

Investigative Report on the Events
of the September 17, 2021 Football Game between
Roxbury Prep High School and Georgetown High School

Prepared by: *Foley Hoag LLP*
June 30, 2022

Contents

I.	Introduction	1
II.	Executive Summary	2
	<i>a. Roxbury Prep Made Contemporaneous Complaints About Racial Slurs Starting at Halftime Through to the Final Play of the Fourth Quarter and After the Game</i>	3
	<i>b. Game Officials and Georgetown High Administrators and Coaches Failed To Address Complaints of Racial Slurs in a Timely and Effective Manner</i>	5
	<i>c. Some Roxbury Prep Coach Conduct Escalated Tensions During the Game</i>	6
	<i>d. Foley Hoag Encountered Credibility and Evidentiary Issues that Complicated the Investigation.</i>	6
	<i>e. Two Roxbury Prep Players Used the Term “Nigga” Toward White Georgetown Spectators</i>	9
	<i>f. Four Georgetown High Students Used Racial Slurs Toward Black Roxbury Prep Coaches or Players</i>	9
	<i>g. Ultimately, Roxbury Prep Team Was Subjected to a Racially Hostile Environment</i>	11
III.	Scope	11
IV.	Methodology	12
	<i>a. Document Review</i>	12
	<i>b. Audiovisual Recording Review</i>	12
	<i>c. Interviews</i>	12
	<i>d. Survey</i>	13
	<i>e. Site Visit</i>	13
V.	Discussion	13
	<i>a. Georgetown High Football Team</i>	13
	<i>b. Roxbury Prep Football Team</i>	14

c.	<i>Game Scheduling</i>	14
d.	<i>Field Layout</i>	14
e.	<i>Pregame Environment</i>	18
f.	<i>Spectators</i>	20
g.	<i>Game</i>	20
i.	First Half	20
ii.	Halftime	21
iii.	Second Half.....	22
h.	<i>Post-game</i>	26
i.	<i>School Responses</i>	28
i.	Georgetown High’s Response.....	28
ii.	Roxbury Prep’s Response	29
j.	<i>Georgetown Police Involvement</i>	29
VI.	Findings	30
a.	<i>Georgetown High Students Used Racial Slurs During the Game</i>	30
i.	Two Georgetown High student spectators approached the bench and used racial slurs towards Roxbury Prep coaches.	30
ii.	The N-word was used during the fight in the third quarter.....	31
iii.	At least one Georgetown High Player used the term “monkey.”	32
iv.	The evidence was inconclusive concerning whether other players used the N-word.	33
v.	No Georgetown High coaches or faculty used racial slurs, despite the claim made on social media to the contrary.....	34
b.	<i>Two Roxbury Prep Players Used the Word “Nigga” Toward White Georgetown Spectators</i>	34
c.	<i>The Responses to the Events of the Game were Inadequate and in Some Instances Exacerbated the Tensions</i>	34

i.	Game officials failed to take appropriate action in response to Roxbury Prep’s complaints.....	35
ii.	Georgetown High administrators and coaches largely did not take adequate steps in response to Roxbury Prep’s complaints.	35
iii.	Roxbury Prep coaches largely failed to deescalate tensions in the midst of complaints about racial slurs.	37
d.	<i>Members of the Georgetown High Football Team Engaged in Unsportsmanlike Cheering as the Roxbury Prep Team Left the Field</i>	<i>37</i>
APPENDIX.....		38

I. Introduction

Georgetown High School (“Georgetown High”) and Roxbury Prep High School (“Roxbury Prep”) together commissioned an independent investigation and report concerning the events of a September 17, 2021 football game in which Roxbury Prep played at Georgetown High.

Specifically, the schools engaged Foley Hoag LLP to conduct an investigation of allegations, including those posted to social media, that Georgetown High players taunted Black Roxbury Prep players and coaches, calling them “Nigger,” “Nigga,” and “monkey.” These are racially derogatory slurs used to show contempt for Black people.¹ Foley Hoag’s mandate was to both investigate these allegations and write a report detailing the events of the game from an independent and unbiased perspective. The findings in this report arise from a four-month investigation that focused on interviews with players, parents, coaches, officials and police officers in attendance at the game.

The investigation was complex. Witnesses from both Roxbury Prep and Georgetown High often offered conflicting and competing versions of the events of the September 17, 2021 football game. Even witnesses from the same school offered versions of events that were often inconsistent and in tension with each other. While Foley Hoag had access to known video and documentary evidence, such evidence did not resolve all inconsistencies between competing accounts. Encountering competing and conflicting witness accounts, even from credible witnesses, is not unusual in any investigation. However, the claims here involved racial discrimination, adding an additional layer of complexity. So, too, did the national political climate during the course of the investigation: The game took place during a moment of national reckoning on race relations for many reasons, including the post-George Floyd movement. Witnesses were well aware that the investigation itself was prompted in part because of intense media scrutiny that focused on a clash between a white suburban high school football team and a Black high school football team from the city. As a result, in the interviews themselves, emotions were often high and likely influenced witnesses’ recollections on both sides.

There is no clear, simple story to tell about what happened at the game. Some allegations remain unresolved. Nevertheless, through careful weighing of testimonial evidence and examination of video and documentary evidence, Foley Hoag made the following key findings, among others:

- (1) Georgetown High students used racial slurs against Roxbury Prep during the game. Specifically, Foley Hoag confirmed four incidents of the use of racial slurs against Black Roxbury Prep players or coaches at the game: two by Georgetown High football players and two by Georgetown High student spectators (one of whom

¹ Foley Hoag will refer to the term “Nigger” as the “N-word” throughout this report, except when quoting from witnesses.

himself is Black). These racial slurs, together with other events before, during, and after the game, contributed to a racially hostile environment.

- (2) Game officials, Georgetown High administrators, and Georgetown High coaches all failed to address complaints of racial slurs in a timely and effective manner. This failure allowed rising tensions during the game to escalate into an on-field fight in the third quarter.
- (3) Roxbury Prep coaches instructed their players during the game to de-escalate tensions, focus on the game, and not engage in verbal sparring. However, some of their own actions in response to officiating and during the third quarter fight heightened tensions.
- (4) While many Roxbury Prep players commented that they use the term “Nigga” as a term of endearment or a neutral reference akin to “bro,” two Roxbury Prep players used the term in a hostile and inappropriate manner toward white Georgetown High spectators.

Foley Hoag anonymized names throughout the Report for privacy reasons, particularly to protect the identities of the players who are minors.

The Report is divided into six sections: Section II summarizes the key events and findings; Sections III and IV describe the scope and methodology of this investigation, respectively; Section V provides a detailed discussion of factual evidence; and Section VI sets out a detailed analysis of the Report’s findings.

Both Roxbury Prep and Georgetown High were cooperative in Foley Hoag’s investigation. The schools both take the allegations seriously and intend to use the findings of this Report to inform their next steps.

II. Executive Summary

The September 17, 2021 game was not a typical Friday night football game in Georgetown, Massachusetts. The Roxbury Prep team, visiting from Boston, Massachusetts, made complaints during and after the game that white players and spectators at Georgetown High used the N-word against their Black players and coaches. In addition, a fight involving several players from each team broke out in the third quarter, prompting coaches and spectators to take to the field. At the Georgetown High principal’s request, police officers working a detail at the game escorted all spectators from the field after the fight. The game continued thereafter but ended early in the fourth quarter, when an incensed Roxbury Prep team claimed that a Georgetown High player had used the N-word on the field during or after the play. This was the final straw for Roxbury Prep and they refused to play further. Immediately after the game, Roxbury Prep Coach 05 posted to Facebook claiming, among other things, “we were ridiculed called n-bombs by players, faculty, staff, spectators and were taunted all night.”

