

Dear Mr. Podraza,

I am contacting you regarding your and the school's response to the walkout this morning. My friends and I were extremely disheartened at the lack of support the entire administration has shown for what was supposed to be a unifying experience for students. Additionally, the excuses we have been given are absolutely inadequate. The portion of the student body interested in the protest are completely unconvinced by the idea that the walkout was unsafe. And, even if that was the case, we have a school police officer for a reason. It would not have been very difficult to post an officer at the only entrance road to the school, or out front. However, instead of being supported and protected by our 'community,' protesters like myself were met with hostility. It looks to us as if the administration hijacked our protest. An assembly is not a protest. An assembly is the student body breaking at the will of adults, the entire base of the protest. This movement was supposed to be about not only protecting students from gun violence, but calling out the inaction of our elders. It was meant to be call to action for the generations before us to fix their mistakes. Instead, those same adults have kept us under their thumbs once again, and taken our protest from us. You have shown the entire student body that our school administration does not only not support our cause, but also does not support our civic right and desire to protest for what we believe. Not only were we not supported, but were not even allowed to exercise control over our own personal decisions, like the many of us who were manhandled by administrators trying to corral us like animals. If I want to leave the school, I am prepared to face the consequences (although there shouldn't be any). I do not accept being grabbed by my backpack by an adult for exercising my beliefs. The school administration, and everyone along the way who decided that our protest does not belong to us, has failed us. On behalf of the entire movement, I sincerely hope that you and the administration will take this into consideration, and do something to right this injustice.