
Nassau County School District Provides Update Following Fernandina Beach High School and Andrew Jackson High School Volleyball Match

FERNANDINA BEACH, Fla. | Sept. 15, 2026

The Nassau County School District has completed its investigation of the student conduct that occurred during the Sept. 10 girls' volleyball match between Fernandina Beach High School and Andrew Jackson High School.

We want to begin by speaking directly to the students, coaches, families, and school community of Andrew Jackson High School. We are deeply sorry for the events that occurred in our gym, along with the hurt and distress it caused. Students and guests who enter a Nassau County school should be treated with dignity and respect, which was not demonstrated during this event.

Immediately upon being notified of these troubling reports, district and school administrators began conducting an investigation that included a review of all available photographs, videos, interviews, and statements from individuals who were present. In addition, we have been in consistent communication with Duval County Public Schools and reviewed the official FHSA report submitted following the match. Superintendent Dr. Kathy Knight Burns and Duval County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Christopher Bernier also remained in communication as the districts worked to fully understand the events.

The investigation revealed that a student taking a parenting class at Fernandina Beach High School was issued the black doll as part of a school assignment. The student brought the doll to the game in a baby carrier, as required by the assignment. At several points during the game, other students

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took the doll out of the carrier. Two students are seen, at separate times, holding the doll in the air and shouting. Fernandina Beach High School and Nassau County School District deem this conduct inappropriate and unacceptable. The review did not substantiate reports that racial slurs were spoken during the match based on the video, statements, and other information reviewed. However, the absence of substantiated racial slurs does not make the other described acts acceptable.

The district has identified the students whose conduct violated the Nassau County School District Student Code of Conduct, and those matters are being addressed in accordance with district procedures. Federal student privacy laws limit what the district may disclose publicly about individual students or disciplinary actions.

Accountability, however, cannot end with individual consequences.

Nassau County School District and Fernandina Beach High School are taking additional steps following this incident. Athletic event supervision, security, and crowd management procedures are being reviewed and strengthened to help ensure students, staff, families, visiting teams, and guests experience a safe and welcoming environment at district events. School and district leaders are also reviewing expectations and response procedures for administrators and staff supervising athletic events so concerns can be identified and addressed quickly and appropriately.

To ensure appropriate conduct at future athletic events hosted by Fernandina Beach High School, in addition to an increase in supervision at all events, our student body will receive instruction and participate in activities which reinforce community standards, build leadership skills, and promote respect for all.

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Fernandina Beach High School and Andrew Jackson High School administrators are working together on opportunities to bring student leaders and student-athletes from both schools together. Our goal is not simply to move beyond what happened, but to learn from it, rebuild trust, and strengthen the relationship between our school communities.

We extend our sincere apology to the entire Andrew Jackson High School community, particularly the student-athletes, coaches, and families who were affected.

Every student-athlete, team, family, and guest who comes to a Nassau County School District campus should know they are welcome, respected, and safe. We are committed to doing the work necessary to ensure that expectation is reflected at every Nassau County school and every Nassau County athletic event.

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