

#SaveYourVI

We Believe All Students Should Feel Welcome & Safe at School. Betsy DeVos Doesn't Agree.

SANTA ROSA, June 22, 2017: U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos is making it harder for our children to access **Title VI** civil rights protections from racial discrimination at school. We started a campaign and website to combat this effort. It's called **#SaveYourVI**.

#SaveYourVI provides resources that teach students how to protect themselves and educators how they can make sure their schools are in compliance with Title VI so that all children can go to school in a welcoming environment. We are letting kids, adults, and educators know that **students have the federally protected right to an education free from racial discrimination and harassment under the Civil Rights Act of 1964**. In the previous administration, President Obama's directives helped investigators gather data about how our school system systemically discriminates against students based on race, color, and national origin. But now... things have changed.

Racial harassment incidents on U.S. school campuses have increased since the election of Donald Trump, and yet his appointee, Betsy DeVos wants to stop investigators from broadening their inquiries, even when there is evidence of a systemic issue where an entire segment of students is suffering. Regional offices will no longer be required to alert department officials in Washington of these highly sensitive complaints, such as the pattern of disproportionate discipline of minority students. This loss of data eliminates a big picture view of the situation, it invalidates the complaints of the victims, and it absolves the system of fixing the problem.

"It's really a way of curtailing the way civil rights enforcement should be handled. It's literally a stick your head in the sand approach." — Catherine Lhamon, former Assistant Secretary of Education / current Chair US Commission on Civil Rights

As we explained to DeVos in **our open letter**, this is an attack on our children's federally protected right to an equitable education and an attempt to weaken the mechanism in place for students to file complaints when other processes have failed them. We were ready for this attack. We have gathered information and tools to educate and advocate for ALL students to feel welcome and safe at school.

###

About: #SaveYourVI was launched by a group of women who had the common experience of our children being racially harassed at school. We encountered a knowledge gap when it came to our school district's awareness of Title VI. In short, we found that there was very little knowledge among those responsible for educating our kids—that our children did, in fact, have civil rights protections.

Visit the website to learn more about the civil rights that Betsy DeVos seems determined to suppress and how you can Save Your VI. www.SaveYourVI.org

Press Contact

Name: Johanna Pino

Mobile: 415-595-8329

Email: info@saveyourvi.org

Press Kit: www.saveyourvi.org/#press

