

California State Senate

SENATOR
BEN HUESO

FORTIETH SENATE DISTRICT



June 24, 2021

Joe Heinz, Commissioner
California Interscholastic Federation, San Diego Chapter
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San Diego, CA 92129
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Ron Nocetti, Executive Director
California Interscholastic Federation
4658 Duckhorn Drive
Sacramento, CA 95834
Email: rnocetti@cifstate.org

Via Email

Dear Commissioner Heinz and Executive Director Nocetti,

I call for the immediate revocation of Coronado High School's basketball championship status by the California Interscholastic Federation, also known as the CIF.

This intentional act was designed to be racist and should not now, nor ever, be tolerated. Failure to impose swift and appropriate justice will become a tacit endorsement of the act itself by the CIF and violate CIF's own principals of ethical character building for student athletes.

An overtly aggressive act interferes with students' learning and this type of intentionally harmful racism should not now, nor ever, be tolerated. Allowing this to stand and steep has actual long-term consequences in that it harms real people, almost all of whom are minors, and embeds the incident in their young psyches. Acting swiftly with purpose to chill any future racist acts attaches the appropriate ramifications to racism and shows support for these students as human beings first and foremost. Latino students everywhere are every bit as deserving of respect and an education free from racist overtones. These students deserve and should receive the utmost protection from us.

Being part of a team means players are bound to each other by their actions and they share in the results of those actions – before, during and after a match, but especially while they are still on

the court. This incident was specifically designed by the perpetrators to occur while both teams were on the court. The only thing that matters is that members of the Coronado High School Boys Basketball Team picked up tortillas and hurled them at the opposing team members, a high school known to be predominantly Latino. We can deduce that they in fact did this, otherwise the Coronado High School District Board could not have terminated their coach, as there would have been no grounds to do so. If the members of this team can win a game by the actions of just one of their teammates while on the court, they can lose a game, too, as a result of their teammates' actions on the court.

The CIF cannot let any more time go by without acting. It must quash this behavior loudly and definitively to prevent future racist acts. There is no better way for the CIF to teach student athletes the consequences of racism than by stripping them of their team title.

Further, I call on the CIF to take meaningful steps to ensure that referees for every sport under its banner understand how to identify racist acts and how to stop a game and/or nullify its results on the spot for any team that engages in racist behavior. The referees should have pulled the results of this game right then and there and the fact that they did not do so raises concerns. There must be concrete policy in place, and an effective means of enforcing it, before a CIF student-athlete steps onto a field or court for safe athletic engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Hueso", with a horizontal line drawn through the bottom of the signature.

Ben Hueso
Senator, 40th District