

## **A MESSAGE TO THE DISTRICT 96 COMMUNITY**

**March 9, 2018**

Parents and students across the country have been engaged in one way or another with the school safety issue resulting from recent events. This has included discussion regarding widely publicized planned and unplanned “walkouts.”

In District 96, our top priority is to support the academic and social/emotional needs of our students while maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment for all. While we respect the right of our students to advocate for causes that are important to them, any planned or unplanned “walkout” may create an unsafe situation, as students may not be properly supervised and may be put at risk while creating a greater sense of fear and anxiety for some.

Indeed, it would be impossible to supervise and adequately protect students from potential harm if they were to leave the school building during a planned, widely publicized “walkout.”

Please also know that we feel strongly that our relationships matter. We must all engage with each other in a manner that shows and shares value for one another. Likewise, our schools must remain safe, non-political, and focused on learning. Thus, District 96 schools will not be participating in “walkouts.”

We urge you to talk with your students about how they may be feeling about this topic and about the importance of expressing themselves in appropriate ways at school. Encourage them to reach out to their principal (and/or, if applicable, to their assistant principal) if they would like to discuss this matter and to consider how to advocate and use their voices constructively.

In addition, as a non-political entity, please note that employees are not permitted to participate in any political activity during school hours per Board of Education Policy 2:105. If you feel the need to take additional action, we encourage you to write or call your legislators to express your position.

*--Kildeer Countryside District 96 Superintendent Julie Schmidt*