

California State Senate

SENATOR
ELOISE GÓMEZ REYES
TWENTY-NINTH SENATE DISTRICT



January 14, 2025

Redlands Unified School District Board of Education
20 West Lugonia
Redlands, CA. 92374

Dear Members of the Redlands Unified School District Board of Education:

It is my pleasure to represent you in the California State Capitol and as a State Senator I am deeply committed to fostering inclusivity, equity, and respect in our schools. I am writing to you regarding the board's policy banning the display of flags, that would allow only United States and California flags to be displayed.

While I recognize that policies are often enacted to promote neutrality, the ban on flags—particularly those symbolizing marginalized communities, like the Pride flag or other banners of inclusivity—sends an unintended but harmful message to students, educators, and families. Rather than fostering neutrality, it possesses a chilling effect on the celebration of the diverse identities and lived experiences that make our state and communities vibrant. Research consistently demonstrates that students thrive academically and socially in environments where they feel safe, valued, and seen. Policies that restrict the acknowledgment of identity, culture, or inclusion can unintentionally discourage students and hinder their sense of belonging, ultimately impeding their ability to succeed in school.

Moreover, banning flags that symbolize equity and justice contradicts our shared responsibility to teach students about the values of democracy, mutual respect, and community. Schools are meant to be spaces where we model the ideals of freedom of expression and inclusion, preparing young people to engage thoughtfully in the civic life of our state and nation.

I sincerely appreciate all the work of the Redlands Unified School District Board of Education, and look forward to prioritizing the best interests of students and upholding the values that define our great state. I urge the board to reconsider this policy and adopt standards where students can creatively and freely express themselves regardless of political or social ideological movements. Should you have any questions please contact the District Office at (909) 888-5360.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eloise Gómez Reyes".

ELOISE GÓMEZ REYES
Senator, 29th District