Signs of potential antagonism between the two teams, who had never previously met or competed against each other, arose before the game began. Some Roxbury Prep players, coaches,

and parents expressed skepticism about being welcomed in a white suburban town. Roxbury Prep perceived slights when they were not provided with a bench upon arrival at the Georgetown High field and had to request a bench from Georgetown High staff, though this was quickly addressed. Concerns were heightened when Roxbury Prep was placed on the sideline crowded by Georgetown High fans and spectators, which is where Georgetown High had always placed the visiting team. Georgetown High failed to consider the potential perception of hostility that Roxbury Prep was likely to experience during the game because of the close proximity of the Roxbury Prep sidelines to the Georgetown High fans. Having the visiting team so close to the home team's fan base was a long-time Georgetown High policy,² but for good reason is not common in high school football.

For Georgetown High's part, some took note that Roxbury Prep knelt during the national anthem—an act of protest for racial justice that the Roxbury Prep team engaged in at all games. Some Georgetown High parents and players believed that Roxbury Prep players taking a knee during the national anthem was odd or disrespectful, with one parent asserting that Roxbury Prep approached the game with an “agenda.” In addition—and seemingly unrelated to any racial dynamic—Georgetown High was conscious that its team had blown a large lead the previous week when playing against Boston Latin Academy and was determined not to let the same thing happen again.

These simmering tensions escalated throughout the course of the game for many reasons. First, there is strong evidence, including video recordings, that Roxbury Prep was frustrated both by the officiating and by Georgetown High's four unanswered touchdowns in the first half. Indeed, it is unsurprising that Roxbury Prep would be frustrated after losing badly in the first half. Second, Roxbury Prep complained during the game about racial slurs that allegedly occurred as early as the first half, during the third quarter when the fight broke out, and on the final play.

a. Roxbury Prep Made Contemporaneous Complaints About Racial Slurs Starting at Halftime Through to the Final Play of the Fourth Quarter and After the Game

Starting at halftime and continuing through to the abrupt end, Roxbury Prep's complaints about racial slurs were contemporaneous and widespread. The evidence clearly demonstrates—and players, coaches, parents, and officials largely agree—that Roxbury Prep coaches and players complained in real time during the game that Georgetown High players and spectators were using the N-word and other racially derogatory language. Specifically:

- (1) At halftime, Roxbury Prep Coach 01, the head coach, complained to Official 01, the head official, that Georgetown High players were calling his players the N-word. Official 01, Official 04 and Roxbury Prep coaches remember this event. Official 01 remembered it as the first time he realized something was amiss, and recalled telling the Roxbury Prep Coach 01 that, while he had not heard any use of the N-word (nor

² Georgetown High changed its policy after the September 17, 2021 game and the visiting team's bench is now on the other side of the field. Georgetown High has represented that its sideline policy had itself never led to any incident such as the one that occurred on September 17, 2021. However, corroborating that representation was outside the scope of Foley Hoag's investigation. Foley Hoag accordingly takes no position on whether Georgetown High's sideline policy contributed to past conduct or tension.

had any of the other officials), he was nevertheless on notice and would listen for any use of the N-word.

- (2) In the third quarter, after a Roxbury Prep touchdown, Roxbury Prep coaches flagged down Official 01 and complained that a Georgetown High spectator had used the N-word. Official 01 responded by calling a time out and clearing fans from the area behind the Roxbury Prep bench.
- (3) Also during the third quarter, Roxbury Prep Coach 03 complained to Georgetown School Administrator 02, Georgetown School Administrator 01, and Georgetown Police Officer 01 that Georgetown High student spectators were calling Roxbury Prep coaches the N-word. After being called the N-word by a spectator, Roxbury Prep Coach 03 swore at the Georgetown High spectators, telling them to back up from the Roxbury Prep bench. Georgetown School Administrator 02, alarmed by the Roxbury Prep coach's swearing, came over with a police officer to investigate. Georgetown School Administrator 04 arrived shortly thereafter. All three recall that Roxbury Prep Coach 03 was very upset and that he complained that his team was being called the N-word. Then, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 approached and put an end to the conversation between Roxbury Prep Coach 03 and Georgetown School Administrator 02. Roxbury Prep Coach 01 stated in frustration that they had a game to play and he did not have time to explain the situation—meaning the alleged racial harassment—to Georgetown School Administrator 02 anymore. Georgetown School Administrator 02 then proceeded to move fans away from the area and questioned nearby spectators about the claims.
- (4) During the third quarter, Roxbury Prep players can be heard on video complaining to a Georgetown student about the Georgetown High team's use of the N-word during the game. None of the participants in the conversation are in view on the video recording. The Georgetown student can be heard saying that people are calling the Georgetown High team racist. In response, the Roxbury Prep players told him that the Georgetown High players had been using the N-word "all game." The student then replied, "our school is too white for this."³
- (5) During the third quarter fight, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 grabbed Georgetown Player 03 by the facemask and brought him to Georgetown Coach 02 and Official 03. Roxbury Prep Coach 01 then complained to Georgetown Coach 02 that Georgetown Player 03 used the N-word. Multiple witnesses from Georgetown High confirmed that Roxbury Prep Coach 01 accused this particular player. Those witnesses included Georgetown Coach 02, Georgetown Player 03 himself, and Roxbury Prep Coach 01. Georgetown Coach 02 and Official 03 criticized Roxbury Prep Coach 01 for physically handling the player. Georgetown Coach 02 later confronted the player about the alleged use of the term, and the player denied using the term.
- (6) On the final play, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 ended the game after Roxbury Prep Player 11 complained that Georgetown Player 06 used the N-word. Official 01 remembered

³ See Roxbury Prep Game Footage, Clip No. 85.

seeing Roxbury Prep Player 11 upset and agitated after the play, and recalled him having run off to the sideline. Then, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 came out onto the field, stating to Official 01 that Georgetown Player 06 used the N-word against Roxbury Prep Player 11, and Official 01 called an end to the game.

In addition to the complaints described above, various Roxbury Prep witnesses reported several other instances of use of the N-word during the game in interviews with Foley Hoag.

Tensions continued to flare even after the game. Roxbury Prep players, coaches, and parents reported that Georgetown High players engaged in unsportsmanlike cheering and taunting of Roxbury players, that they heard sounds of a revving engine coming from the car of a Georgetown High student, and that groups of Georgetown High students were apparently waiting for Roxbury players, coaches, and parents in what they perceived as a threatening fashion.

There is also no question that the Roxbury Prep players and coaches experienced trauma consistent with their complaints. That trauma was evident (1) on the field in real time according to video footage showing players, coaches, and parents becoming increasingly agitated and angry during the game; (2) immediately after the game when at least two coaches were in tears; (3) after returning home, when many Roxbury Prep players complained to their parents about being called the N-word; and (4) during Foley Hoag interviews, where multiple Roxbury Prep interviewees expressed clear emotion—including anger, sadness and resentment, sometimes leading to openly crying—regarding their experiences during the game. The pain that the players and coaches still carry is palpable.

b. Game Officials and Georgetown High Administrators and Coaches Failed To Address Complaints of Racial Slurs in a Timely and Effective Manner

Unfortunately, the game officials, Georgetown High coaches, Georgetown High administrators, and at least one police officer did very little to respond to the Roxbury Prep complaints during the game. None appeared to believe the complaints, and no one confronted the Georgetown High players as a team until **after** the complaints were made public on social media. For their part, the officials were aware of Roxbury Prep's complaints and passed those complaints along to Georgetown High, but took little action based on not having heard any slurs themselves.

