

## The Thursday Letter on Wednesday

March 13, 2019

Dear PCS,

This Friday, March 15 at 3:30 p.m, youth and adult allies concerned about the urgency of action needed to stem climate change will assemble in solidarity with the [Global Children's Climate Strike](#) at the Clocktower in Downtown Santa Cruz. [American youth](#) are joining the worldwide climate strikes, scheduled for March 15, 2019.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Special Report, "[Global Warming of 1.5 Degrees Celsius](#)," humans have just 12 years to limit devastating worldwide warming. Impacts of climate change, like this fall's worst-on-record California wildfires and other extreme weather, are already deadly and damaging. Without unprecedented societal changes, world scientists warn that the ever-worsening impacts of climate change will become unstoppable by 2030.

While PCS supports Friday's 3:30 Clocktower Climate Strike, we cannot dismiss students early. If students choose to leave campus in a show of solidarity with the worldwide #FridaysForFuture movement to join UCSC, Mission Hill, and Santa Cruz High students who will be assembling at Santa Cruz High at 2:30 pm to walk to the Clocktower, parental supervision is advised and sidewalks should be used. Students also must have parent permission to leave campus early - this permission needs to be sent in writing to the office in advance, either by email or note, just as with any other excused absence. Permission must be received in the office by 12:45 PM on Friday, March 15th.

With that disclaimer in mind, climate change is one of the greatest challenges humanity has faced, and the consequences will be disproportionately felt by our children and future generations. Regardless of where you stand politically, the scientific evidence overwhelmingly supports the urgency of solving these complex issues.

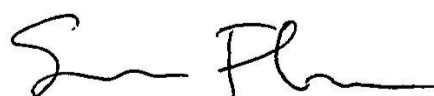
Young people around the world are starting to discover the power of their individual and collective agency in holding the adults with political leverage accountable for taking action. This movement has not yet taken hold in the United States, despite the fact that the Global Children's Climate Strike Movement was inspired by the power and attention U.S. youth garnered in support of serious gun legislation just a year ago. I encourage you to watch these videos of Greta Thunberg, a student from Sweden who has helped

to inspire millions of young people around the world demanding action ( [COP24](#), [TEDx](#), [2019 World Economic Forum](#)).

While it is not our school's place to facilitate political activism, I do think we as parents, educators, and mentors are responsible for ensuring our children have the tools and knowledge to advocate for influence over the future they will live in. PCS students are clearly building their capacity for critical thinking, research, analysis, and communication - all skills that will serve them well to be leaders and participants in this important work.

We also need to consistently refresh our school curriculum to make sure we are presenting students with the fact-based truth and historical context they will need to expertly engage both with their peers as well as with political power brokers. If the result of our teaching is to empower our children to be the agents of change that we have been slow or unable to initiate, I think we can be proud of what we have done.

Regards,



Simon Fletcher