



## ISD 748 - update



July 26, 2021

Sartell-St. Stephen ISD 748 Families:

As many of you are aware, our students, staff, families, and community members engaged in an equity audit in December 2020. The purpose of the audit was to gain insight into the student experience and provide the best possible - and comprehensive - school experience for each of our learners.

The school-to-home partnership is vital to the success of our learners and is something that our families should rightfully expect. District leadership would never impose a policy that prohibits students from talking to their parents or guardians about any part of their learning, including the equity survey.

In light of recent attention related to the administration of the equity audit survey, clarification and context are important:

- The survey was provided to students during distance learning via Zoom. Many students were in their homes while in the distance learning



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- The survey was provided to students during distance learning via Zoom. Many students were in their homes while in the distance learning model.
- Teachers were instructed to note if a parent/guardian opted out of the survey and some families did contact the district to opt out of the survey prior to its administration.
- Parents/guardians were not prohibited from speaking to their children about the survey nor from viewing the survey while the student was taking it.
- Notification of the surveys included emails to families and staff in December 2020, weekly announcements to families in December 2020, and local media coverage (including but not limited to a December 3, 2020 [article](#) from the St. Cloud Times and a December 17, 2020 [article](#) from The Newsleader).

The context that was shared - which may have been misinterpreted by students and/or staff - was that students were asked to answer the questions related to their own personal experience and that their answers



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The context that was shared - which may have been misinterpreted by students and/or staff - was that students were asked to answer the questions related to their own personal experience and that their answers should reflect their own personal perceptions and not those of classmates, friends or family members.

It is also important to reiterate that we have extremely dedicated teachers and support staff who work tirelessly to provide the highest quality instruction and care for our students. I thank them for all they do.

As a district, we remain committed to providing each and every student with a safe, healthy, academically appropriate learning environment. This is our collective work and maintaining a productive and engaging partnership with families is part of this effort. I sincerely thank you for your engagement and look forward to our continued dialogue as we do this work together.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeffery P. Ridlehoover

Superintendent

Sartell-St. Stephen ISD 748



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