October 15, 2019

STATEMENT
First, the Board understands that the public wants and deserves answers. Unfortunately, due to federal student privacy laws we cannot divulge any information that would identify specific students or the punishments that they may have received.

Based on the District’s investigation, the Board would like to share the following information with the community:

1) First, the timeline of the investigation – The MISD administration received an anonymous report through its hotline after school hours on Friday, September 27th, of a possible hazing incident involving MISD students. MHS administrators notified the MISD Police Department within a matter of hours of receiving the report. Student interviews began on Monday, September 30th. Superintendent Beau Rees notified the board on Tuesday, October 1, 2019. After MISD PD concluded their criminal investigation, the case was turned over to the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office on Friday October 4th. At the time of this statement, the Sheriff’s investigation is still ongoing.

2) Campus administrators conducted over 20 student interviews. Student interviews consistently described a hazing event involving several MISD students at an off-campus location. At this point, we believe that the district has conducted a thorough investigation. The District’s investigation revealed that prior to the September 27th report, no District employee or administrator had received a report of the type of conduct alleged to have occurred in this situation.

3) Students have reported that there was a video of the misconduct that was shared via Snapchat, a social media app designed to allow for videos to be viewed for a limited time only. Accordingly, MISD administrators and police officers have not been able to obtain a copy of the video.

4) Pursuant to the Montgomery ISD Student Code of Conduct, “hazing” includes actually engaging in hazing-type conduct as well as having knowledge of such conduct and failing to report it. Therefore, the Montgomery ISD Administration, in consultation with the MHS coaching staff, made the decision to forfeit Montgomery High School’s football match against Huntsville High School in an effort to emphasize Montgomery ISD’s zero-tolerance hazing policy and deter future events of hazing in any MISD extracurricular program. At this point in time, we do not anticipate forfeiting any future athletic contests as a result of this investigation.

At this point, all necessary student punishments have been administered. Montgomery ISD will not be releasing any additional information about the specific students involved or any disciplinary consequences assigned. We realize that this may be an unsatisfactory result for those who desire more information about the facts or consequences, but we have a duty to protect our students, and we will continue to take all necessary precautions to maintain the privacy of MISD students as required by federal law.

We thank the Montgomery ISD community for continuing to respect the privacy of the students involved by not sharing false or unverified information about this investigation. Any person with questions about Montgomery ISD’s anti-hazing initiatives or resources available to students who believe they have been the victim of hazing may contact any MISD campus administrator for more information.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to state that the Montgomery ISD Board of Trustees fully supports its students, teachers, campus and District-level administrators, the MISD Police Department, and Dr. Beau Rees, and we look forward to a successful remainder to the 2019-2020 school year.