

Dearborn Heights School District No. 7

20629 Annapolis Street, Dearborn Heights, MI 48125
(313) 203-1000 phone (313) 278-1413 fax



February 20, 2018

Dear District 7 Families:

Many of you have heard of the "National School Walkout Day" that is being organized for March 14th following the tragic shooting at a Florida high school last week. I have received a few questions as to whether District 7 Schools would participate in this activity. Many of the people that I have spoken to are under the impression that the planned "walkout" was organized to show honor and respect to the 17 lives that were lost in this most recent massacre. Although honoring the lives lost would be a by-product of this event, the organizers behind this activity have made it clear that the main objective is to make a political statement through protest.

District 7 Board policy has language that speaks to participation in political activities such as this event. Administrative Guidelines 3231A – Participation in Political Activities states in part:

"Non-school related activities, including political activities, do not contribute to a positive learning climate and may be disruptive, divisive and distracting. Therefore, such activities are not appropriate within the school setting. It is the intention of the Board of Education to regulate such activities on all Board owned or used property, within all school buildings and at all school sponsored activities."

This policy, as well as others, keeps personal political feelings out of our classrooms and our instruction. This policy also includes literature that supports political agendas.

I hope that our staff, students and families will recognize that our lack of participation in the "walkout" does not mean that we are not grieving and brokenhearted by the tragic events that happened in Florida and every school shooting prior to this one. As a school community, we stand together in honor of those 17 lives lost every single day as we continue to do the very important work of public education. Not one single person on this staff is here because it's easy or because it's safe. We are here because we love the families of District 7. We love our students. We love this community.

I will be supportive of individual schools choosing to recognize and honor the lives that were lost in Florida in the manner that they decide. There are so many ways that we can truly show our support to those families without letting our actions be cheapened by the political agendas that will use this event as a platform.

I hope to see you all at the Community Forum Meeting on School Safety this Thursday, February 22nd at 6:30 pm in the O. W. Best cafeteria.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Mast".

Jennifer Mast
Superintendent of Schools