

This has been difficult to write but I believe I need to represent my families and students as a teacher in rural Oregon. The equity team came about last year at my school with funding for a wellness coordinator from the state of Oregon. I have quietly watched presentations at meetings and have noticed book groups such as White Fragility put on my calendar. The equity team has not conducted student surveys to find out what the equity needs might be for my school students and families. They have pushed an agenda based on group think and assumptions from their personal experiences when they were in school as an LGBTQ student.

I watched a board meeting at my school that included the discussion of the LGBTQ+ Flag from our equity team. Support staff gave personal emotional testimony and described why they wanted to display the LGBTQ+ flags in zoom and in their email signatures. I wanted to say that I support and agree with the school board's decision not to allow the flags because it will marginalize other students. In my opinion LGBTQ+ flags and hashtags we have used on our facebook page for #BLM and #blacklivesmatter constitute political speech. My teaching philosophy has always included staying neutral in political speech.

I support students of ALL walks of lives and have worked in some highly urban extremely diverse communities. I pride myself in treating everyone equally and with respect. I wholeheartedly agree the display of flags will cause some families and students to feel marginalized. I also know some of the work from the equity team has caused students and families to leave my school because they do not agree with such affiliations. I think we should tread carefully into this arena as I believe the equity team has caused some strife as well amongst staff members at my school. As we look to the future and the possibility of losing students next year I see the addition of this type of political speech could further cause declines in enrollment and families to homeschool. We have an obligation to accommodate and welcome students and staff from a wide variety of backgrounds and religious beliefs. This is testimony from an equity committee already at my school and the issues it has been causing. I appreciate your time and consideration and hope you will oppose SB 732

SB 732

Public Hearing

Requires school districts to establish an educational equity advisory committee.