

## Superintendent Cabrera's statement on the death of George Floyd

The El Paso Independent School District condemns the murder of Mr. George Floyd last week in Minneapolis and joins the millions of Americans who call for a speedy and full investigation into the action that led to his death. While Mr. Floyd's death happened hundreds of miles away, its impact is strongly felt in communities like ours. Hundreds of El Pasoans have rightfully exercised their right to protest the racial inequities that for generations have affected People of Color and other minorities in our country.

The tragic events that have unfolded in the wake of Mr. Floyd's death remind us that while our society has made significant strides in creating equity in rights and access to our most vulnerable populations, much work is left to be done in guaranteeing that all future generations of Americans can enjoy fairness in the systems we expect to be in place to protect us. El Paso has been a beacon of progress in racial progress throughout its history, with many instances of political and social decisions aimed at providing rights and access to African-Americans, Mexican-Americans and the LGBTQ communities. And while not perfect, our community can fall back on our history of diversity to lead the way nationally in creating systems that seek to eliminate the divisiveness that today makes our country suffer.

EPISD remains committed to doing its part to make equity a reality.

Our classrooms remain safe spaces for all students regardless of their race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or physical ability. Through our policies and trainings, we seek to instill on our youth the thoroughly American principle that we are all created equally and that our differences will make our future stronger. Our employees, too, enjoy equal access to services regardless of their background as we continue to seek and implement programming aimed at helping our teachers, principals, custodians, cafeteria workers and all other workers pursue happiness through their jobs without fear or worry.

Much of the conversation surrounding the protests that have erupted throughout the country revolve around the perception of police brutality – an issue that weighs heavily on all of our communities. Without a doubt, this issue is one that merits frank discussion and urgent action. The EPISD Police Services Department has an established history of protecting students and employees in a fair and equitable manner. We vow to continue our training and oversight procedures to make sure the racially-motivated police actions that have caused so much grief in other communities never become a reality in our schools.

The deaths of George Floyd and other Americans like him give us an opportunity to reflect on the values that we as El Pasoans, Texans and Americans embrace and pass on to our children. EPISD vows to not just continue, but also strengthen the policies and procedures we have in place to ensure everyone in the District has the opportunity to learn and work in an environment where they are treated with dignity and respect, free from bullying or harassment.

To our students and employees, especially those who identify as People of Color, we want you to know that YOU MATTER. We see you and we support you. Let's work together to create a better EPISD, a better El Paso and a better America.

