



JENNINGS COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Teresa A. Brown, Superintendent

March 8, 2018

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Dear Jennings County Students, Parents, Staff, School Board and Community,

The core mission of our schools is to inspire and empower our students to reach their full potential as lifelong learners and productive members of a global community. As such, it is important to make sure our young people are well-informed enough to make choices and decisions about complex matters. We want our students to have a voice. We also want to protect our students so they have a safe environment in which to learn.

Recently, Jennings County administrators, law enforcement, and Jennings County High School and Middle School student leaders met to talk about the student walk-out movement being planned nationally for March 14. Our school leaders understand and respect that our students want to show their support for school safety and for the 17 victims in the Parkland, Florida February 14 shooting.

With this message in mind, we write this correspondence to state our plans and rationale as we navigate the upcoming student protest days. March 14 and April 20 are days thus far designated by a national protest group calling for students to walk-out of school. We do not know if other national movements will manifest similarly in the coming weeks. We believe it is important to support our students by giving them the opportunity to make decisions and formulate opinions. We also know as school employees, it is our obligation to be protest neutral and ensure that school safety is maintained.

When discussing the national student protest movement, our students shared their views and stated, "We don't want this to be political." "Our safety begins with us." "We take care of each other." "We want this to have a lasting effect and not be about one day."

Our JCHS and JCMS students have planned a "walk together" on March 14. At some point during the day, a "walk together" will be announced over the PA for our students to exit classrooms and walk in the hallway as student leaders read announcements about the importance of taking care of one another and making sure if you "see something, you say something." They also plan to share a message with students about being kind. They plan to challenge one another to do 17 acts of kindness each week to honor the 17 individuals, who lost their lives in Parkland.

Stronger Together

Florida. They want to create a lasting effect and make this bigger than one day and one event. They are using it as a forum to create a positive change and make a positive difference for all students.

Additionally, the JCHS students plan to create a panel of student leaders, who will be going to each of the elementary and middle schools this spring, to share their message and ask younger students to join them in remembering school safety "Starts with Us." They will also ask younger students to participate in the 17 acts of kindness each week to help create schools that are safer and more inclusive for all students.

While some school districts are publishing letters planning how to react to student protests, we are celebrating that our students are modeling for adults what this day should really mean. It is an opportunity to make a lasting difference beyond 17 minutes. It really is about us.

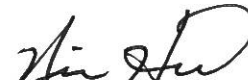
Sincerely



Teresa A. Brown
Superintendent



Tom Black
JCHS Principal



Nick Hill
JCMS Principal



Blaich Blanton
Student President



Molly Vaughn
JCCTA Co-President



Matt Staples
School Resource Officer