



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

February 23, 2018

Board Resolution, Walk-outs and School Safety Plans -- A Message from the SMMUSD Superintendent

Dear SMMUSD staff, parents, students and community members,

Students and adults throughout the country have been activated following the tragic event that took the lives of 17 students and teachers in Florida on February 14th. We have joined this movement in several capacities and I want to share this with our stakeholders.

Our Board of Education will discuss a resolution at the March 1, 2018 school board meeting: [In Support of Common Sense Gun Laws](#). This resolution is posted on the district website as part of the agenda and once approved it will be posted on the home page of all school websites.

We are aware of a series of scheduled walk-outs being organized by various groups across the nation. The Women's March Youth Empower organizers are encouraging "students, teachers and their allies to walk out of schools on March 14 to protest gun violence." Survivors of the Parkland, Florida shooting announced a March for Our Lives event planned for March 24. Another walkout is planned for April 20, which will mark 19 years since the tragedy at Columbine High School in Colorado.

We want to let students, parents and community members know that we respect our students' rights to engage in civic discourse in a safe and productive manner. We are encouraging our school site administrators to plan age-appropriate activities on campus that may coincide with the dates above or as schedules allow.

For elementary schools, this may include activities that promote peace, tolerance, mindfulness and kindness, or perhaps an Olweus bullying prevention rally.

For secondary schools, administrators may work with their student bodies, through ASB, to develop student-led events or activities based on students' needs. We want to ensure that youth voices are empowered and supported.

We are working in partnership with our Santa Monica-Malibu PTA Council leadership as they activate as powerful advocates for our children, both locally, in California and nationally. We are fortunate to have our strong PTA units ready, willing and able to support these activities at our schools and bring a unified voice as a strong lobbying organization to our elected officials.

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We have had inquiries regarding our school safety plans that we review and update on a regular basis. We have posted our [Comprehensive School Safety Plan](#) document online so that everyone can see the priority we place on student safety and emergency preparedness. We will continue to engage in additional conversations in the future evaluating areas where we can improve.

We are fortunate to serve both the Santa Monica and Malibu communities where students, parents, community members, local law enforcement and other community partners, are working together to ensure a bright future for our children, in a safe and protective environment.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Dr. Ben Drati
Superintendent