In particular, Official 01 informed Georgetown Coach 01 about the complaints of use of the N-word during halftime, but the coach never addressed the complaints with his team as a whole. Georgetown Coach 01's claim that Official 01 did not inform him at halftime is not credible. In addition, Georgetown School Administrator 01, who admitted to learning of the N-word complaints at halftime from Official 01 and again heard complaints during the third quarter, did nothing to address the complaints, instead assuming that Georgetown Coach 01 would address the concern. During the third quarter of the game, Georgetown School Administrator 02 at least made an effort to investigate claims from Roxbury Prep coaches that spectators used the N-word, and canvassed the crowd to see if anyone had heard use of the N-word. None of the spectators he questioned corroborated Roxbury Prep's claims. Although the Georgetown Superintendent was present at the game, she was not aware of the complaints until the game resumed after the fight in the third quarter. A few Georgetown High players remembered their coaches raising the

complaints of use of the N-word to them during the game, but the majority were unaware of the complaints until they appeared on social media after the game.

c. Some Roxbury Prep Coach Conduct Escalated Tensions During the Game

Roxbury Prep coaches should be credited with encouraging and advising their players to remain calm in the midst of unfolding events during the game.

Roxbury Prep coaches themselves added to rising tensions at the game at times when they could have deescalated tensions. Very early in the game and prior to any complaints about racial slurs, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 shouted complaints concerning officiating, suggesting that the officials made calls against Roxbury Prep because of their race. At least one Georgetown chain crew member⁴ recalled that officials made inaccurate calls against Roxbury Prep. No witnesses in interviews though, not even Roxbury Prep Coach 01, suggested that the officials acted with racial animus. To the contrary, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 in retrospect recalled the officiating as fair. Roxbury Prep Coach 01's complaints about the officiating offended some of the Georgetown High chain crew, including a non-Black Georgetown High parent of color, who claimed the Roxbury Prep coach initiated or exacerbated a tense racial dynamic.

Of greater significance, during the third quarter fight, it was inappropriate for Roxbury Prep coaches to physically remove Georgetown High players from the altercation, even in an effort to break up the fight or to identify those who were using the N-word. Specifically:

- During the fight, Roxbury Prep Coach 03 can be seen on video grabbing a Georgetown High Player from the periphery of the scrum, and forcibly throwing him to the ground. This behavior was unacceptable and an inappropriate way to break up the fight.
- In the immediate aftermath of the fight, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 grabbed a Georgetown High player by the facemask and brought him over to an official and Georgetown High coach. While this was done because Roxbury Prep Coach 01 heard this player use the N-word, that does not justify forcibly handling a minor from an opposing team.

d. Foley Hoag Encountered Credibility and Evidentiary Issues that Complicated the Investigation.

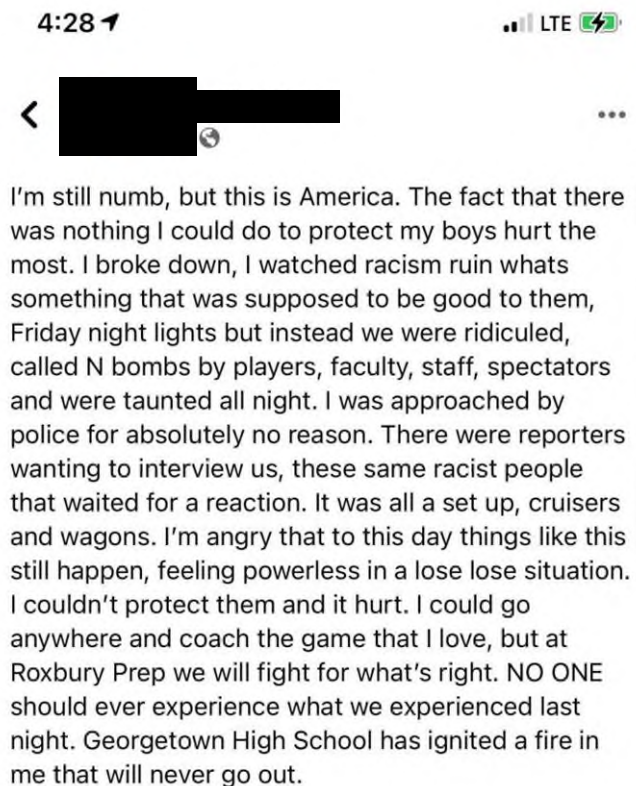
Despite the strong indicia of credibility described above regarding Roxbury Prep's complaints—namely the widespread, contemporaneous complaints and credible evidence of trauma—Foley Hoag encountered significant challenges in either confirming or rebutting many of the complaints of the use of the N-word. These challenges, described below, impacted Foley

⁴ The chain crew consists of a group of volunteer Georgetown parents who manage signal poles on the visitor sideline.

Hoag's ability to make definitive findings, as Foley Hoag could not fully credit all accounts from either Roxbury Prep or Georgetown High witnesses.

Some of the Roxbury Prep witness accounts during interviews contained exaggerations, inconsistencies with other Roxbury Prep testimony, or a lack of support from video evidence:

- (1) To start, the Facebook post that prompted significant media attention contained inaccuracies. Here is a copy of that posting:



4:28 1 LTE

< [Redacted Name] ...

I'm still numb, but this is America. The fact that there was nothing I could do to protect my boys hurt the most. I broke down, I watched racism ruin what's something that was supposed to be good to them, Friday night lights but instead we were ridiculed, called N bombs by players, faculty, staff, spectators and were taunted all night. I was approached by police for absolutely no reason. There were reporters wanting to interview us, these same racist people that waited for a reaction. It was all a set up, cruisers and wagons. I'm angry that to this day things like this still happen, feeling powerless in a lose lose situation. I couldn't protect them and it hurt. I could go anywhere and coach the game that I love, but at Roxbury Prep we will fight for what's right. NO ONE should ever experience what we experienced last night. Georgetown High School has ignited a fire in me that will never go out.

Although Roxbury Prep Coach 05 alleged in his interview that Georgetown High players and spectators had used the N-word, he also admitted that, to his knowledge, no Georgetown High faculty, staff, or coaches used the epithet at any point. However, he was approached by police after the game and claimed to have been approached by someone whom he believed to be a reporter.

- (2) In addition, Roxbury Prep coaches and players identified Roxbury Prep Player 04 as having complained about Georgetown High players calling him the N-word and racial slurs multiple times early in the game. However, when interviewed, Roxbury Prep Player 04 stated that he personally did not hear slurs used in the first half of the game, and his complaints were on behalf of his teammates. Roxbury Prep Player 04 **did** hear the N-word himself, but in the second half.
- (3) In another instance, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 stated that Georgetown High players from the Georgetown High sidelines were yelling curse words throughout the game loudly

enough for those on the Roxbury Prep sidelines to hear, an allegation stated by no other interviewee and undetectable in audiovisual media to which Foley Hoag had access.

- (4) In a fourth example, a Roxbury Prep player claimed that Georgetown High players were not only calling the Roxbury Prep players “monkeys” and “gorillas,” but also beating their chests—an allegation Foley Hoag could not corroborate through other interviews or through audiovisual media. However, Foley Hoag did corroborate derogatory use of the word “monkey” against Roxbury Prep players.
- (5) As a final example, some Roxbury Prep witnesses believed there were a half dozen or more police officers at the game, when in fact there were only two on detail, and an additional two that arrived after the fight in the third quarter.

