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**Suburban Denver Student Education Protest Grows**

**Suburban Denver student protest over history education proposal grows, 700 gather at rally**

**By COLLEEN SLEVIN**

***The Associated Press***

**DENVER**

Around 1,000 young people across several high schools in suburban Denver participated Wednesday in the largest of a series of student demonstrations opposing a new set of high school history standards proposed by a conservative-led school board.

Most of the young protesters gathered at a busy intersection, chanting "Education without limitation!" and waving signs and American flags.

The afternoon demonstration against a plan to focus class material on topics that promote patriotism and respect for authority while discouraging civil disorder lasted about three hours, authorities said.

Later, about 75 students from another area school walked out after meeting with Jefferson County school Superintendent Dan McMinimee about the proposal.

McMinimee has offered to meet with any students about the standards proposed by Julie Williams, one of three members of the school board's recently elected conservative majority.

The proposal in the state's second-largest school district comes in response to a new national framework for teaching Advanced Placement history.

Supporters say the new outline from the College Board, which oversees the program, would focus on critical thinking and classroom discussion rather than memorization. Critics fear it would place too much emphasis on the nation's problems.

For its part, the College Board says the new system provides a balanced view.

The Jefferson County school board plan would establish a committee to review texts and coursework, starting with Advanced Placement history, to make sure materials "promote citizenship, patriotism, essentials and benefits of the free-market system, respect for authority and respect for individual rights" and don't "encourage or condone civil disorder, social strife or disregard of the law."

The district hasn't tried to stop the students' own form of civil disobedience and the young participants haven't been punished. "We're going to allow students to make their concerns heard," district spokeswoman Lynn Setzer said.

District administrators have been sent to watch over the demonstrations to make sure students stay safe, she said.

At the large afternoon protest, students mainly from Chatfield and Dakota Ridge high schools peacefully gathered along the roads near Littleton as deputies and school officials looked on.

"There are kids here" just skipping class, student organizer Scott Romano told the Denver Post (http://dpo.st/1mSu4MN). "But the majority of us are out here for the right reasons."

The proposal was introduced last week, but a vote hasn't been scheduled. The next school board meeting is scheduled for Oct. 2.

The protests began Friday with a sick out that shut down two schools by teachers upset over the plan and other issues.

Students began walking out of classes in waves on Monday, organizing largely by social media. Hundreds of students from at least six area schools have participated.

The dozens of students who left Alameda International High School in Lakewood asked McMinimee about the school board plan and teacher concerns including pay, KMGH-TV (http://bit.ly/1B8x2Of) reported. He said he was worried that students haven't fully informed themselves.

"I think sometimes, as a student," he told the station, "sometimes you hear what is going on, you don't necessarily have the whole picture."

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**What are your thoughts on this? What side of the debate would you be on? Why? How does the media coverage affect a debate like this? Would you be involved in something like this? How?**