

Alliance for Parental Rights and Taxpayers Call for Immediate Cancellation of EPISD Survey, Highlighting Unnecessary Use of Taxpayer Funds El Paso, TX– 11/15/2024

Alliance for Parental Rights and taxpayers are calling on the El Paso Independent School District (EPISD) to cancel its planned Equity Survey, citing concerns over its methodology, parental notification, lack of transparency, the surveys intrusive nature and the misuse of taxpayer dollars.

The survey, which is planned to be administered to students, has raised alarms among parents/guardians, students, and community members. Many believe the survey is both unnecessary and redundant, especially given that EPISD is already required to protect all students, regardless of their race, religion, sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics. Furthermore, the funds spent on this survey are taxpayer dollars that could be better used elsewhere.

Key concerns regarding the survey include:

1. **Invasive and Unnecessary Questions** – The survey asks personal and sensitive questions that go beyond what is necessary to foster a safe and supportive educational environment. By probing into deeply personal matters such as family dynamics, religion, and personal beliefs, which is outside of the scope of education, the survey infringes on the privacy and intimacy of the family institution. Students should be able to learn in an environment where they are respected and safe, without being asked to disclose private details about their family life. EPISD is already obligated to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, regardless of their background or identity.
2. **Redundant Nature of the Survey** – EPISD's mission already includes ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The district's policies, as well as state and federal laws, already require that all students be treated with respect and dignity. As such, this survey appears redundant and unnecessary, duplicating efforts that are already in place to ensure student safety and equity.
3. **Misuse of Taxpayer Funds** – The resources allocated to this survey, including time, staff, and financial costs, are funded by taxpayers. Given the survey's questionable necessity, many parents and community members feel that this money is being misused, as it does not address distribution of EPISD resources. These funds could be better directed toward initiatives that directly benefit students and improve their educational experience, rather than being spent on a survey with unclear objectives.
4. **Community Concerns**—Numerous parents and community members have voiced their opposition to the survey, citing concerns over its emotional and psychological impact on students and its lack of clear purpose. How will EPISD be able to confine or contain the impact from other students who would not take the survey? Many believe that EPISD should focus on improving academic outcomes and student well-being rather than collecting unnecessary personal data.

In light of these concerns, Alliance for Parental Rights and Taxpayers are urging EPISD to:

- Cancel the survey immediately.
- Reaffirm the district's commitment to inclusivity and safety without the need for intrusive data collection. The protection of all students' rights, regardless of race, religion, or sexual orientation, is already enshrined in EPISD policies and in law.
- Reevaluate the allocation of taxpayer funds and direct those resources toward initiatives that have a clear and measurable benefit for students and the community.
- Engage in a transparent dialogue with the community to address concerns and ensure that any future surveys, if necessary, are conducted with full parent and community involvement.

“We acknowledge that EPISD is dedicated to creating a safe, inclusive environment for all students, however, this survey seems to be a solution in search of a problem. The district is already obligated to protect every student, regardless of their identity. Moreover, the taxpayer dollars spent on this survey could be better invested in initiatives that directly benefit our students.”

Alliance for Parental Rights and Taxpayers remain committed to collaborating with EPISD to ensure that students receive the best possible education in a safe, respectful environment. We urge the district to prioritize transparency, respect for privacy, and wise use of taxpayer funds in future decisions.

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