Foley Hoag also did not find several Georgetown High witnesses credible regarding their narrative of the game. Many Georgetown High players undermined their credibility by painting an overly rosy picture of the game. Some denied trash talk by either Roxbury Prep or Georgetown High, while others claimed that Roxbury Prep was trash talking and their team simply did not respond. Roxbury Prep statements contradicted this account, as did a few Georgetown High players, a Georgetown High spectator, and Georgetown Coach 03, all of whom described both teams as using trash talk. Therefore, when many Georgetown players refused to concede that there was any verbal sparring at all, their denials of any players’ use of racially derogatory language were not compelling.

In addition, it was evident to Foley Hoag that many Georgetown High players, coaches, and parents were unwilling—either during or after the game or in interviews—to acknowledge in anything more than a cursory fashion the possibility that the accusations were valid. During interviews and in some witness statements, parents and coaches blamed Roxbury Prep for their own complaints, including seizing on their kneeling during the national anthem as being odd or problematic, blaming Roxbury Prep coaches for infusing race into the game early on, or suggesting that Roxbury Prep came to the game with an “agenda” to hang racial accusations on Georgetown High.

Georgetown Coach 01’s claim that he did not learn about complaints about use of the N-word until the third quarter contradicted Official 01’s recollection that he informed Georgetown Coach 01 at half time. Foley Hoag credits Official 01’s statement and finds Georgetown Coach 01’s claim lacks credibility. In any event, while there is evidence that Georgetown coaches asked certain players if the accusations were true, there is no evidence that the coaches did anything more than accept their denials and proceed to close ranks.

To be sure, some of the inconsistencies provided to the Foley Hoag investigatory team resulted due to the passage of time. By the time Foley Hoag was engaged to conduct its investigation, over one month had passed since the incident. By then, witnesses had had several

conversations amongst themselves and viewed video of the game, thereby compromising their ability to recall and distinguish their own first-hand memories of the event.⁵

e. Two Roxbury Prep Players Used the Term “Nigga” Toward White Georgetown Spectators

Roxbury Prep players used the word “Nigga” in an apparently confrontational way. After the fight in the third quarter, two Roxbury Prep Players are recorded on videotape using the word “Nigga.” As he returned to the Roxbury Prep bench after the fight, Roxbury Prep Player 13 said, “bitch ass Nigga, [you don’t even know] what you’re talking about,” directed at an off-camera Georgetown High spectator. Additionally, Roxbury Prep Player 03 stated on his return to the sideline from the fight, “Ay yo, [Imma] see that Nigga after the game,” directed at an off-camera Georgetown High spectator. Roxbury Prep Player 03 conceded that he made this comment toward a white Georgetown High spectator.

While Roxbury Prep Player 03 states he was responding to racially derogatory language from the crowd, any use of the N-word in a derogatory and confrontational manner only served to exacerbate tensions. While the word “Nigga” in these instances as used toward white people was not intended as a racial slur, the word was intended to be antagonistic. This is distinct from Roxbury Prep players’ use of the word “Nigga” amongst themselves in a friendly and conversational manner during the course of the game.

f. Four Georgetown High Students Used Racial Slurs Toward Black Roxbury Prep Coaches or Players

Faced with very different accounts of the game from Georgetown High and Roxbury Prep and a lack of credibility in several witnesses’ accounts on both sides, it was difficult to reconcile many of the statements. Nevertheless, Foley Hoag confirmed four specific incidents of use of racial slurs:

- (1) In the third quarter, a young Georgetown High fan who was described as a young, short, middle school-aged child wearing glasses and a red sweatshirt, approached the Roxbury bench. Four witnesses, including Roxbury Prep Coach 03, Roxbury

⁵ Even after Foley Hoag was engaged, further time elapsed before interviews could be completed because of either scheduling difficulties or interviewee reluctance, or refusal, to participate. One of the main scheduling challenges arose because of Foley Hoag’s decision to conduct player interviews only if players were accompanied by a guardian. While important to protecting minors’ rights, it was difficult to accommodate parent and student schedules in an expedited manner. Additional delays arose due to intervening holidays, pandemic-related illnesses, interviewees from both Georgetown High and Roxbury Prep not appearing for scheduled interviews, and difficulties and delays receiving responses from some interviewees. Although most interviews were completed in November, some interviews were not completed until March, six months after the incident. This lapse in time from the incident, even for the earliest interviews, may have and sometimes did lead to lapses in memory.

Prep Player 09, Roxbury Prep Player 05, and Roxbury Prep Parent 01, report this fan saying some variation of “Niggers suck” to Roxbury Prep Coach 03.⁶

- (2) Also in the third quarter, Georgetown Student 03 and Roxbury Prep Coach 05 reported that a spectator fitting the description of Georgetown Student 02, who is Black, shouted to Roxbury Prep Coach 05, “Check the scoreboard Nigga,” in a confrontational manner in response to Roxbury Prep Coach 05 having applauded his team for a good play. At the time, Georgetown Student 02 was standing right behind Roxbury Prep Coach 05 with other students in the fan section. When Roxbury Prep Coach 05 turned around and asked if Georgetown Student 02 was talking to him, Georgetown Student 02 repeated himself saying, “Check the scoreboard Nigga.” Roxbury Prep Coach 05 told Georgetown Student 02 that he should not be saying that, to which the student replied, “I can say it because I’m Black.” At this point, Roxbury Prep Coach 05 told the students to get back and himself walked away from the area. It was after this incident that Roxbury Prep coaches approached Official 01 with the complaints of the use of the N-word as described above.
- (3) Two witnesses reported hearing Georgetown Player 07 using the word “monkey” against Roxbury Prep Player 06 in the first half. Roxbury Prep Player 06 and Roxbury Prep Coach 05 described that Roxbury Prep Player 06 was trying to sack the quarterback, and that after the play was over, Georgetown Player 07 called him a monkey.⁷ A third witness reported Georgetown Player 07 calling a Roxbury Prep player a “monkey” on a separate occasion. For his part, Georgetown Player 07 admitted to hearing the word “monkey” being used in the game, but denied having said it himself, or that any of his teammates said it. This same player was identified by three Roxbury Prep witnesses as having said the N-word. (While Foley Hoag was able to corroborate the player’s use of the term “monkey,” these separate allegations concerning the N-word are all second-hand accounts in which a coach or other player said they were told that Georgetown Player 07 used the N-word. Foley Hoag was unable to corroborate these allegations with first-hand accounts.)
- (4) A Georgetown player used the N-word against Roxbury Prep Player 09 during the third quarter fight. During the fight, two witnesses, Roxbury Prep Player 09 and Roxbury Prep Player 05, confirmed that Roxbury Prep Player 09 was called the N-word by the person with whom he was fighting. Video evidence, which captured only part of the fight, showed the person fighting with Roxbury Prep Player 09 as Georgetown Player 03, the same Georgetown High player whom Roxbury Prep

⁶ Roxbury Prep School Administrator 02 recounted this event as the fan saying, “you fucking suck,” and not hearing the N-word.

⁷ Roxbury Prep Coach 05 recalled Roxbury Prep Player 06 missing the sack, and Georgetown Player 07 saying “too slow monkey”; Roxbury Prep Player 06 recalled himself making a sack and Georgetown Player 07 saying “nice play monkey”; Roxbury Prep Player 11 recalled Georgetown Player 07 making a joke about Roxbury Players being monkeys at a different point in the game.

