

# Three North Penn students walk out on 19th anniversary of Columbine shooting

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Anissa Gardizy, Editor in Chief • April 20, 2018 •





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TOWAMENCIN – Today marks the 19th anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting in Colorado in 1999. Until the Parkland, Florida shooting in February 2018, Columbine was the deadliest high school shooting in our country’s history. Reports of walkouts and protests have been surfacing from high schools all over the nation, and some students from North Penn also participated in the demonstration.

Brittany Crosson, Dakota Drake, and Lindsay Henning were the three students who walked out at 10:00am and remained outside until the end of the school day. Sitting on the steps at the bottom of the main entrance to the high school, each with a poster, the girls explained why they chose to protest.

“We came out to protest against gun violence, since today is the 19th anniversary of Columbine. We are here to show that it has been 19 years, nothing has happened, nothing has changed. There needs to be something that has changed,” mentioned Henning.

The Columbine shooting happened before the class of 2018 was even born, but many teens feel it is their generation that will finally make a difference.

“I think it is really important for us to try and make a change. We’re all old enough to vote, so I think it is really important that we get our opinions out and look for people with similar opinions. We need to vote to make a change,” said Drake.

“It’s so mind blowing that I’ve grown up with this, and it doesn’t faze me. That makes me upset,” commented Crosson.

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— Brittany Crosson

While three students walked out today, there were hundreds of North Penn students who walked out on March 14th, a month after the Parkland shooting. For that walkout, some students coordinated with school administration and organized 17 minutes of silence and an after school forum.

“I think the reason everyone did the walkout on the 14th was because it had a lot more publicity. I think it was better organized. No one went to Dr. Bauer this time to organize it specifically with the school, so I think that’s why a lot of people didn’t know about it,” explained Crosson, “I also had a few friends who said they were afraid of possible repercussions. It’s close to graduation during senior year, and they didn’t want to potentially get in trouble. I was thinking that I would be willing to take that risk since this is important to me.”

Another reason that there were less students participating could be that since it is over two months since the Parkland shooting, the issue is no longer at the forefront of people’s minds.

“In between incidents, people don’t pay as much attention. It’s been about two months since the Parkland shooting, people aren’t as focused on it as they were. I think that is a really large contributor to why there are only three of us out here,” noted Drake.

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— Dakota Drake

The April 20th protest also has a specific stance on gun control, whereas the March 14th walkout was in part to honor 17 victims. Today, protesters had a more solid stance on gun control, an opinion that not every high schooler may have.

"I feel like people were more intimidated by that. Some people aren't sure where they stand [on gun control]. This one makes people question where they stand, and a lot of people didn't want to commit to that," said Hennings.

As people walked out of the high school, many teachers, students, and staff members encouraged the three girls to keep advocating.

"I hope [school shootings] are in the media because things are finally changing, not because it happened again," said Henning.