



Students plan rally over allegations of abuse against GJHS teacher

Former GJHS student organizes walkout

Becca Nedohon, Online Editor

Editor's Note: The Orange & Black has chosen not to name the accused or report specific allegations as no party has been charged with a crime. The organizer of the walkout willingly shared their name for publication. This is the beginning of the Orange & Black newspaper's coverage on the ongoing situation.

In response to allegations of abuse against a Grand Junction High School teacher, students have planned a walkout, date set for 2 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20.



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The walkout was organized through the social media platform TikTok by Olivia Deines, who attended GJHS before graduating early from a D51 online program in November of 2022. Under the account "Justice For GJHS Girls" a video that presented serious allegations about a current GJHS teacher was posted on Dec. 18, 2022, and the video has amassed more than 68,000 views. The videos and details of the walkout were also shared on Facebook.

GJHS was cancelled on twitter for not asking kids for their consent to learn. Students and teachers in an uproar.

The walkout is scheduled to take place on the N. 5th Street sidewalk in front of the school.

"I'm not in school anymore and can't be suspended for speaking out, and after hearing more and more people come out about it, I had enough," said Deines. "My report and others weren't taken seriously, and it's become an unsafe place to go to school."

"We do take these reports very seriously," said GJHS Principal Meghan Roenicke in response to these claims. "We look into them, we gather statements from students who may or may not have witnessed something, and we get a statement from the teacher. We try to provide due process. I wish we would have known that she felt like her report wasn't addressed because we would have wanted to reassure her. I want every student to feel safe when they come to school."

School District 51 issued a statement regarding the planned protest and the allegations made. The full quote can be found at the end of this article.

Student Resource Officer Tyson Olsen, a Grand Junction police officer, acknowledged that he was aware of the planned protest and that there was going to be an official presence at the walkout in order to maintain safety on campus, and to prevent any potential disruptions.

Roenicke said administration is aware of the plans to protest and specified that there will be no disciplinary action for student participation. Teachers may mark students absent.

GJHS students have planned protests and walkouts in the past.

In 2020-2021, a group of students organized a protest against the mask mandate, which was in place for a majority of that school year.

Nearly a year ago, students in the GJHS student section at a Fruita vs. Junction basketball game shouted chants and wore shirts with the goal of raising awareness for sexual assault. A few students were consequently removed from the game at halftime, after refusing to remove their shirts.

Last spring, GJHS's Gay & Straight Alliance held a walkout in support of LGBTQ+ youth in Florida, after the "Don't Say Gay" bill was passed there.

This is the full statement from D51:

"Grand Junction High School is aware of the student-organized walkout scheduled to take place this Friday. We are also aware of the allegations made and want to assure our students and families that we take allegations of this nature extremely seriously. While student participation in the walkout is entirely voluntary, students who participate are expected to do so respectfully and in a way that does not disrupt the learning environment. District Safety and Security, as well as local law enforcement, will provide extra support, if needed, during the walkout to ensure the safety of everyone involved."