

Resources on Managing School Walkouts-Protests

With observance of the recent tragedy at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, many different groups including students from across the nation and even within Montana have formed protests or “walkouts” in recognizing safe schools and demanding answers to what constitutes safety for all students and staff within a school building or school district campus. School districts across the state may have already witnessed or may face the likelihood of a walkout or protest soon in their community or on campus. In the event of a walkout during school hours, districts must keep in mind Montana Law in regard to student responsibilities:

Montana Codes Annotated

20-5-201. Duties and sanctions. (1) A pupil:

- (a) shall comply with the policies of the trustees and the rules of the school that the pupil attends;
- (b) shall pursue the required course of instruction;
- (c) shall submit to the authority of the teachers, principal, and district superintendent of the district; and
- (d) is subject to the control and authority of the teachers, principal, and district superintendent while the pupil is in school or on school premises, on the way to and from school, or during intermission or recess.

Here are a few helpful resources from the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and Horace Mann that can help schools deal with potential problems set forth in the event of or planning of a student walkout:

[NASSP - Consideration for Principals When Students Are Planning an Organized Protest or Walkout](#)

[Horace Mann – Student Walkout Guidance for Administrators](#)

The following resource from the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) gives great guidance on how schools can create teachable moments and communicate with students in the face of tragic events like Stoneman Douglas High School:

[AASA Resources for School And Gun Safety Discussions](#)

You may have also received a message and link from MTSBA referencing another helpful guide put out by the National School Boards Association with how to manage potential walkouts within school districts. You can access this resource by clicking [NSBA-Navigating Student Walkouts & Mass Protests](#).

Administrators should be aware that there are national protests planned for Wednesday, March 14, Saturday, March 24 and Friday, April 20. Montana schools should be prepared for possible walkouts as we approach these dates and for protests planned in your community. To find out more on these national protests, please reference [TIME – What to Know About March for Our Lives and Other Student-Led Gun Control Protests](#).