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3 arrested as protesters clash over Pride curriculum outside Glendale school board meeting



By <u>Leanne Suter</u> a

Tuesday, June 6, 2023 11:43PM



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Demonstrators clashed and fights erupted during a protest outside a meeting of the Glendale Unified School District board, which was scheduled to vote on recognizing June as Pride month.



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GLENDALE, Calif. (KABC) -- Demonstrators

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Footage from AIR7 HD captured the chaos as punches were thrown in the parking lot. After the skirmishes, police in riot gear kept pro-LGBTQ+ protesters and conservative groups separated.

Three people were arrested for various charges, including allegedly using pepper spray and obstructing officers, according to the Glendale Police Department.

Close to 500 people showed up at the protest at GUSD headquarters.

"While most of the protest was peaceful, a small group of individuals engaged in behavior deemed unsafe and a risk to public safety," police said in a statement.

A dispersal order was given just after 6 p.m. and additional police resources were requested "to ensure the safety of the Glendale community would not be



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compromised."

The school board was set to adopt a resolution recognizing Pride Month, which has been done for the last four years. However, a shelter-in-place order disrupted the meeting as a brawl happened outside.

Board members later unanimously adopted the resolution to declare June as Pride Month.

Protesters who have been gathering at the last couple of meetings say the state's curriculum - and thus the Glendale Unified School District's policy in dealing with LGBTQ+ issues - violate their rights as parents.

Glendale Unified Superintendent Vivian Ekchian said the district is following the state's curriculum and that a lot of erroneous information is being spread on social media.

"We have absolutely no agenda," Ekchian said. "We are not in the business of converting anyone's child."

On Friday, dozens of parents descended on

Saticoy Elementary School in North Hollywood in protest of a Pride Month assembly. Parents organizing the protest said they were not condemning the LGBTQ+ community, but wanted the right to decide what - and when - their children are taught on the subject.

The days leading up to the assembly were marred by news that a small Pride flag on the campus was set on fire, further aggravating tensions.

The protesting parents were met at the school Friday by LGBTQ+ advocates and other supporters, creating a sometimes tense standoff that included at least one scuffle between the opposing sides and prompting police to form a skirmish line to keep the factions separated.

City News Service contributed to this report.



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