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# Parents and Players Rally to Support Hirashima, Again

*By Andrea A. Firth*

It was déjà vu at the last Governing Board meeting of the Acalanes Union High School District when parents and students packed the public comment portion of the meeting to once again to voice their support for former Miramonte Girls Varsity Basketball coach Darrell Hirashima. Although parents and players had much to say about the fine caliber of their former coach and their frustration over the way in which Hirashima's dismissal has been handled, once again the Board had nothing to say in response. Per Board meeting guidelines, members of the AUHSD Governing Board and staff are unable to comment on items raised in public comment that are not part of the approved agenda. "I am one of many here who are outraged by how this has been handled," stated Katherine Craig a former Miramonte student and the mother of two girls who have been part of the Miramonte Girls Basketball program during Hirashima's tenure. Craig followed her comments with submission of a written administrative complaint to the Governing Board. Hirashima's daughter, Trisha, who has served as an assistant coach to the Miramonte Girls Basketball team for the past four years, expressed frustration that history may be repeating itself with the dismissal of her father as coach. "This is bigger than one man fighting for his job. This is about the program and the community," she stated. Miramonte senior Chelsey Christensen, who was flanked by six uniformed Miramonte Girls Basketball players, spoke on behalf of the team members present requesting that the Board speak directly to the girls. "Please talk to us," said Christensen, who added that she and other players felt that their knowledge of the issues surrounding the case were being disregarded. "The best thing for us is for you to reinstate Coach Hirashima," she concluded. Hirashima was relieved as the Miramonte Girls Basketball coach at the end of the school year which sparked the first rally of parents and players to address the AUHSD Governing Board at the meeting in mid-June. In a surprising turn around, a few weeks later Hirashima and the District entered into contract negotiations for his return to coach the Matadors this Fall. "I agreed to their terms, but they withdrew from the contract discussions without explanation," states Hirashima, who has filed a lawsuit against the District to gain the right to have a public hearing of the charges made against him. When asked why Coach Hirashima's contract was not renewed, AUHSD Superintendent Jim Negri reported that he could not comment due to the pending litigation. "I want my day in court," states Hirashima "I want to find out what is going on and why they are doing this to the program and to me."

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