



WATERTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

324 French St., Watertown, CT 06795

Telephone: (860) 945-4810

Fax: (860) 945-3348

Mr. Thomas Hogrefe
Assistant Principal

Mr. Paul Jones
Principal

Mrs. Nicole Cote
Assistant Principal

March 12, 2018

Watertown High School Community,

As many of you are aware, there is an international student-led school “walk-out” planned for March 14th at 10:00, in response to the recent tragic events in Parkland, Florida. The “walk-out” is meant to last for seventeen minutes, in recognition of the seventeen students and staff members who lost their lives in that tragic event. As a school we support our students in understanding how to participate in civil-discourse. However, we also do not want to encourage students to miss academic time. We also know that our policies limit how much we as a staff can be involved in an event such as this. In accordance with this national movement of student advocacy that is taking place, we have allowed students to take the lead in planning the event; however, to ensure we maintain a positive and safe learning environment, we, as administrators, have met with the student leaders, Leadership team, and Watertown Police Department to discuss the plans. Accordingly:

- Students will have the choice to leave class at 10:00 and go to a designated area. Due to recent winter weather, this will be located within the building. At the conclusion of the seventeen minutes, students will be expected to return to class, without disrupting the academic process.
- Students who leave class, but do not go to the designated area will receive a consequence for skipping class.
- Students are allowed to stay in their classes and continue working on academic activities.
- Administration and other available staff will monitor behaviors of students who gather. Any inappropriate behaviors as defined by the Student Handbook would be dealt with accordingly.
- Only current students attending WHS are allowed to participate in the event.
- The Watertown Police Department will be assisting our staff in maintaining the safety of all students. We are appreciative of their continued support to our school community.
- Students that participate are encouraged to use this time to discuss things such as acts of kindness that they can do in their lives or things that students can do to help end bullying behaviors.

We know that there are always many sides to every conversation. As always, our goal is to provide a venue for students to engage in open dialogue without attempting to persuade them towards any ideology or political viewpoint. In allowing this to occur, we believe that we are supporting our students as they grow into civically aware citizens. It is our hope that this will be a respectful time to honor the victims of the shooting in Parkland, FL, but also as a way to potentially improve our school climate as well. We encourage all families to speak with their students about these events. As always please feel free to contact me by email or phone if you have any questions regarding the plans for this day. Thank you all for your continued support of Watertown High School.

Paul Jones
Principal

***Watertown High School is creating a rigorous and accepting place of learning for all students.
We believe that our students will leave us better prepared for any success or challenge.***

