



August 20, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians of SFPS Students:

On August 8, the SFPS Board of Education voted to accept the recommendations of the Superintendent's Equity & Diversity Council regarding Fiesta Court visits to the public schools. The vote was made in an effort to be respectful to all students as the Santa Fe community continues to move toward reconciliation and peace.

It's important for you to know that there are strong opinions that the Fiesta Council visits should be eliminated all together and strong opinions that the tradition of the school visits remains.

The vote to accept the recommendations is a compromise position at this current time. As we go forward, there will be continuing dialogue so that we can learn from each other regarding our traditions, their impact on learning and how we can be inclusive of all the traditions which make Santa Fe a unique place.

Students in grades 4, 7 and 9, where New Mexico History is taught, will receive Fiesta Court visits, based on the Fiesta Council's schedule. Teachers' lesson plans will be aligned to state standards and provide a comprehensive and balanced view of the state's history from multiple perspectives, with relevant resources shared with students. Only students in these grades will be allowed to participate. SFPS will continue to allow an opt-out option for grades 4, 7 and 9.

Additionally, schools will no longer participate in the past practice whereby the Fiesta Council selected students for the roles of Little La Reina and Little Don Diego de Vargas.

As your superintendent, I take seriously my responsibility for the well-being and success of all our students. I promise to continue to place that responsibility above all as we work together to better understand, and be sensitive to, differing viewpoints and experiences. I want every student to feel respected and valued. I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Veronica C. Garcia". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Veronica C. Garcia, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Board of Education  
Superintendent's Cabinet  
All Principals  
All Assistant Principals  
Melissa Mascarena, Santa Fe Fiesta Council President