



December 19, 2025

Dear Essence Prep Families

We are writing to share an important update about the future of Essence Prep Public School.

We know this news will be disappointing to many of you, and we want to be clear and transparent as we explain what this decision means for your family and what comes next.

On December 18, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) informed Essence Prep that our charter would not be renewed. After careful consideration, the Essence Prep Board of Directors met on December 19 and voted not to appeal the decision and to voluntarily surrender the school's charter. As a result, **Essence Prep will close at the end of the 2025–26 school year.**

Essence Prep was founded with a clear mission: to provide students in San Antonio's East Side with a high-quality public education that affirms their identity, builds academic excellence, and prepares them for long-term success. That mission has guided every decision we have made, including this one.

This decision to close was not made lightly. When the school received its third unacceptable accountability rating earlier this year, we knew that state rules made non-renewal very likely. Even so, we did not give up. This fall, we submitted a school improvement plan and worked closely with the Texas Education Agency to show progress. Ultimately, the state decided that Essence Prep could not remain open after receiving three unacceptable ratings.

The Essence Prep Board of Directors and I concluded that an appeal was unlikely to succeed and would require significant time and resources, with little chance of changing the outcome. Staying true to our mission meant focusing our energy on finishing the school year strong and supporting scholars, families, and staff through a thoughtful transition.

We want to emphasize the following:

- **We are committed to finishing the 2025-26 school year on a strong note.** We have made significant progress this year, and we are proud of the gains. Our students deserve stability, care, and consistent instruction through the final day of school.
- **In the coming weeks, we will be supporting you in your efforts to find a public-school option for the 2026-27 school year that meets your child's unique learning needs.** With the goal in mind, we will host a Family School Options Fair House on January 15, where our families can learn more about public school options in San Antonio. You can expect regular updates from us in the months ahead, including transition planning timelines, access to student records, and resources for families.

We also want to assure you that our Essence Prep teachers and staff will remain employed through June 2026 and will receive support as they explore new career opportunities. We're incredibly grateful to our teachers, support staff, and school leaders for their dedication to our scholars through every chapter, including this one. We sincerely wish the outcome had been different. We are deeply grateful for the trust you have placed in Essence Prep and for the partnership we share with our families.

With respect and appreciation,
Akeem Brown
Essence Prep Superintendent

Brian Dillard
Essence Prep Board Chair