Coach 01 dragged over to the Georgetown High coaches during the fight to identify him as someone who had used the N-word. Roxbury Prep Player 05, however, contradicted this evidence. He recalled that Roxbury Prep Player 09 fought with Georgetown Player 03 and a second Georgetown High player and thought it was the **second and unidentified** player who had used the N-word.

g. Ultimately, Roxbury Prep Team Was Subjected to a Racially Hostile Environment

There was a wide range of conduct during the game. It is noteworthy that there were players from both schools who played a fair and friendly game. Then, there were Georgetown High and Roxbury Prep players who engaged in trash talking and aggressive play, much of which both teams acknowledged as “typical football.” In addition, there was also unsportsmanlike conduct that crossed the line even in an aggressive and physical sport like high school football. This included the third-quarter fight, the Roxbury Prep coaches’ effort to break up the fight, the two Roxbury Prep players using the word “Nigga” toward white Georgetown High spectators after the fight, and Georgetown High’s team cheering at the end of the game. Finally, and most central to Foley Hoag’s mandate in this investigation, Foley Hoag confirmed four instances of racial slurs used by Georgetown High students against Roxbury Prep players and coaches.

Ultimately, Georgetown High failed to provide a safe and welcoming space for the Black players and coaches of the visiting team. There was no evidence that Georgetown High intentionally failed to provide Roxbury Prep with a bench, but in retrospect for Roxbury Prep, it became the first in a series of slights. Roxbury Prep felt intimidated and unsafe being surrounded by the loud Georgetown crowd, especially because of the racial slurs. Roxbury Prep felt vulnerable and unsupported because of the racial slurs themselves and the lack of meaningful response from officials or Georgetown administrators. Then, after the game, Roxbury Prep encountered the revving of an engine in the parking lot and a group of Georgetown spectators waiting down the road for Roxbury Prep’s bus to pass. In totality, these events created a racially hostile environment that has indelibly harmed the Roxbury Prep players and coaches.

III. Scope

Foley Hoag was engaged on October 21, 2021, by both Roxbury Prep Charter Schools and Georgetown Public Schools, to conduct an independent investigation of the game jointly on behalf of the parties. Foley Hoag was engaged to provide a factual report to the parties at the conclusion of its independent investigation, but was otherwise not directed to provide any specific recommendations or to confine its investigation of the game in any way. Further, because its investigation was independent, it did not form an attorney-client relationship with either party. The parties agreed to cooperate by providing all non-privileged documents that Foley Hoag requested, and further assisted in making witnesses available for interviews.

Consistent with its engagement by the parties, Foley Hoag’s primary focus in its independent investigation was to investigate what occurred at the game, and provide an independent assessment of the facts regarding the game through this written Report.

IV. Methodology

To conduct this independent investigation, a Foley Hoag team consisting of Giselle Joffre, Christopher Hart, Joanna McDonough, and Seth Reiner undertook the following actions:

a. Document Review

Foley Hoag reviewed 38 witness statements (from coaches, parents, students, administrators, and officials) made shortly after the game. Foley Hoag also reviewed an investigative summary from the Georgetown Police Department concerning their investigation of the Game, police reports from the Georgetown Police Department concerning the game, texts and social media comments, nine news articles regarding the game, the Roxbury Prep Student Athlete Contract, and documents from the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), including the Tournament Code of Conduct, Sportsmanship Manual, Rules and Regulations Governing Athletics, and FAQs.

b. Audiovisual Recording Review

Foley Hoag reviewed official game videos taken by Georgetown High's athletics department, official game video from Roxbury Prep's athletics department, and videos captured on smartphones by two parents. Additionally, Foley Hoag reviewed photographs taken by one Georgetown High parent.

c. Interviews

Foley Hoag interviewed fifty-two witnesses. Thirty of these witnesses (including police officers for the town) were affiliated with Georgetown High, eighteen were affiliated with Roxbury Prep, and four had no affiliation (officials). Twenty-two of the interviewees were players, thirteen were coaches or school employees, eight were spectators, and the remaining consisted of police officers and officials. More specifically, Foley Hoag interviewed three Georgetown High football coaches; six Roxbury Prep football coaches; twelve Georgetown High players; ten Roxbury Prep players; six Georgetown High spectators; two Roxbury Prep spectators; four members of the Georgetown Police Department and one Groveland police officer; the principal, superintendent, custodian, and athletic director of Georgetown High School; and four officials. Interviewees' identities have been anonymized for purposed of this report.

Foley Hoag also encountered the following challenges and obstacles:

- Because most players were minors at the time of the investigation, interviews with players were always conducted with a guardian (usually a parent or older family member) present, at Foley Hoag's invitation. This may have inhibited some players from sharing their complete memories in some instances. In other instances, guardians interjected their own version of events or offers of clarification, which may have altered recollections from player witnesses.
- The investigation did not begin until approximately six weeks after the game, and interviews were sometimes not able to proceed until several months later

because of schedule conflicts or witness reluctance to participate. This may have led to a fading or even confusion of memories.

- Although Foley Hoag was provided with several audiovisual recordings of the game, no recording was able to adequately record player comments, to the extent there were any, on the field after a play ended. Further, no recording was present near the Georgetown High sidelines.

d. Survey

In an effort to capture recollections of any witnesses to the game willing to provide them, but avoid the additional time in seeking interviews that may prove unnecessary, Foley Hoag created a survey that was distributed to Georgetown High and Roxbury Prep players, students, and parents in mid-January 2022 and left open until mid-February 2022. Participation in the survey was optional. The survey required respondents to identify themselves by name and school affiliation and identify whether or not they attended the September 17, 2021 football game. Respondents had the opportunity to provide a statement and bring to our attention any photographic or video evidence that had not previously been shared. Foley Hoag reviewed each of the thirty two survey responses (twenty-six Georgetown High/six Roxbury Prep)⁸ and followed up with certain respondents when appropriate.

e. Site Visit

Foley Hoag went to the Georgetown High football field accompanied by Georgetown School Administrator 02. Georgetown School Administrator 02 identified the visitor and home team sidelines and the location of the benches and bleachers. Foley Hoag observed and took photographs of the layout and location of the field.

V. Discussion

a. Georgetown High Football Team

Georgetown High School is a small school located in northeastern Massachusetts. The school has fewer than 350 total students and serves grades 9–12. According to Massachusetts Department of Education data, Georgetown High School is over 90% white and around 1% African American. The football team at Georgetown High is similarly small. The official MIAA roster shows 30 students. Like the school, Georgetown High’s football team is predominantly white, with Georgetown High administration indicating only four players identify as students of color.

Multiple Georgetown High players describe the team as close-knit. Even by the September 17, 2021 game against Roxbury Prep, only the second game of the season, Georgetown High players described the team as “gelled.” In addition, many of the Georgetown High players socialize with each other outside of football.

⁸ Because the game was at Georgetown High, there were far fewer Roxbury Prep parents present at the game.

b. Roxbury Prep Football Team

Roxbury Prep High School is a public charter high school serving approximately 800 students across two campuses. The Lower School (grades 9–10) is located in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Boston, and the Upper School (grades 11–12) is located in Roxbury. Roxbury Prep is part of the Uncommon Schools network. In contrast to Georgetown High, just 1.1% of the student population is white. According to Massachusetts Department of Education data, 56.3% of students are African-American and 40.6% of students are Hispanic.

