



LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

March 12, 2018



Robert W. Runcie, Superintendent

Broward County Public Schools Families:

Across Broward County, our hearts remain with the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School community. Over the past few weeks, as we have worked to begin the recovery and healing process, students have been expressing their hurt, anger, disbelief and a flood of other emotions. We are proud of our students' focus and determination to turn their grief and outrage into action, as they dedicate themselves to effecting positive change in this country.

As you are likely aware, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) students, and students from across the nation, continue to engage in peaceful protests related to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School tragedy and issues related to gun control and gun legislation. When students protest at schools, our school staff will respond appropriately and allow our students to be heard.

Because we do not want continued disruption of our daily school routines, guidelines have been provided to our school leaders, should walkouts or protests continue this school year. We want families to be aware of these guidelines, so you can reinforce them at home:

- BCPS staff will not interfere with peaceful student-led protests or gatherings at schools.
- During any student protest on school grounds, our staff will work together to ensure students are safe and that protests are peaceful. Any violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be handled by individual schools.
- Regarding national walkouts being publicized via news outlets and promoted in social media, it is likely that many students, especially across our District, will choose to participate. Such occasions are teachable moments, during which students can demonstrate their First Amendment right to be heard.
- In the event students walk out or gather, school principals and assigned staff will remain with students in a designated walkout area, so that supervision is in place.

It is my hope that taking the calm and deliberate approaches described above will minimize, rather than escalate, tensions in our schools. In the meantime, counselors remain available in all District schools, and school staff are being encouraged to help students share their feelings about the tragedy. Online resources such as "[Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#)," may be helpful for both parents and teachers. Crisis support information is also available on the District website, browardschools.com/crisissupport.

Keeping our students, staff and schools safe is the responsibility of everyone in our community. To reinforce existing safety measures, we continue to remind students and staff – if you see something, you should say something.

Information and tips can be shared anonymously in the following ways:

- **Call** 754-321-0911
- **Email** school911@browardschools.com
- **Text** CRIMES 274637 – the message must begin with SBBC
- **Submit online** via broward.k12.fl.us/siu/siunew/tipsemail.asp

Thank you for supporting our students and efforts to help ensure their voices are heard in the wake of the school tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Runcie, Broward County Public Schools Superintendent

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