

June 3, 2014

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Subject: Unsanctioned student-organized protests

As you may have heard, a student-organized walkout is being coordinated for Wednesday, June 4th. Students are being encouraged by other students to take part in this event in connection with the current labour dispute between the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA), which represents school boards in bargaining with the union. Details can be found on Facebook by searching "BC Student Walkout for Students".

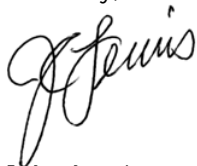
As a School District, we recognize that the dispute has raised widespread concerns and frustrations. However, it is essential to note that our primary function is to ensure safe and orderly learning environments for all students. By encouraging students to leave school property during the instructional day, unsupervised activities such as walkouts place students at risk and are disruptive to learning and to the school community at large.

There are a number of options and channels available to students to express their concerns and opinions that do not impact class time and learning. For example, any student, or group of students, may choose to coordinate communication to express the perspectives of students to the negotiating parties. Specifically, students may choose to contact the BCTF or BCPSEA to respectfully express their concerns. These types of activities can be engaged in outside of class time, independently, or as part of a group, and need not create disruption to the school day.

As is the case with any non-sanctioned event during school time, students who do not report to their scheduled class will be marked as absent and are responsible for any missed work and assignments.

Thank you for your attention to this message. We hope it encourages dialogue around an important issue, while ultimately respecting the importance of student safety and scheduled instructional time.

Sincerely,



John Lewis
Superintendent of Schools

JCL/vm