



Madison Junior-Senior High School

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Middletown, OH 45042
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Justin Smith, Principal
Darren Stevens, Assistant Principal
Matt Morrison, Athletic Director

April 10, 2018

Dear students and parents,

I am writing to explain Madison Junior-Senior High School's policy and position on the topic of student walkouts.

The Madison Local School District has a primary mission to provide the best educational opportunities available for our students and to do so in a safe learning environment. While students have the right to peaceably express their opinions or views, they do not have the right to infringe on the rights of others or disrupt the educational processes of the school.

The Code of Conduct in the Madison Junior-Senior High School Student Handbook specifically lists a student walkout as an example of a disruption of school. Additionally, School Board policy number 5520 clearly states that any student demonstration or protest shall not disrupt or interfere with the operations of the school.

When students decide to walk out of class, it creates a disruption for students, staff, administration and School Resource Officers. When those students walk out of the school to protest, to pray, or to just stand quietly, the disruption pulls attention away from the everyday business of the classroom and requires our staff to be pulled from duties in order to ensure that the students who have walked out are safe. At the time of a walkout, every other student on our campus is less safe as a result. Walkouts, scheduled or not, political in nature or not, are counterproductive to our mission, disruptive to the learning process and place the majority of our students in an unsafe situation.

That being said, Madison Junior-Senior High School wishes to support students with their civic engagement and hopes to do so in a manner which doesn't interfere with the normal operations of our school. As principal, I want students to find a way to be civically engaged, to have a voice, and to express their viewpoints, but to do so in a manner that is respectful of our educational mission.

I will be working with student leaders to develop plans moving forward. We have been unified in supporting one another and unified in our commitment toward safety. We now need to find a way to be unified as we work towards our educational mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Justin Smith'.

Justin Smith
Principal
Madison Junior-Senior High School