

Oregon School Board Members of Color Caucus

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February 12, 2019

Peter Weber, Executive Director, OSAA
25200 SW Parkway Ave Suite
Wilsonville, Oregon 97070

Dear Peter,

We write to express our grave concerns about an incident reported in the media around the Jan.16 girls' varsity basketball game between Parkrose and St. Helens high schools, and to request your intervention.

We represent the Oregon School Board Members of Color Caucus, a group of elected or appointed school board members across Oregon who identify as persons of color.

Based on the information available to us, Parkrose student-athletes were verbally assaulted with racially offensive slurs and gestures, plus "monkey noises" by persons attending the game. Evidently no basketball officials attempted to stop the behavior. The students, coaches and staff who were targeted by or witnessed this vile and hateful behavior have been deeply impacted. Their tears, pain and fear are real, and we are here to support them.

We are aware that OSAA has issued a statement that "This type of behavior is not acceptable at high school events." But the fact that it did occur – and that the behavior was not challenged and halted by sporting officials and the St. Helens staff and coaches – is a clear call for meaningful action by your organization. It is our job as leaders in education to reject demeaning and offensive behavior and to treat one other with respect.

The OSAA's mission is to ensure equitable competition for Oregon high school students. This basketball game was not an equitable or a positive experience for the students of Parkrose High School. We therefore urge you to: investigate this matter, take steps to ensure that referees and coaches understand their responsibility to stop this kind of behavior and penalize those who engage in it.

Lastly, we request that you share with us the publicly disclosable results of any investigation, including any penalties or sanctions against those involved, as well as any corrective actions you take to ensure this never happens again.

Sincerely,



Bill Graupp, President
Oregon School Board Members of Color Caucus
503-888-0428