



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

April 19, 2018

## **Message from Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati: Call to Action Walk-Out – April 20<sup>th</sup>**

Dear parents, guardians, staff and community members,

We are aware that there is a national “call to action,” walk-out planned for April 20<sup>th</sup> at 10 am, for people to express their support of gun control and encouraging legislators to take action to help prevent more tragedies like the one in Parkland Florida in February.

Our schools participated in the March 14<sup>th</sup> national event, in honor of the victims of Parkland. Many of our schools conducted moments of silence and activities that centered on peace, love and kindness. Please know that our school board supports the public calls by our young people for our leaders to take productive action to further the cause of school safety.

While we will honor and respect student rights for freedom of speech and civil disobedience, the district schools will not deviate from the normal activities planned for the day. The district does not take positions on political issues. As such SMMUSD schools are not sanctioning, coordinating or facilitating any activities for April 20<sup>th</sup>. This includes elementary, middle and high schools.

Any student who is missing from class will be marked as an unexcused cut for the missing time. Please note that students who leave school without permission are putting themselves at a safety risk. As a parent, if you feel strongly about allowing your student to participate in a walk out, we request that you please sign them out of school and be mindful of their safety.

We support opportunities for students to express themselves, regardless of their opinion, on various issues. We are dedicated to teaching and modeling methods for effective civic engagement while under our care and supervision at our school sites. We ask that parents and students consider the impact on their education by choosing to leave school. I encourage any outside activities be conducted under parent supervision, after school or weekends.

Educating your child and keeping them safe is the most important work we do every day and we are looking forward to a productive school day on Friday and every day.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ben Drati, Superintendent

### **SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

1651 Sixteenth Street • Santa Monica • California 90404-3891 • (310) 450-8338 • [www.smmusd.org](http://www.smmusd.org)

**Board of Education:** Oscar de la Torre • Jon Kean • Craig Foster • Maria Leon-Vazquez

Laurie Lieberman • Ralph Mechur • Dr. Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein

**Superintendent:** Dr. Ben Drati