

the NEW TRIER NEWS



NT News Staff

Walkout unites students in activism

Students participate in the national school walkout against gun violence

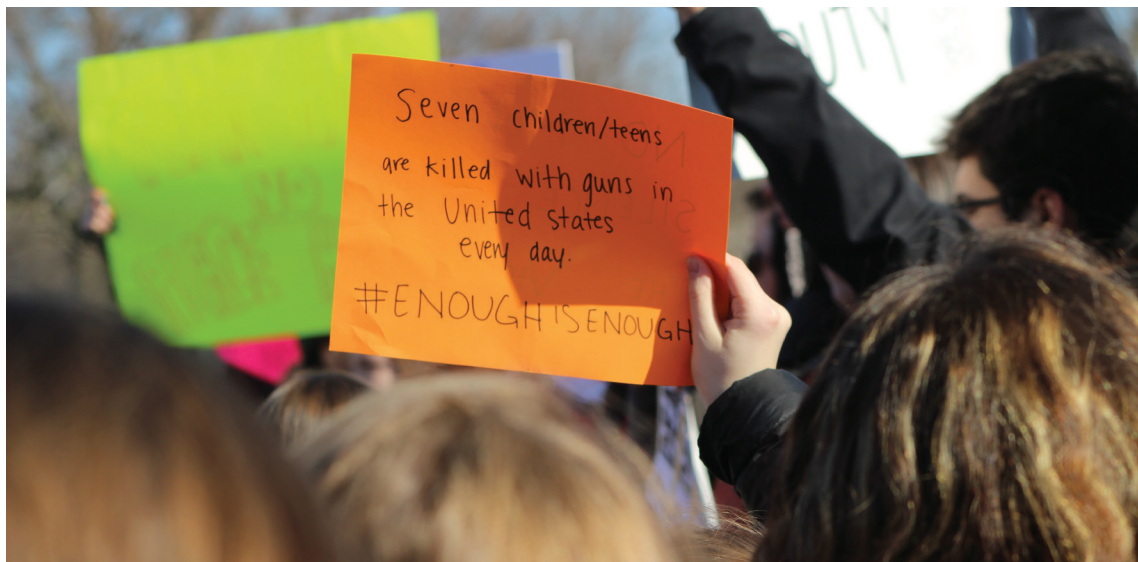
by Molly George

Students are still talking about the walkout a week later with varying opinions, particularly debating the status of the walkout as a political protest or a neutral memorial.

Junior Molly van Gorp was glad the walkout shifted from honoring victims to reform. She said, "I have a friend who goes to Loyola, and theirs seemed much more focused on memorial or mourning of victims. They stated a name for each minute, and it was arranged by the students and administrators together."

Senior Eden Hirschfield felt that the school's facilitation of the walkout was a good idea. "I think this was still a disruption. This is a government building, and they are supporting our cause, and I think that's progressive and I think that's important," said Hirschfield.

Senior Albert Yen said, "If I was a school administrator. I would definitely do the same thing, because I would want students to be safe. We're still expressing our point, and



Students express their support for victims of gun violence and frustration for a lack of school safety | Guthrie

I think it's even better that we didn't get a truancy for it."

The decision to make a special schedule to help students participate in the national protest created some controversy regarding their level of involvement.

Senior Andrew Eisenstein said, "I don't necessarily agree with how the school organized the entire thing, but I think it's important to support the movement."

Senior Helen Ware, one of the many supporters at the gathering on the track, said, "What happened today was definitely more of a memorial.

A protest has to disrupt something; it has to cause a ruckus and cause a change. [Since] we had the period off, it didn't really cause a change."

She added that the way to make a change is by reaching out to legislators, senators, and candidates running for office.

Sophomore Trey Bess agreed, "If we want to get political we need to start talking to people who can actually make a change. I think what's more important is that we remember who was killed. We can worry about gun control later."

Junior Sabrina Morris

participated in the walkout because she has a personal connection to the event.

Morris' cousin is currently a junior at Marjory Stoneman Douglas.

She said, "[My cousin] was really curious to see how schools outside of FL were reacting. She's in full support of our walkout. For her it's also about just bringing attention to the issue and the walkout was a good way to do that and hopefully get the conversation going."

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Nationwide youth rises up

Students across the nation take a stand against gun violence

by May Paddor

On Mar 14th, schools across the nation participated in a walkout in support of the students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and to advocate for school safety against gun violence.

