



RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

ONE ACADEMIC AVENUE, JOHNSTOWN, PA 15904
PHONE: (814) 266-6081 FAX: (814) 269-9506

TIMOTHY C. REGAN
PRINCIPAL

Richland High School Family,

The Richland School District Mission recognizes that the pace of change in our world is placing new and more complex demands on students and schools. The Richland School District understands that the pace of this world oftentimes leads to confusion for our students when intense political and social pressures about topics arise. Unfortunately, due to recent tragic events in Parkland Florida, school safety has once again become the focus of the stakeholders of school districts across the country. The need to secure our schools has sparked an intense debate about a number of topics.

In the upcoming week, there will be a push from social media and other outlets for students to voice their opinions regarding government officials instituting certain gun control measures. The movement, known as “National School Walkout,” is calling for a nationwide walkout. The goal of the walkout is a call to Congress to pass legislation to keep students safe from gun violence at our schools, on our streets, in our homes, and in our places of worship. The “National School Walkout” is scheduled for 10:00 am on March 14th and will last for 17 minutes.

The Richland School District is sympathetic to students who have other beliefs or views that may not align with those who call for stricter gun control laws. The opinions of all students are valued and will be respected during this process that will be described throughout this letter.

The Richland School District, striving to be a leader in education, shares the following mission: *To produce responsible contributing citizens who can demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in a changing world. We will accomplish this by providing diverse practical educational opportunities, recognizing each person's self-worth, and developing individual talents and interests*

The Richland School District believes that allowing our students to have a voice in the political process leads them to understand how to use that voice in a productive, safe manner, which is vital towards achieving our school mission. It is our sincere hope and desire to make this call for political change a positive learning experience, no matter what the solution to this growing epidemic may be.

Although the vast majority of our students have not expressed a desire to participate in the proposed walkout, some of our students may wish to have their voices heard. In a collaborative effort, the Richland School District Administration has been working with students, staff members, and local law enforcement to present students with the following options.

- In order to keep all students safe and secure, we are not allowing any students to leave the building. Leaving the building creates an unsafe environment and will not be tolerated. Any student who leaves the building will be subject to disciplinary action found in the student code of conduct located within the student handbook. To maintain a safe and secure environment, The Richland Police Department will be patrolling our parking lots during this time period.
- Students who wish to peacefully participate in “National School Walkout” and the 17 minutes of silence, may do so by reporting to the theater at 9:55 am. At 10:00 am, students



RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

ONE ACADEMIC AVENUE, JOHNSTOWN, PA 15904
PHONE: (814) 266-6081 FAX: (814) 269-9506

TIMOTHY C. REGAN
PRINCIPAL

will begin the observance of silent respect for those students tragically killed in the Parkland School shooting. All students who participate in this peaceful demonstration will be sent back to their classes at 10:17am. Students who participate in the peaceful demonstration will be responsible for all missed work.

- Students may choose to stay in their scheduled classes. Classes will continue as scheduled for the duration of the “National School Walkout” time period.

During the course of the school day, all social studies classes will review the following items:

- Social Studies Teachers will provide time in each class to discuss productive strategies to have student voices heard within the scope of our democratic process. Items covered will include: registering to vote, writing members of Congress, calling members of Congress, etc. It will be stressed that younger students can have parents contact state and federal representatives and senators. When students or parents call their elected officials, a return call should be requested if the representative is not available.
- It should be noted that Richland School District Employees will not take a political stance on issues. The materials covered in class will simply be educating students on our political process.
- Any students participating in any other activity that violates the student code of conduct will face disciplinary action.

Students are encouraged to do the following on their own time:

- Write thank you letters to first responders for their bravery in the face of danger and for their willingness to keep others safe while placing themselves in danger.
- Write letter of support to students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. All letters should be addressed to Stoneman Douglas High School, ATTN: Ms. Diane Wolk-Rogers, 5901 Pine Island Road, Parkland, FL 33076

The Richland School District would like to make this a safe and orderly event for our students to have their voices heard. Political expression is a cornerstone on which our democracy is based. As always, we wish to educate the students of the Richland School District in the safest environment possible. Please feel free to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Timothy C. Regan
Principal
Richland High School
(814)-266-6081