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Superintendent Issues Statement Supporting Proper National Anthem Decorum

Freedom is not free. Each day the men and women at Barksdale Air Force Base and in other branches of the military in Bossier Parish and throughout the nation don a uniform and put their lives at risk as they proudly serve and protect us with honor. The least Bossier Schools can do is expect our student athletes to stand in solidarity when the National Anthem is played at sporting events in honor of those sacrifices.

In Bossier Parish, we believe when a student chooses to join and participate on a team, the players and coaches should stand when our National Anthem is played in a show of respect. This extends to those that elect to join a club or student organization, which requires a faculty sponsor. It is a choice for students to participate in extracurricular activities, not a right, and we at Bossier Schools feel strongly that our teams and organizations should stand in unity to honor our nation's military and veterans.

This district directive was derived after seeking input from all Bossier Parish middle and high school principals in light of the national conversation currently taking place. Our principals and their coaching staffs have sole discretion in determining consequences should a student athlete elect not to stand during the National Anthem and they are making their expectations known to players and their families this week. As Superintendent, my administration will be in full support of these school-based decisions.

Our district stance is reflective of the values held not only at Bossier Schools, but throughout our great parish. The vast majority of our citizens are proud to live in a patriotic community that supports its military and shows deep respect and reverence toward our active duty military and veterans.

It is an honor for Bossier Schools to pay homage to the American flag and stand during the National Anthem. May we never take that for granted.

Scott Smith Superintendent of Bossier Schools

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