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Brookings-Harbor School District Information About Student Walkouts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - March 7, 2018

Why are we seeing student walkouts at this time? In the wake of another school shooting, students across the country are making plans to express their political views by organizing walkouts, protests and other political activities. In general, the events are both a memorial for victims and a call to action in response to gun violence in America. These events can happen at any time, but are expected at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 14, for the “Enough” walkout; on Saturday, March 24, for the “March for Our Lives”; and on Friday, April 20, for the “National Student Walkout.”

Our Brookings-Harbor School District goals in the event of any protest or walkout are to:

- **Maintain a safe and orderly learning environment**
- **Protect student’s free speech and right to protest**
- **Engage in a “teachable moment” at teacher’s discretion by facilitating in-class discussion before or after any protest or walkout on related curriculum topics**

Public schools, as units of government, must follow the First Amendment’s guidelines, but a public school is not a public street. Schools have a duty, and recognized authority, to limit expression to maintain order, to protect the safety of the school community, and to provide a nurturing environment for learning. Students have a constitutional right to free speech at school, but schools may regulate speech that interferes with the operations of the school or infringes upon the rights of others.

Brookings-Harbor School District policies can be found in the online [Policy Book](#). In particular, the following two policies guide student and staff conduct around protests or walkouts:

- [Student Demonstrations and Petitions \(Policy JFI\)](http://policy.osba.org/brookings/J/JFI%20D1.PDF)
<http://policy.osba.org/brookings/J/JFI%20D1.PDF>
- [Staff Participation in Political Activities \(Policy GBG\)](http://policy.osba.org/brookings/G/GBG%20D1.PDF)
<http://policy.osba.org/brookings/G/GBG%20D1.PDF>

Students who participate in a walkout or protest at BHSD must leave classrooms or hallways without disrupting the learning environment and must remain peaceful throughout any action. Any student who leaves school grounds or fails to return promptly to class may receive a disciplinary action, such as an unexcused absence. Vandalism, other criminal activity, or actions that result in harm to school or other property is not protected by the First Amendment and is a violation of school district policies and school rules.

Questions

Questions from families of students or students related to any protest or walkout that may occur or does occur should be directed to the Principal's Office at that school. Find contact information at www.brookings.k12.or.us. Please direct all media inquiries to BHSD Public Information Officer Nancy Raskauskas-Coons at nancyr@brookings.k12.or.us.

"Every Student Can Succeed"