

Student Walkouts in Greenville County Schools



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PARKLAND TRAGEDY

- **Primary Concern after Stoneman Douglas HS Shooting was student safety**
- **Had a greater presence of administrators and law enforcement at schools**
- **Responded to community and safety concerns related to the Feb 14 tragedy**
- **Focus then shifted to the planned walkout on March 14, 2018.**

PLANNING FOR THE WALKOUT

- **Extensive Discussion on how to handle and respond to student walkout**
- **Balancing of Competing Interests**
- **District wanted to allow students to have a voice and express their views**
- **On other side, student safety during a walkout and disruption to instruction/school operations**
- **Considered *Tinker*, *Corales v. Bennett* (9th Circuit Ct. of Appeals), and other cases**
- **An important consideration was not to set a precedent especially with other walkout(s) planned and possibility of appearance of endorsing political speech**

OTHER FORMS OF STUDENT SPEECH

- **After much discussion, the District decided to balance the two by encouraging schools through principals and student leaders to engage in expressive activity that would not risk student safety or disrupt school setting**
- **Some of these options included:**
 - Wearing colors of Stoneman Douglas HS
 - Wearing armbands or other clothing
 - Moment of Silence recognizing tragedy
 - Reading names of victims
 - Line 17 desks in lobby/cafeteria for the victims
 - Students write notes/cards to school and victims' families

LEADING UP TO MARCH 14

- **Communicated to Parents and Guardians in advance:**
 - of approved options
 - that students could be picked up early from school (either if they didn't want to participate or if they wanted to participate off campus)
 - Walking out during instruction was not permitted- Content Neutral Stance
 - Disciplinary warning referral (cutting class) would be consequence but no substantive discipline
- **Teachers/staff instructed not to stop students but monitor and account for students**

WALKOUT

- **Out of 76,000 Students, nearly 700 students walked out of the building**
 - Nearly 500 High School and 200 Middle School
 - All student returned to class after several minutes (17 mins in most cases)
 - All walkouts/gatherings were peaceful and respectful of others
- **JL Mann High School had over 200 student participate**

WALKOUT



WALKOUT

