



Austin Independent School District
4000 S. IH 35 Frontage Road
Austin, TX 78704

Dear Superintendent Matias Segura and Austin ISD Board of Trustees,

A community member who has had children and grandchildren in Austin ISD has brought to our attention that the school calendar for the 2025-2026 academic year does not acknowledge the religious holiday of Good Friday, April 3 and is requiring students to attend school on that day instead. In place of allowing students to observe Good Friday, students are given a day earlier in the week, Tuesday March 31, to honor Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. Students will have Monday April 6 off however this day does not appear to be an off day where the campus is closed because it is a "campus staff development day".

Austin ISD choosing to observe Cesar Chavez/Dolores Huerta day and not observing Good Friday, which is commonly a day that schools close in Texas, appears as if the school district is placing politics above a religious holiday. In fact, our grassroots/ parent allies have found that two other large metropolitan school districts, Ft Worth ISD and Houston ISD, have found a way to observe and close schools on Chavez/Huerta Day and Good Friday. Thus, Austin ISD had an option to accommodate both holidays but chose to remove Good Friday. It appears that the goal was to highlight a controversial and divisive figure like Dolores Huerta over acknowledging a holiday that a significant portion of Americans observe and ties to our state and nation's Christian heritage. According to a 2025 report, by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 31 percent of state and local government employers in the country offer a paid holiday for Good Friday and 19 percent of private employers offer it as a paid holiday¹. Many churches choose to have special

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/ebs/factsheets/holiday-profiles.htm>

religious services on Good Friday that students and staff may want to attend that day. Unfortunately, Austin ISD has a history of diminishing viewpoints of a Christian background.

We ask that Austin ISD edit their calendar to restore Good Friday as a staff and student holiday. The school district has time to correct this issue before the next semester when Good Friday will be observed.

Choosing to remove Good Friday sends the message to students and staff that their religious views are not appreciated to the extent that they will be forced to attend school and work while other kids across the state will enjoy the day off.

Please reinstate Good Friday for the Spring semester in 2026.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Saenz, President and Attorney

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