

School walkouts amplify division

Ryler Hanosky said he was disappointed that his stepbrother, Kylee's boyfriend, did not join the counter-protest.

As a new generation joins the gun debate, students face tensions in and out of class.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

As she addressed the crowd during the walkout at her Idaho high school, Kylee Denny faced heckles and name-calling from a group of protesters including many familiar faces, including her boyfriend's stepbrother.

ers, including her protest gun violence.

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teacher defused some tension by letting students take turns sharing their opinions on the walkout.

Organizers of the national walkouts called for measures such as tighter background checks on gun purchases and a ban on assault weapons like the one used in the Florida rampage.

A protest against gun violence also is scheduled in Washington on Saturday, and another round of school walkouts is planned for April 20, the 19th anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting in Colorado.

In last week's walkouts, some students tried to steer clear of politics, including Jacob Shoemaker, a senior at Hilliard High School in Ohio, who was suspended a day for not following instructions because he stayed in a classroom instead of joining protests or the alternative, a study hall.

School, he said, isn't the place for politics, and he wasn't taking sides.

In Pennsylvania, a superintendent issued detentions to 225 Pennridge High School students who walked out Wednesday instead of attending an assembly honoring the Parkland victims.

Elsewhere, scuffles broke out between walkout participants and students who had other ideas about how to spend the time out of class.

Students at Blythewood High School in South Carolina were tightly packed in an atrium when some began talking during the moment of silence for the Parkland victims. Shoving broke out as some called for quiet.

"These kids, who were probably younger, they weren't against the protests," said Andrew Kilgore, an 18-year-old senior who said students would be better organized for the next demonstration. "They were just being disruptive. They wanted a reason to get out of class."

One student, Jess Doolley, 16, said that the school in rural western Connecticut is small enough for her to know nearly everyone, but that she did not feel comfortable joining the walkout because of comments by gun rights supporters.

Tensions already had been high since the Parkland shooting amid constant debate over arming teachers, school shootings and gun control. "Everybody knows how everyone feels about it," Jess said.

The day after the walkout, Jess said, her civics class said, her civics

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In some cases, personal relationships have been strained.

High School in Parkland, Marjory Stoneman Douglas massacre of 17 people at actively one month after the school instructions and discipline for those who defied schools handed out disciplinary leaders are sorting through the fallout as some administrators and students exposed sharp differences of opinion.

The walkouts that mobilized students across the country also created tensions in hallways and classrooms as a new generation was thrust into the debate over guns. While those calling for new restrictions stood in the spotlight, the surge of youth activism has exposed sharp differences of opinion.

respect for me because I was walking out," said Kylee, a 17-year-old junior who helped organize the protest.

being so hostile about losing very tense because he was credibly awkward, and it's brother, which is really in-

"I'm dating his step-out to protest gun violence.

day's national school walk-which was part of Wednes-

High School in Idaho Falls, during the rally at Hillcrest