

Deadline is Friday
to withdraw from
classes with a 'W'

WALKOUT

BC students and community members stand together with a message of unity

By Mary Lewe
Staff Writer

Wednesday, March 14 may have begun as a typical school day, but at 10 a.m. schools across the nation came alive with the spirit of protest as students abandoned classrooms for 17 minutes to demand change in the wake of increased gun violence and mass shootings.

The #Enough National School Walkout was conceived by the Youth EMPOWER sect of the Women's March Network and had wide participation. The walkout was held one month after the Feb. 14 school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School which claimed 17 lives in Parkland, Florida.

Less than two weeks after the Parkland school shooting, Brevard College experienced a fearful hour-and-a-half when the campus was locked down after a parent reported a rumor of a possible shooter. Thankfully, this incident was benign, but it roused SGA President Lauren Fowler to action. As she waited in a locked and darkened classroom, she began to plan Brevard College's own walkout.

Although Wednesday morning was cold and windy, the Transylvania Times estimates that

100 students, faculty, and community members gathered at the Bell Tower to join thousands of others across the country in saying "enough."

"It is this kind of love and activism that changes a nation," Fowler said as she welcomed and thanked participants. She then turned the mic over to campus minister Sharad Creasman who held a moment of silence for those lost to gun violence and a prayer giving thanks for the freedom and strength which made the event possible.

"Hope—even in the midst of despair—comes because people believe and dare to stand," Creasman said. "There are students who have the courage to stand, and show us that there's still hope for a better future, a better tomorrow, and a better today."

Campus counselor Dee Dasburg also spoke, acknowledging the effect the campus lockdown had on Brevard College students saying "a little bit of our innocence was lost" that day.

"Since 1999 there's been about 25 fatal school shootings," Dasburg said. She continued by sharing her memory of the horrific Columbine

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Updated BC emergency response plan released

The college released an updated emergency response plan on Friday, removing language from the previous plan that instructed people on campus to exit buildings during an active shooter situation "if it is possible to do so safely."

The new plan removes that instruction to exit buildings. "When you become aware of an incident, if you are in a classroom or office," the new plan recommends, "remain in the room you are in and initiate Shelter in Place procedures."

The policy defines those procedures as follows: "Shelter in Place means to stay in the room you are in, lock the door, go to a corner of the room that is not exposed to any window (including any window in a door), turn out the lights, do not make any noise." The policy also says to call 911 and Campus Security at 577-9590 "only if you feel it is safe to do so."

The new policy was announced to campus via an email sent Saturday morning by Stan Jacobsen, director of safety, security and risk management at Brevard College. The full policy can be downloaded from the college website at <https://brevard.edu/campus-safety> and on MyBC by visiting the Office of Campus Life page and selecting Campus Security.

A front-page article in the March 14 issue of The Clarion highlighted what were at the time the college's official emergency response procedures, based on the plan that had been updated as recently as Feb. 14, 2018.

Thirteen days later, that plan was put to the test when the college received a credible threat of a possible shooter on campus and lockdown procedures were initiated across campus. The most recent update to the plan (on March 16, 2018) is an attempt to apply some of the lessons learned during the Feb. 27 lockdown.

More changes to the college's emergency response procedures may be forthcoming, and The Clarion will continue to report on them as they are implemented.

—John Padgett



Photo by Jeni Welch

Students and community members gather on Wednesday, March 14 in protest.