Several high schools in neighboring districts participated in the walkout, including Loyola, Niles West, Evanston Township High School (ETHS), Northshore Country Day, Glenbrook South (GBS), and Stevenson.

The number of students who participated in the walkout varied at each school. Students at Glenbrook South reported 800-1000 participants out of the 2,972 students are enrolled. The Chicago Tribune reported 500 participants out of the 2,500 students enrolled.

Loyola senior, a lead organizer of his school walkout, Jonas Madison said, "Three hundred students had a vigil in the chapel, while around twelve hundred [participated in the walkout]."

ETHS senior and participant Elizabeth Sperti reported that almost every student participated her school's walkout. "I think we're already aware of these issues and it was not remotely surprising or groundbreaking for the students to organize such an event and for the administration to support it," said Sperti.

Administrations seemed to be generally supportive of the walkout.

"Our administration told us that they were on board, but they moved to restrict the movement to what they wanted it to be," said Madison, "The administration was explicit that they never took political stances."

Students at Stevenson, Glenbrook South, and ETHS reported that there were no administrative consequences for participating in the walkout.

Many of the student organizations made speeches or provided activities during the walkout.

At ETHS, students were given sheets with representatives' phone numbers on them.

"The final speech encouraged students to call a number from a sheet they handed out when students were walking to the field. On the back of the sheet there was a template for students to follow if they wished," said Sperti, "There was a period of time where hundreds of students called the representatives right there in the bleachers."

Even after the walkout, students were encouraged to continue advocating for their beliefs.

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Northwestern hoax tests school safety

Northwestern and surrounding schools respond to swatting incident

by Rhea Mech

A report of an armed man on Northwestern campus on Mar. 14, hours after hundreds of students participated in a nationwide walkout, was confirmed to be a hoax by Evanston police.

At approximately 2:15pm, the Evanston police department received a call from a man saying that he shot his girlfriend in Engelhart hall, located on the south side of campus, which has apartments for Northwestern graduate students and their families.

Police rushed to the scene, only to discover the apartment they were looking for had been vacant since late 2017. The number that called in the tip was tracked to Rockford, IL, approximately 86 miles away.

The real "girlfriend" and the "shooter" were unaware of the incident, according to a bulletin sent out by the city of Evanston on Mar. 15.

A quick and thorough investigation led the police department to conclude the situation



Northwestern hoax evoked the attention of the Evanston police | AP

was a swatting incident, meaning someone made the false emergency call with the aim of drawing a large response from law enforcement and civilians.

The event succeeded in drawing attention from the police, as well as testing the safety procedures of nearby schools, like Beacon Academy.

According to The Chicago Tribune, an alert went out to students and staff shortly before 2:30pm., warning them to stay away from the area of Engelhart Hall.

"This is the Northwestern University Emergency Notification System," an email blast to students began. "This is not a drill."

Along with emails, the school sent out tweets, Facebook updates, and called students family members

to inform every one of the situation.

"Northwestern was really great at notifying us about the alleged man with a gun on campus. I received an email, a text message and a phone call every time they updated us on what was going on," said NU sophomore Elizabeth Byrne.

"The head of our school told us that there had been a situation involving a gunman at Northwestern, and that the police were dealing with it. They let us know that they weren't going to let us out until they were positive it was okay" said Beacon freshman Lilly Schar.

"After the first phone call there was no one outside and it was kinda creepy like a ghost town," said Byrne, who noticed how quickly students scrambled to safe spaces.

Byrne was in her sorority when

the school told everyone to get into a safe area. She said she was locked down for about an hour.

"We were all standing in a community area in the school, calling our parents to let them know we were okay. People were pretty calm generally, so there wasn't a lot of commotion," said Schar.

While the danger was suspected to be on the college campus, nearby schools prepared for the emergency without causing an outburst of emotion.

"I didn't even know about the event until I got out of class and tried to leave," said Beacon junior Ben Francis. "I wouldn't change anything about how we handled it honestly. The school did a good job keeping us calm, and only giving out information as needed."

Aside from noticing how well the school and students responded to the possible threat, Schar also noticed a change in students attitudes.

"We've had drills before but never took them very seriously," she said. "This definitely changed how people think because we've finally had enough. We've finally realized that we are the ones who have the power to change what is happening. We had to step into that leadership role."

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