**EMAIL SET-UP**

**\*\*Required. Incomplete forms will be returned. Please submit to** [**cansupport@aclu.org**](mailto:cansupport@aclu.org)**.**

If you have not already, please schedule the email on the [CAN Calendar.](https://www.acluloop.org/Departments/affiliateSupport/CAN/Lists/CAN%20Calendar1/Main.aspx)

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| **Affiliate Name \*\*** | ACLU-VA |

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| **Target Audience \*\*** |
| Affiliate Full List  Segmented list (Please provide zip codes, chapter code or any other geo-information below. Please separate zip codes with a comma.) |
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| **Testers and Reviewers \*\***  **Please provide the email address of those that should receive a test version of this email. One person from your affiliate should respond to the CAN team with edits from all members of your affiliate team. Please don’t have everyone reply directly to the CAN team.** |
| Bill Farrar – bfarrar@acluva.org |

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| **Email Template \*\***  **Note: Images are required for the Action, Event and Banner format emails.** | | | |
| Letter format  (no image) | Action format  (image 190x230) | Event Template  (image 350x300) | Banner Format (Image 600x300) |
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| **Subject line \*\***  Tease, tell or take action. Avoid initial caps, keep it under 50 characters, and make it compelling for constituents to open your email. Avoid the words “Help,” “Act,” “Marriage,” “Immigration,” “Immigrant,” “Action,” ” Let’s,” and “Save the date.” |
| Advice for Parents and Teachers Regarding Upcoming School Walkouts |

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| **Pre-header Text \*\***  The pre-header is the short summary text that follows the subject line when an email is viewed in the inbox. It is right about the header logo. Include a call to action. |
| Students across the country are planning mass walkouts to protest gun violence in schools. Parents and teachers should know how to help protect their rights. |

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| **Side Box Content (Action & Event format only)** |
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| **Hyperlinks for email message \*\*** |
| National School Walkout day - <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/03/01/what-parents-should-know-national-school-walkout/382448002/>  we sent a letter - <https://acluva.org/en/news/aclu-virginia-urges-school-administrators-protect-freedom-expression-schools>  On Civil Disobedience - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_Disobedience_(Thoreau)>  right to express themselves - <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/students-free-speech-rights-public-schools>  National Education Association - <http://vtnea.org/uploads/files/walkout%20advisory%20nea.pdf>  here - <https://acluva.org/en/news/advice-aclu-virginia-students-participating-protest>  submit an intake - <https://acluva.org/en/get-help> |

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| **Email Body Content \*\***  Keep the content brief. One of the worst mistakes we make is trying to include the entire story into the email message. Think about when you open an email in your inbox. Do you read every single word in there? Probably not. Find a way to summarize the content compelling way, and let them click through to a page on your website for more information.  Answer the these three questions for the reader when you write your message:   1. **What are you asking me to do?** Always give the reader an action to take. Your call to action should be able to stand-alone. Remember, people scan their emails, and if there is one thing you want your recipient to notice, it is your call-to-action. 2. **What is in it for me?** You know the value of your email content, but does your recipient? Tell them why taking action is important for them or why they should attend an event. 3. **Why should I care?** Write in the second person – orient the copy toward the reader and not the ACLU. Readers take action on things that are about them or affect them. |
| Greetings –  Across the nation, teens of from all backgrounds are uniting to make their views known about an issue that has affected them directly and deeply – gun violence in schools. Time and time again in our country’s history, we have seen young people lead the way in times of crisis, and the first step in that is hearing what they have to say.  As part of their activism, students moved by the recent, tragic school shooting in Parkland, Fla., are planning mass school walkouts during school hours. This Wednesday, March 14 has been identified as [National School Walkout day](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/03/01/what-parents-should-know-national-school-walkout/382448002/), and other upcoming dates are being mentioned in news reports as well. Many school administrators, teachers and parents are struggling with how to deal with this issue.  In Virginia, we have encouraged school officials to treat this as an educational opportunity rather than behavior that calls for discipline. On March 2, [we sent a letter](https://acluva.org/en/news/aclu-virginia-urges-school-administrators-protect-freedom-expression-schools) to all Virginia school superintendents that included some guidelines that we think should guide how schools respond.    Legally, school administrators have the power to discipline students for walking out of school. They can only do so, however, if they can demonstrate that the students’ conduct materially and substantially disrupted the educational programs at the school or interfered with other students’ rights. And, they can’t punish a student more harshly for walking out in protest of something than another student whose absence is unexcused for a different reason. That would be unconstitutional.  From our perspective, however, the most important thing to consider is that the power to discipline need not be exercised at all, if students, parents, teachers and school administrators can come together to define these student protests as educational activities that enhance student community and civic engagement.  For Parents  Talk to your teen about whether they plan to participate in a walkout should one occur at their school, and review their school’s student handbook and code of conduct with them. Suggest that they engage in self-study regarding free speech and civil disobedience. Henry David Thoreau’s “[On Civil Disobedience](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_Disobedience_(Thoreau))” might be a good place to start.  Ask your school principal how they would respond to a walkout. Suggest that they view this as a teachable moment grounded in the belief that peaceful protest over matters one cares about deeply is an act of courage and positive community engagement that should be admired and encouraged, not an act of defiance requiring punishment. And if they do intend to impose discipline on any students who walk out, ask them to ensure it is consistent with punishments handed out for other types of unexcused absences.  It is also important that the rights of students who choose not to walk out be protected, and that their educational experience is without significant disruption. Facilitating a walkout should one occur will reduce the potential for disruption and help protect everyone’s rights. Lastly, administrators should understand that students have a [right to express themselves](https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/students-free-speech-rights-public-schools) through their clothing and other means even while on school grounds during school hours.    For Teachers  Many teachers have asked us whether they have a right to join their students in a walkout protest during school hours. The simple answer is no, but we would defer to guidance being offered by the [National Education Association](http://vtnea.org/uploads/files/walkout%20advisory%20nea.pdf) (NEA). In addition, we encourage you to talk with your fellow teachers and administrators about how their actions will leave a lasting impression on the young people in their care.  Additional ACLU of Virginia resources on this matter are available [here](https://acluva.org/en/news/advice-aclu-virginia-students-participating-protest). Please forward this email to anyone who might be interested or affected by this issue. If any students you know who walk out receive a punishment that seems disproportionate or overly severe, encourage them to [submit an intake](https://acluva.org/en/get-help) for our Legal Team to review.  Very truly yours,  Claire |

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| **Social Share Buttons \*\***  **Social share buttons are added to the Action and Event templates. Please provide the language below for Twitter. We cannot customize the email or Facebook links.** |
| **Twitter:** |
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