



Joint Statement on School Safety and Student Activism

The recent shooting in Florida has opened deep emotions for students, parents, teachers, and staff in school communities. Unlike any time in the past, students are taking a strong stand in the important debate surrounding school violence, and we salute their efforts to speak out by organizing peaceful protests.

Across the nation, efforts are underway to organize student rallies in March. Students in Pennsylvania are eager to take part in these events, and we should support them where we can.

That is why we encourage students who want to participate in these events to work within the structure and rules of each school district so that their voices may be heard without undue disruption to the educational process.

The safety of all involved is of utmost importance.

We share our students' deep concern about keeping our schools safe, and we commend them for their activism. We are eager to work with students and communities to create a safe space where everyone can make their voices heard on this issue and share their different perspectives about solutions. However, we need to do this in a safe, organized, and orderly way.

We applaud this interest in student engagement, while also recognizing that schools have the responsibility to maintain order during the school day.

No child should go to school fearful of his or her safety. We hope that the many differences in opinion will be able to come together to find workable solutions to improve school safety and may the tragic event in Parkland be the last time we see a school shooting in this, or any, country.

This is a joint statement from the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators, Pennsylvania Principals Association, Pennsylvania School Boards Association, and the Pennsylvania State Education Association.