



TMBA's Statement Denouncing Racism in Schools in Support of Makai Brown

On January 21, 2022, Makai Brown, a Black high school student and basketball player at Portola High School in Irvine, California was subjected to hate speech on the court during a basketball game at Laguna Hills High School, which is part of Saddleback Valley Unified School District in Orange County, California. Sabrina Little-Brown, Makai's mother, shared that during the game, David Yates, the head basketball coach at Laguna Hills High, taunted her son. When Makai's father, Terrell Brown, told the coach to stop addressing his son, Mr. Brown was asked to leave the game. The following morning, Makai was reviewing game footage and heard racist comments spewed at him from an unidentified student of Laguna Hills High (details provided here: <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/racial-slurs-shouted-at-player-during-basketball-game-at-laguna-hills-high-school/>). According to Saddleback Valley Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Crystal Turner, the student has been reprimanded, but Dr. Turner has not provided any further details.

Makai brought this racist act to light, NOT the coaches and administrators entrusted to protect ALL students. If ever there was a glaring example of the need for immediate implementation of California's ethnic studies requirement, this is it! Thurgood Marshall Bar Association condemns these vile and racist comments and acknowledges that what Makai endured is bullying and abuse. Makai deserves better, not because he is Black, but because he is human. We stand with Makai and the Brown family and call on Saddleback Valley Unified School District to hold David Yates and his staff accountable for a toxic culture. We call on Irvine Unified School District to support and join the Brown family's quest for reform. We call on all persons invested in educating our collective future to take swift action to address racism in schools.

To Educate a Person in Mind and Not in Morals is to Educate a Menace to Society

~ Theodore Roosevelt