The Roxbury Prep football team is relatively new, having just completed its fifth season in fall 2021. The high school itself was not founded until 2015 (Roxbury Prep has been serving lower grades since 1999), and the football team was established three years later in 2018. The players on Roxbury Prep's football team all identify as students of color. The team has one white coach.

c. Game Scheduling

The September 17, 2021 game was a non-league game that took place at Georgetown High. Georgetown High plays in the Commonwealth Athletic Conference (CAC). According to Roxbury Prep's website, its football team competes in the Division 8 North bracket, but is not affiliated with a particular league. It is common in the beginning of the season to schedule non-league games.

According to Georgetown School Administrator 01, the game was scheduled by Georgetown Coach 01, who contacted Roxbury Prep School Administrator 01. Georgetown High and Roxbury Prep had never played each other. Georgetown School Administrator 01 stated that it is typical when scheduling non-league games to try to find opponents who will be competitive. He stated that one way to do that is to match schools with similar levels of enrollment.

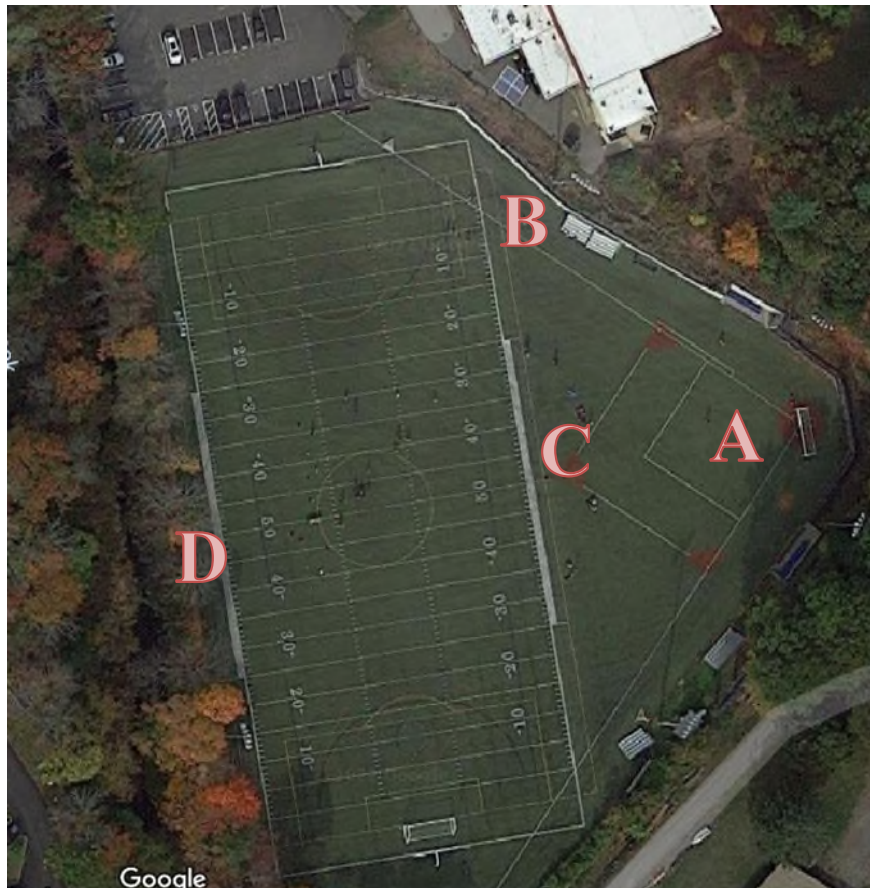
The interactions between the respective schools' coaching staff and administration leading up to the game appear to have been minimal and uneventful. Georgetown School Administrator 01 recalls speaking on the phone with Roxbury Prep's athletic director regarding the timing of the game. The teams confirmed that they exchanged game tape through "Hudl," a commonly used application in high school football. One Georgetown High player noted that after observing Roxbury Prep's tape, the team knew Roxbury Prep ran a triple option offense. Roxbury Prep Coach 01 stated that Roxbury Prep was aware after watching the tape that they would be playing a majority white team. There were no further interactions prior to game day.

Georgetown School Administrator 01 reported that Georgetown High sold approximately 350 tickets to the Game. Players and coaches estimated there might have been about 450 people in attendance the night of the game; other eyewitnesses stated a range between 100–400 attendees.

d. Field Layout

The Georgetown High football field is depicted in Picture 1, below. The entry to the football field is through a single gate by the parking lot. The field is otherwise fenced off. The home bench is on the left side of the aerial photograph, with the trees and river behind it, while the visiting team bench is on the right side with the baseball diamond. The visiting team bench sits between two sets of bleachers on the near side closest to the parking lot, and one set of bleachers on the far side. Of the two sets of bleachers on the near side of the field, the set closest to the end

zone (around the 10-yard line) contains mostly Georgetown High student fans and the other set of bleachers (around the 25-yard line) contains mostly Georgetown High parents. The set of bleachers on the far side of the visiting team bench is reserved for the visiting team's fans. Each set of bleachers does not seat many people. Because the bleachers do not hold many people, most spectators stand to the side of the bleachers and around the opposing team's bench.



Key:	
A:	Where middle school students play
B:	Georgetown student fan section
C:	Roxbury Prep bench
D:	Georgetown High bench

Picture 1

Aerial view of the field captured from Google Maps. (Photo by Google; Date Unknown)

In the baseball diamond area behind the visiting team's bench, middle school students typically play during football games without much supervision from parents. This was true the night of the game between Georgetown High and Roxbury Prep. At a prior game, there had been some bullying behavior, including a "pantsing" incident, by some of the middle school students playing in this area. For this reason, Georgetown School Administrator 02 decided to attend the September 17, 2021 game to more closely monitor these students.



Picture 2

View from Georgetown High sideline across to the visitors' side, with two sets of bleachers on the left for Georgetown High spectators and one set of bleachers to the right for visiting spectators. (Photo by G. Joffre; November 2021)



Picture 3

View of the Georgetown High sideline and bench. (Photo by G. Joffre; November 2021)



Picture 4

View of Georgetown High School from the Georgetown High sideline. The school is up an incline to the left of the visitors' sideline. (Photo by G. Joffre; November 2021)

e. Pregame Environment

As was typical, Georgetown High players arrived at the field an hour and a half to two hours before the game. The Roxbury Prep team arrived by bus about an hour and a half before the game. Georgetown School Administrator 01 met the team and escorted them into the away-team locker room, which is accessed through the main entrance of the school.

Members of Roxbury Prep's coaching staff reported that on their way to the locker room, they witnessed Georgetown School Administrator 01 being dismissive towards Georgetown School Administrator 03, a custodian who works at Georgetown High and who is Black. In a subsequent interview of Georgetown School Administrator 03, he stated that he had a good relationship with Georgetown School Administrator 01 and does not recall feeling dismissed during that interaction. He stated that Georgetown School Administrator 01 had asked him to lock the away-team locker room once the game started.

When Roxbury Prep took to the field to warm up, the opposing team bench had not been placed on the sideline. This was quickly resolved when Roxbury Prep coaches brought the omission to Georgetown High's head coach's attention, and Georgetown High players moved the opposing team bench to its proper location.

Roxbury Prep Player 01 and Roxbury Prep Player 11 both noted that Georgetown High was initially playing country music during its warmup, but switched the genre to rap music when Roxbury Prep took the field. Roxbury Prep Player 01 stated that at first he thought the rap music was "cool," but his perception shifted when he began to wonder whether Georgetown High changed the music to make fun of Roxbury Prep. He also believed that Georgetown High was laughing at Roxbury Prep players dancing to the music. Roxbury Prep Coach 04 stated that Georgetown High was "blasting" rap music when Roxbury Prep players left the locker room for the field and reported that Roxbury Prep players were saying that Georgetown High was playing "our" music.

