



# Miami-Dade County Public Schools

*giving our students the world*

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Alberto M. Carvalho

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March 12, 2018

Dear Parents of Secondary Students:

Students across the nation, including Miami-Dade's own students, have staged peaceful protests in response to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School tragedy. It is likely that we can expect similar demonstrations to continue in the days ahead, including national protests set for March 14, March 24, and April 20. District administration is carefully monitoring these developments, and principals are well prepared to address issues which arise at individual school sites.

Should a student walkout or protest occur in one of our schools, it is the intent to allow the students to peacefully protest in compliance with School Board Policy 2240. We encourage our students to be respectful and to understand that the Code of Student Conduct remains in place and will be enforced during these times. Students are not permitted to leave campus, and behavior that disrupts school operations or threatens the safety and order of our schools will not be tolerated. This movement started by students can be a teachable moment where young people can exercise their First Amendment right to be heard; however, there must also be an understanding that there can be consequences to civil disobedience.

Many of our schools plan to provide structured activities and lessons to help students express their support for Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and learn about the issues. Students are also being encouraged to honor the lives of those lost by walking up, not out. Students can express themselves by walking up to 14 students and 3 teachers and saying something kind. Miami-Dade County Public Schools supports students' constitutional rights to peaceful assembly and free expression. However, our top priority is to support the academic and social emotional needs of our students while maintaining a safe and orderly environment for all. We also respect those students who choose not to participate in these planned events.

If your child is feeling overwhelmed, please reach out to your school's administration for support and guidance. Thank you for your ongoing partnership in your child's education.

Sincerely,

Alberto M. Carvalho  
Superintendent of Schools

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