

September 6, 2004

Dear Dr. Wellman,

On June 28, 2004, I filed an Open Records Request to observe documents that would help me understanding the status of outstanding student activity fees. A copy of this request is posted below.

I first became aware that this is an issue during a board meeting in January 2004. I believe that you were in attendance during that meeting.

During a June 2004 board meeting, this subject was discussed once again. Bits of conversation led me to understand that between 100-200 activity fees were outstanding.

In response to my June 2004 request, I received a ledger that was redacted to omit student names. During my meeting to observe the information, Kristin High agreed with me that the redaction made it impossible to obtain information from the ledger printout. (It appears that student names are not removed from all responsive documents provided to all EISD public information requestors?) Therefore, I asked Kristin to provide a "summary ledger page" that simply indicated the "amount billed" and the "amount received" for student activity fees. Later, I received a ledger sheet with the following information:

<<<<Ran 7/29/04>>>>

YTD TOTALS

Prior balance	25,200.00
Amount billed	422,500.00
Payments	375,306.66
Adjustments	39,784.00
New Balance	32,609.34

MTD TOTALS

Amount Billed	421,250.00
Payments	375,306.66
Adjustments	39,784.00

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During our meeting on Wednesday, September 1, you informed me that the current outstanding fee amounts to \$5000.00. Is the "New Balance" now \$5,000?

Please provide documents that support this number. Please also provide documents that will clarify the "Adjustment" amount of \$39,784 and the "New Balance" of \$32,609.34 as reflected on the ledger sheet, dated 7/29/04, that EISD provided in response to my open records request.

My June open records request included the following:

<<<Please consider this as a formal, written request under the Texas Public Information Act to observe any and all documents, including but not limited to correspondence including emails, between and among EISD employees, board members and patrons regarding payment or non-payment of student activity fees.

Please include a ledger sheet that summarizes this activity, as well. These documents should reflect the past school year, 2003-2004. Please also include documents that reflect an effort to collect these fees and any consequences as a result of non-payment.>>>

Except for the ledger printout, I did not receive any other responsive documents. Please provide the remaining documents requested or provide a written statement from EISD that verifies that no other documents exist. The absence of documents will provide an answer, as well. Please do not log this letter as a separate open records request. The original request, #785, has sufficient detail and scope to include documents that reflect the activity of status of the EISD Student Activity Fee account, and efforts by EISD to manage that source of reimbursement for expenditures.

Again, I don't believe that my daughter would be allowed to participate in a summer class, for example, if we elected to withhold payment of associated fees. I am aware that some schools do not allow student to participate or graduate until fees are paid. I know a HCMS incoming eighth grade student who was not allowed to obtain his school schedule during the August 2004 "Hill Country Hello" because his record indicated (erroneously, at that) an unpaid \$16.00 library fee.

Aside from my PIA request, I have a few clarifying questions. Does EISD have a practice of allowing students to participate in extracurricular activities, UIL activities, classes and camps, receive class schedules, and graduate when athletic and student activity fees are not paid? Are EISD students held to an equitable standard in this regard? I would receiving appreciate clarification from you on these issues so that I can have an accurate understanding of the district's practice in this regard.

Sincerely,

Dianna Pharr
www.keepeanesinformed.com

Original PIA request:

From: Dianna Pharr
Sent: Monday, June 28, 2004 10:33 AM
To: 'Nola Wellman'; 'JoCarol Kastner'
Subject: Open Record Request

Dear Dr. Wellman,

I attended the full board meeting study session on Wednesday, June 23, 2004. During the last hour of that meeting, a discussion occurred regarding non-payment of student activity fees by some EISD families. I listened carefully, with interest. During this discussion, Paul Stone asked for clarification regarding the numbers. Ellen Balthazar, who sits beside Paul Stone in the meetings, answered him. At first, her answer was audible. I was sitting on the first row of the audience section listening to Ellen's response. She lowered her voice to a whisper and covered her face while providing the response. Therefore, though I was clearly interested in the information, I was unable to hear her response.

It would seem to me that this is yet another violation of the Texas Open Meeting Act by the EISD Board of Trustees.

Please consider this as a formal, written request under the Texas Public Information Act to observe any and all documents, including but not limited to correspondence including emails, between and among EISD employees, board members and patrons regarding payment or non-payment of student activity fees. Please include a ledger sheet that summarizes this activity, as well. These documents should reflect the past school year, 2003-2004. Please also include documents that reflect an effort to collect these fees and any consequences as a result of non-payment.

My daughter would not be allowed to participate in her summer school class at WHS if we disregarded the required fee.

Sincerely,

Dianna Pharr