERE, Calif., (March X, 2018) – Like much of the country, the **{District or School Name Here}** has spent the past few weeks grappling with the horrific scene at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and how we might make our own schools and communities safer. Some of our students are eager to turn words into action through a student walkout demonstrating support for tougher gun control laws.

We are encouraged to see our students involved in critical thinking and public advocacy. This is as much a part of the learning and growth process as the lessons in the classroom. We also want to make sure that our students are safe when they engage in the political process.

To that end, we're asked parents and caregivers to speak with their children about the student marches scheduled for March 14, March 24 and April 20, and encourage them to be mindful of their safety if they plan to take part. We've also requested that parents and caregivers inform the school site of any expected absences. As required by Education Code, school sites will take attendance as normal on the days in question. At the same time, we recognize that the decision to excuse a child from school for political protest is a personal decision and we support parental choice in this matter. Knowing that a parent has approved a child's decision to miss school for a protest helps us keep all students safe and accounted for.

For those students who choose to stay in school, many teachers are developing lessons specific to the issues of guns and violence in America and the history of public protests. In keeping with the daily work we do in our classrooms to promote social and emotional learning (SEL), these activities will be focused on developing consciousness and providing a respectful, restorative and empowering forum for our students to develop and share their views.

We will keep the community apprised of relevant developments related to the walkouts. In the meantime, please know that for **{District or school name here}**, along with fostering personal growth and academic achievement, ensuring the safety of our students is our highest priority.