Georgetown Player 01 stated that Georgetown Player 02 was in charge of the warmup music and was playing it through his own set of speakers on the field. Georgetown Player 01 stated that Georgetown High usually plays rock or "clean" rap (that is, without foul language) during its warmup.

During the national anthem, Roxbury Prep players took a knee, while Georgetown High players stood holding their helmets in the air. Roxbury Prep has been taking a knee at football games since the 2019 season and does not play the national anthem at their home games. Many Georgetown High witnesses observed Roxbury Prep taking a knee, while others did not notice due to where they were positioned on the field. At least two Georgetown High players reported that although they had seen professional athletes on television take a knee, this was the first time they had personally observed it.

Georgetown Player 04 stated that some of his teammates noticed Roxbury Prep taking a knee and "there was some confusion at first." He stated that the captains told the team to focus on themselves and "let [Roxbury Prep] do what they want." Georgetown Player 05 stated that some of his teammates made comments, including, "that's kind of disrespectful," "they should stand for the flag," and "why are they kneeling." Georgetown Player 06 said he "heard people talking about [Roxbury Prep] kneeling." Many Georgetown High players stated that they did not notice Roxbury Prep taking a knee, did not hear about it until our interview, and would not have cared had they noticed.

Roxbury Prep Player 02 and Roxbury Prep Coach 01 stated that they noticed Georgetown High players looking at them during the national anthem, but did not see any other reactions. Roxbury Prep Coach 03 also recalled the crowd looking at them as they kneeled, describing the episode as a "staring match." The remaining Roxbury witnesses questioned about the national anthem reported that they did not notice any reaction to their kneeling by Georgetown High witnesses.

In their witness statements, one Georgetown High parent and Georgetown School Administrator 01 affirmatively brought up the fact that Roxbury Prep kneeled during the national anthem. Several other Georgetown High parents reported that they had heard about Roxbury

Prep's kneeling from a parent who had observed the occurrence. No Georgetown High players mentioned Roxbury Prep kneeling until they were specifically asked whether they observed anything during the national anthem.

f. Spectators

Georgetown Player 07 reported that Georgetown High spectators were being “wicked loud” and “egging [Roxbury Prep] on,” saying things like “Good game!” in an obviously sarcastic manner, and generally being “annoying” to Roxbury Prep. Georgetown Player 04 said the Georgetown High spectators generally get “rowdy” and identified the fan section’s location immediately behind the visitors’ bench as a problem. Georgetown Player 04 stated that since the fans were standing right next to the team, “it might have got out of hand at times.” Georgetown Student 01 stated that he and other middle-school children were taunting the other team. He also stated that he heard Georgetown High student fans swearing at the Roxbury Prep players.

Witnesses on both sides universally reported that the positioning of the away bench near Georgetown High spectators was problematic.

g. Game

i. First Half

By most accounts from both Georgetown High and Roxbury Prep, the game started normally. The score, however, quickly became lopsided, with Georgetown High scoring four times in the first half. Roxbury did not score any points in the first half, and the halftime score was 30-0.

Coaches from both sides stated that they did not recall players or coaches complaining of racial epithets during the first quarter. However, some of Roxbury Prep’s players reported hearing the N-word early in the game, and as early as the first drive of the game. Roxbury Prep Player 05 and Roxbury Prep Player 06 both reported racial language being used in the first quarter. Roxbury Prep Player 05 stated he personally heard the N-word used twice in the first quarter, while Roxbury Prep Player 06 stated that after a play in which he made a tackle, Georgetown Player 07 said to him, “nice play monkey.”⁹

In the second quarter, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 and Roxbury Prep Coach 04 stated in interviews that Roxbury Prep Player 04 came to them with complaints about the N-word being used against him multiple times.¹⁰ Roxbury Prep Coach 01 reported that he then promptly spoke

⁹ This incident was corroborated by Roxbury Prep Coach 05, though with slightly different words being said, and is discussed later in the report.

¹⁰ Roxbury Prep Player 04 stated he was reporting on behalf of others, and did not personally hear the N-word in the first half, but regardless, the Coaches were put on notice by Roxbury Prep Player 04 that the N-word had been used on the field.

to Official 01 and Official 02 and told them about the allegations. Official 01 and Official 02 recalled Roxbury Prep Coach 01 making these first reports of the N-word during halftime.

Some Georgetown High parents stated that the only thing they noticed in the first half was Roxbury Prep's coaches complaining about calls. Georgetown Parent 01, Georgetown Parent 02, Georgetown Parent 03, and Georgetown Parent 04 all indicated that Roxbury Prep coaches were getting agitated with non-calls from the officials, and witnessed statements and actions by Roxbury Prep Coach 01 that implied the non-calls were related to race. Georgetown Parent 04 acknowledged that Roxbury Prep was not getting many calls in their favor, and that Roxbury Prep Coach 01 was not imagining the missed or inaccurate calls, but also did not believe the poor calls early in the game had anything to do with race. These parents recounted Roxbury Prep Coach 01 shouting that Roxbury Prep knew it would not be getting calls this far north of Boston. According to one Georgetown High witness, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 then stated, "and we all know why." Georgetown Parent 04 said that Roxbury Prep Coach 01 rolled up his sleeve to indicate his skin color.

Roxbury Prep Coach 02, a white Roxbury Prep coach, recalled that he was approached by two students in the first half who seemed to be friends. They came up to the Roxbury Prep bench, but Roxbury Prep Coach 02 stood in their way. One of the kids said, "fuck you motherfucker, I'm going to beat your bitch ass up." Roxbury Prep Coach 02 indicated that these two students—later identified to be Georgetown Students 07 and 08—were the ones "talking crap" most of the game.

ii. Halftime

As halftime began, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 approached Official 01 and Official 04 and told them that his players were being called the N-word by the Georgetown High players. Official 01 then asked the other officials whether they heard the N-word being used during the first half, and they all said they did not hear anything. Official 01 then went to Georgetown School Administrator 01 and told him of the accusations. When the teams were coming back on the field, Official 01 approached Georgetown Coach 01 and told him that Roxbury Prep alleged that Georgetown High players were using the N-word. Georgetown Coach 01 denied being aware of the N-word allegations until after the altercation in the third quarter. After evaluating the credibility of both witnesses and the contemporaneous actions of Official 01, Foley Hoag does not credit Georgetown Coach 01 and finds he was told at halftime of the allegations, consistent with the recollection of Official 01.

At halftime, the Roxbury Prep team huddled up in the end zone by the scoreboard to discuss the first half. Accounts from Roxbury Prep Player 07 and Roxbury Prep Coach 04 described the halftime talk as emotional: the team addressed their anger and hurt regarding what they perceived to be Georgetown High players using racial slurs on the field. The coaches asked the players to "eat it" and not to react violently, and touched on the broader theme of being Black in society. Roxbury Prep Coach 04 was in tears when he recounted this event. Ultimately, the team was in positive spirits after the huddle, and looked forward to the second half due to uplifting comments from Roxbury Prep Player 01.

