



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of Education
& Early Development**

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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March 9, 2018

Dear Superintendents:

On February 25, I sent you a letter recognizing our nation's grief over the loss of life at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida and encouraged each of you to reflect on your current school safety policies, procedures, and current level of crisis preparedness. The letter also directed you to school safety resources available through DEED, other supporting agencies in Alaska, and nationally. This email is a follow-up to this earlier correspondence.

The prevalence of school shootings in the U.S. continues to be an area of great concern following the shooting in Parkland, and the incident has been a catalyst for civic engagement by students nationwide. Alaska, like many other states, is seeing students organize walkouts to protest school violence and to advocate for school safety reforms. While civic engagement by students is constitutionally protected, is essential to the democratic process, and can be a rich educational experience, it can also present logistic and safety challenges for schools. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) updated its Recommended Guidance on Student Walkouts on February 23, 2018 and has made this guidance reflecting national best practices available so states can tailor it to their individual state and local needs. Attached you will find DEED's Recommendations on Student Walkouts, an adaptation of CCSSO's model guidance. Our hope is that this resource will be useful to districts both immediately, should students in your district engage in walkouts in response to Parkland, and also into the foreseeable future as our students involve themselves in other important civic issues. This is a courtesy document for districts to use as is, to adapt, or to decline to use in favor of locally produced guidance.

If you have any questions regarding this student walkout recommendations document, please contact Kami Moore with our School Health and Safety Team at kami.moore@alaska.gov or at 465-2939.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to school safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Johnson".

Dr. Michael Johnson
Commissioner