



## Windber Area School District

High School/Middle School Office  
2301 Graham Avenue  
Windber, Pennsylvania 15963  
(814) 467-4567  
Fax: (814) 467-0677

Dear Parents and Guardians.

The Windber Area School District prepares, plans, and performs our designs for student safety with the utmost care and diligence in all of our schools on each and every school day. As a school district and within all of our schools, we take measures and develop plans focused on providing continuously increasing safety for the students within our schools. Our planning and preparations are performed in concert with local law enforcement and experts in both school safety and crisis management, developing aligned efforts to protect our schools and the students within from dangers.

In light of the most recent school shooting tragedy in Florida, a national movement is occurring to motivate students to find ways to constructively deal with the aftermath of this event. One such movement currently being planned at a national level and being supported by EMPOWER, the youth branch of the Women's March, is a *National School Walkout on Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM*. This planned movement is presented as 17 minutes of solidarity with the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, the site of this tragic school shooting.

Windber Area School District respects the First Amendment rights of our students both through supporting them in the communicating of their thoughts, feelings and beliefs and continuing to support them in their development as citizens within our community. Within our intentions to both support our students' rights to open and free communication through demonstration and our continuous and unwavering desire to maintain student safety, we are providing students with options that allow for them to both communicate their support for the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and the associated topics of political discussion surrounding the events. *Each of these options has been considered with the ability to maintain a safe and secure environment in mind for our students.*

**Option 1:** Students wishing to participate in the National Walkout will be permitted to do so for 17 minutes beginning at 10:00 AM. Students will be permitted to leave the school through the main entrance and participate in a silent observance of solidarity in the main parking lot of our Middle/High School complex. Students participating in this option will be monitored to provide support and a safe environment through the collaborative efforts of both the Windber Area School District and the Windber Borough Police Department. Following the 17 minutes of provided time of observance, students will return to their classrooms.

**Option 2:** Students who wish to represent their solidarity in support of the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School may also consider on March 14<sup>th</sup> wearing orange, burgundy, or silver which represent the unifying color of the national movement (orange) or the school colors of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (burgundy and silver).



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Option 3: Students of voting age are provided the opportunity to pursue registration to vote during their lunch periods, both on the computers provided within our cafeteria and via paper registration located within our High School Guidance Office.

Option 4: Students will be presented upon request the resources and support needed to pursue the development of correspondence providing support to the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

Option 5: Students will be presented upon request the resources and support needed to pursue developing correspondence with elected officials at the local, state and national level.

Please be aware that students will be permitted to participate in any number of the provided options, but are not required to participate in any if they choose not to do so. It is in our observance of our students' First Amendment rights that we additionally respect their right to choose not to participate also.

As a school district, we ask that you communicate with your child/children in regards to the importance of school safety and the critical role they can play. We ask that if they "Hear Something" or "See Something" of concern that they exercise the effort to "Say Something" to a Teacher, an Administrator, Law Enforcement, or their Parent. The importance of what they have to share can have resounding and profound results for a person or people.

The days, weeks, months, and years following this tragic event will continue to provide our society with both teachable moments and opportunities to grow and learn together further means by which to best protect our students. Together as an extended community, we can and will continue to support one another to protect our children and their futures.

Thank you for continuous support; our partnerships are grounded in our shared love and compassion for the children of the Windber Area School District community.

Richard E. Lucas  
High School Principal

Lance D. McGough  
Middle School Principal