

January 25, 2022
Incident at LHHS

Dear SVUSD Community,

As you may be aware, an unacceptable incident occurred at Laguna Hills High School (LHHS) during the basketball game between LHHS and Portola High School (PHS) of the Irvine Unified School District on the evening of Friday, January 21, 2022. Inappropriate and inflammatory racist comments were made by an attendee during the game.

After a thorough fact finding process that included review of the entire game footage and interviews with each individual verified as being near the attendee, it was determined that the unacceptable comments were made by a student who attends LHHS.

The language and connotations expressed by the words used do not represent the culture, attitudes, or feelings of the students and staff of LHHS, nor those of Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD).

LHHS is taking action. The student has been counseled, and immediate, appropriate consequences and discipline have taken place. Bystander students have been advised regarding their responsibility to redirect such language and report it to school administration immediately. Administration has attended sports practices to discuss the seriousness of the incident with players and coaches. The Associated Student Body (ASB) and the advisor have discussed their role in affecting change. Appropriate personnel actions, while required to remain confidential, have taken place.

Although apologies are necessary, they do not suffice. The words used by this student will never be acceptable. This is a learning opportunity for our school communities that there is ongoing work to be done in building continued mutual respect and understanding. Administrators from LHHS and PHS will continue working together to use the incident to teach, learn and heal.

Sincerely,

Dr. Crystal Turner
Superintendent
Saddleback Valley Unified School District