

# HAWTHORN SCHOOL DISTRICT 73

District Office Education Services Center

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*Director of Special Services*

March 7, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Today I reach out to you as a follow-up to my February 27<sup>th</sup> letter concerning the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida. We continue to hold the victims and their families in our hearts and prayers.

There is a national social media movement underway for students to protest school violence by walking out of class on March 14<sup>th</sup> and April 20<sup>th</sup>. These walkouts have been advertised for specific times for students to participate. It is our plan for **All Hawthorn School District 73 students and staff to remain in school**. The security of students and staff is our priority and it would be impossible to supervise and adequately protect everyone from potential harm if a planned walkout is publicized. I am concerned that this walkout puts students in potential harm.

This is a meaningful opportunity for students to participate in a topic that is timely and important. The administration will be working with students to identify ways for them to participate and share their voice as they choose to this movement. Plans are being made to provide meaningful options for those students that plan to participate.

As a reminder, Hawthorn 73 has a very strong partnership with Vernon Hills Police Department, Fire Department and other community leaders. We regularly meet with these leaders to review all our safety protocols and work as a team to keep our students and staff safe. Our schools practice safety drills regularly and review our efforts to maintain a safe and caring environment for all. Our staff is committed to providing a world class education as well as protect their care and safety every day.

The *American School Counselor Association* recommends that parents and adults:

- Listen to children's fears and concerns
- Limit exposure to television and social media
- Reassure children that the world is a good place, but there are people who do bad things
- Keep routines as normal and predictable as possible — this includes attending school
- Remind children that we have drills and procedures in place to keep them safe

If your child has voiced a particular concern and seems troubled, please reach out to your child's teacher and school social worker for support. You can also find more age appropriate resources for responding to violence and tragedy at: <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/collections/teaching-content/resources-responding-violence-and-tragedy/>

If you have further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 847-990-4215 or via email at [brownn@hawthorn73.org](mailto:brownn@hawthorn73.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mick Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mick Brown  
Superintendent

NB:wp