

Suggested Talking Points to Help Students Understand the Walkout

We understand the teacher walkout has created difficulties for parents. We also understand it can be challenging to explain this unprecedented event to your child. Below are some suggestions to help your child understand why school is closed at this time. It is our sincere hope that a resolution will be found as soon as possible and we are anxious to have our teachers and students back in the classroom.

- Teachers are at the Capitol meeting with lawmakers to ask for more funding for public schools so that all Oklahoma students can receive the very best possible education.
- It is hard on everyone to be out of their daily routines. This is also difficult for the teachers because they miss seeing their students.
- Teachers would rather be at school with their students, but they know more money for schools is important so that every student gets the education they deserve.
- Children and teens like routines, so trying to keep the daily schedule as normal as possible will help to make this time less stressful.
- Be careful not to say that teachers are “fighting” for more educational funding. The teachers are not fighting with legislators, they are talking and explaining to legislators why more funding is needed for schools. This is important especially for younger children.
- Give your child an opportunity to talk about their feelings about being out of school. It is ok to feel uncertain, scared, sad or even angry. Ask “what can you do to feel better?”
- Parents can help reduce anxiety by helping child/teen maintain sleep and eating routines, supporting reading, reviewing coursework and exercising each day.
- Monitoring the amount of media exposure children get about the walkout via television, computers and social media will help keep younger children calm.
- Use this time as a teachable moment to learn about the democratic process and advocating for a cause that they believe in.

The most important thing is to reassure your student that their teachers will be back as soon as they can. Parent responses to the teacher walkout will influence how children feel. Parents are truly the greatest teachers and if you as a parent are positive and calm about the walkout, it most likely will carry over to your child.