

July 9, 2018

South Pasadena Unified School District Statement
Student Incident on May 2, 2018

On May 2, 2018, a student walked around the South Pasadena High School campus wearing a cape picturing a semi-automatic rifle.

At South Pasadena Unified School District, student safety is our primary concern. Anytime a symbol is presented on campus that could potentially intimidate or scare people, administrators will investigate. If the symbol or activity disrupts the educational process for other students, then the student(s) involved will be called in to discuss the matter.

During this incident, SPSHS school procedures and education code were followed. The student proceeded with a planned march, which had been discussed with administration over the course of several months, and he chose to remove the cape for the remainder of the school day.

Upon request, the student involved voluntarily turned in his phone, which was not searched by administrators. The student made a recording on a different device without the knowledge or consent of administrators. Administrators consistently followed the current SPSHS student handbook policy for personal mobile devices.

SPHS administrators, faculty and staff respect students' rights to engage in civic discourse. Making certain these activities take place in a safe and productive manner, including meeting with students to ensure that all views are respected and that activities are safe for participants and non-participants, is an on-going practice.

In the spring, several student groups demonstrated interest in participating in walkouts to support various causes. Administration met with all groups to ensure that everyone was given the opportunity for expression. The administration's guidelines for these walkouts were shared with parents, students, faculty and staff prior to the walkouts. They include:

- Maintain a caring and understanding environment for all students, regardless of students' views.

- Students have a Constitutional right to demonstrate as long as it is civil and not disruptive
- We will respect students' rights to participate, or not participate, in any walkout or demonstration
- Students who choose to walk out should be allowed to without verbal or physical restraint but are subject to consequences equal to the rules that are violated while protesting
- Teachers, as adults who have great influence, have a responsibility to not display favor toward some students' points of view over others
- We all have opinions related to national issues; however, our primary responsibility as educators in the workplace is to provide for the safety, well-being, and supervision of our students
- Students have a right to protest. We respect this right, while also maintaining a caring and safe environment for all students
- We will fulfill our obligation as educators to provide supervision and instruction for students who choose to remain in the building and learn during a walkout

Students who participated in campus walkouts were informed about the absence policies related to walking off campus during the school day. The expectation of faculty and staff during a walkout is to carefully supervise students while they are on school premises during the school day.

Additionally, South Pasadena Unified School District works in tandem with local authorities who have a successful history of demonstrating diligence and care for our community.

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