

OAK GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT #68

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Dear Oak Grove Parents, Staff, and Community Members,

3/12/2018

The Oak Grove School District #68 Board of Education, Administration, and Staff place the highest priority on the safety and security of our students. Due to recent events, a heightened awareness has been placed on a school district's ability to defend its students against malicious and aggressive threats. Unlike other events, the most recent tragedy at Stoneman Douglas High School has prompted student advocacy that has given rise to a national movement. This letter provides valuable information regarding the administration's plan for any student "walkouts" that may occur on March 14th and/or April 20 as a result of the student "call for action".

The administration and staff at Oak Grove are deeply troubled and concerned with violence against school children and staff. We certainly value our student's thoughts, opinions, and advocacy for safe learning environments. The following bullet points will govern the actions of the staff, students, and administration on any day where students "walkout" in an organized or unorganized statement of protest.

- The collective discussion of school safety must be a community undertaking. Parents are encouraged to have discussions with their students about their intentions regarding the topic of school violence and make a plan for peaceful protest that may or may not involve school "walkout" participation. Student protest is totally voluntary to the individual student and participation in such an event is not being promoted or advocated for by any adult within the Oak Grove organization.
- The instructional day shall not be interrupted on any day of planned or unplanned student protest. Teachers will continue to provide instruction within their classrooms and will not join students. Students will be responsible for any and all missed work associated with spontaneously leaving a period of instruction during the school day.
- For the safety and security of our students and staff, no student will be allowed outside of the school building or allowed to freely roam the hallways, a designated area will be available for students who would like to participate and assemble. The time associated with the "protest" will be spent discussing ways to improve school safety at the local level, social media alerting, and ways to improve the student culture to ensure all students feel a part of the school.
- Although the administration would like to support our students; disorderly, rude, or disobedient protest will not be tolerated and such actions will constitute a disruption to the education of other students. Behavior such as this will be cause for discipline consistent with the student handbook or consequences as deemed appropriate by the building Principal.

The importance of school safety can't be overstated. No matter your political stance, the call for action against school violence has given rise to national debate. At the local level, students who feel compelled to show support should do so in a manner that is responsible, respectful, planned, and safe. If parents or community members should have any questions regarding these plans or would like to provide input into school safety recommendations, please feel free to email those to Dr. Loren Baele at lbaele@og68.org. Together, it is the hope of the Board, Administration, Staff and Community to have the safest learning environment for our students and we appreciate those that help us to attain that goal.

Sincerely,