Georgetown High players described their halftime talk as focused on winning the game and not letting their large lead slip away. Many of the players cited the previous game in which

the team blew a large halftime lead and ultimately lost the game. In the locker room, Georgetown Coach 01 addressed trash talking generally and told the team to “keep their mouths shut.” After the Georgetown High team left the locker room to return to the field, Official 01 stated that he told Georgetown Coach 01 about the N-word complaints. Georgetown Coach 01, however, denied having heard anything about such complaints until after the third-quarter fight. It is undisputed that no one addressed the N-word complaints with the Georgetown High team at halftime.

iii. Second Half

By many accounts, the tension building throughout the game came to a crescendo in the third quarter, resulting in the altercation between the two teams late in the third quarter. Three witnesses recounted Georgetown High fans being far too close to the Roxbury Prep Bench and multiple witnesses reported that Georgetown High fans were inappropriately interacting with the Roxbury Prep team.

Roxbury Prep Coach 03 recalls, and video evidence confirms,¹¹ that at least one middle school-aged fan from Georgetown approached the bench and criticized Roxbury Prep’s quarterback. The subsequent conversation addressed some serious subject matter—including N-word allegations—providing contemporaneous evidence that these allegations were made and openly discussed before the third quarter fight. The tone of the conversation suggests that it was friendly ribbing with no apparent disrespect on either side. The conversation is excerpted below and the audio clip is provided with this Report:

GT Student X: Bro, your quarterback looks like ass.

RP Player A: Bro what’re you [inaudible]

RP Player A: Bro you is not touching me like that Bro!

...

GT Student X: He asked if our team was racist.

RP Player B: [laughs]

RP Player A: They’ve been saying that N-word all game.

GT Student X: Actually?

RP Player A: Yea

GT Student: This team?

RP Player A: Yea, swear to God

GT Student X: Our team’s too white for this bro.

RP Player A: Literally they –

GT Student X: We have the whitest team.

GT Student Y: We are in sixth grade, I don’t know.

GT Student X: [GT Student Y], we have the whitest team ever.

...

GT Student X: Where are your guys’ cheerleaders?

RP Player A: It’s an away game.

In background, Coach 01: Step away from the camera.

¹¹ Roxbury Prep Game Footage, Clip #85

GT Student X: There were cheerleaders last time.

RP Player A: At an away game?

GT Student X: Yeah.

RP Player A: [inaudible]

Multiple witnesses recounted a Georgetown High student (Georgetown Student 02), who is Black, calling Roxbury Prep Coach 05 the N-word to his face. Georgetown Student 03 described the interaction as Georgetown Student 02 saying, “check the scoreboard nigga” and then, when confronted by Roxbury Prep Coach 05, saying, “I can say it because I’m black.” This is confirmed by Roxbury Prep Coach 05.

In a separate instance, four Roxbury Prep witnesses¹² also described a Georgetown High student fan coming up to the Roxbury Prep bench saying some variation of “Niggers Suck” to Roxbury Prep Coach 03. The witnesses describe this student as a “young kid,” and recalled several identifying features. One Roxbury Prep witness thought that someone dared the student fan to say the N-word because he appeared to be so young.

Shortly after being called the N-word, Roxbury Prep Coach 03 stood on the bench and faced the Georgetown High crowd, telling them to “get the fuck back” from the Roxbury Prep bench. Georgetown School Administrator 02 heard this and approached the bench area with Police Officer 01 to address the situation. Georgetown School Administrator 02 describes Roxbury Prep Coach 03 as “enraged” and said he could barely understand what was going wrong. Georgetown School Administrator 02 did, however, grasp that Roxbury Prep Coach 03 alleged the N-word was being used. Georgetown School Administrator 02 then told Roxbury Prep Coach 03 to stop cursing at the fans. At the same time, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 intervened and ended the interaction, telling Roxbury Prep Coach 03, “we don’t need to explain anymore, they know what’s going on.” Roxbury Prep Coach 03 describes the incident as Georgetown School Administrator 02 and Police Officer 01 approaching him merely to chastise him for yelling at the fans, and not to actually help address the problem.

At this point, Georgetown School Administrator 02 moved the fans back.¹³ He also went around to the parents in the section and asked if anyone heard the N-word. He told the parents that the Roxbury Prep team was saying it was “yelled” so he believed, if true, it should have been widely heard. All Georgetown High parents in the area at the time told Georgetown School Administrator 02 they did not hear anything, and none of the Georgetown High parents that were interviewed and were in the area at the time heard the N-word being used.

Shortly after the incident with Georgetown School Administrator 02 and Roxbury Prep Coach 03, there was an altercation on the playing field. The altercation occurred on a two-point conversion attempt, after Georgetown High scored on a long touchdown that started with a screen

¹² Roxbury Prep School Administrator 02 recounts this event as saying “you fucking suck” and not hearing the N-word.

¹³ Official 01 also moved fans back in the third quarter.

pass, making the score 44–8 late in the third quarter. Multiple witnesses described, and the video evidence confirmed, that the altercation started between Georgetown Player 04 and Roxbury Prep Player 04. Georgetown Player 04 dropped a short pass, and Roxbury Prep Player 04 made contact with Georgetown Player 04 shortly after the drop. The hit on Georgetown Player 04 was slightly late (that is, it occurred shortly after the play ended) but within the norms of football plays. Neither player fell nor was tackled to the ground. Georgetown Player 04 responded to the late hit by grabbing Roxbury Prep Player 04's jersey, and then forcefully shoving Roxbury Prep Player 04 away, into Georgetown Player 03. Georgetown Player 03 then grabbed Roxbury Prep Player 04 by the neck and facemask, before a Roxbury Prep player pulled Georgetown Player 03 off of him. Then, more Roxbury Prep players swarmed around Georgetown Player 03. From this point, there was a large scuffle between Roxbury Prep and Georgetown High players, who all congregated around Georgetown Player 03.

At this point, witness and video evidence showed that the Roxbury Prep coaches came running onto the field. One of these coaches, Roxbury Prep Coach 03, grabbed Georgetown Player 08 from the pile from behind, and forcefully tossed him to the ground before returning to the pile to try to break up the fight further. Some witnesses from Georgetown High describe this incident as a coach who had lost control of his emotions and was engaging in an altercation among students. Roxbury Prep witnesses indicate that the coach was simply trying to break up the fight.

Once the players were fully engaged in the fight, three Roxbury Prep witnesses recalled hearing a Georgetown High player say the N-word. Two of those witnesses identify Georgetown Player 03, while the third stated that it was instead a different, unidentified Georgetown player. Roxbury Prep Coach 01, one of the witnesses who personally heard Georgetown Player 03 use the N-word, brought Georgetown Player 03 over to the officials and Georgetown Coach 02. Roxbury Prep Coach 01 told the official that Georgetown Player 03 was the player who was using the N-word. Official 03 told Roxbury Prep Coach 01 that the coach was “out of line” for bringing Georgetown Player 03 over to him by the facemask. Georgetown Coach 02 recounts telling Roxbury Prep Coach 01 to calm down. Afterward, Georgetown Coach 02 brought Georgetown Player 03 to the sideline and confronted him about whether he used the N-word. Georgetown Player 03 denied saying the N-word at any point to Georgetown Coach 02, and denied saying the N-word when asked by Foley Hoag.

Also during the altercation, Police Officer 01 called for backup from the Georgetown Police Department and two officers arrived shortly after the altercation was over.

After the altercation was separated, Georgetown School Administrator 02 attempted to end the game, and told Police Officer 01 to clear the spectators from the field. Spectators were confused about why they were being asked to leave, and worried about their children who remained to play the game. Nevertheless, spectators were ushered into the parking lot. According to Police Officer 02, about 50% of the spectators that were ushered into the parking lot actually left the game; the other half stayed.

According to Roxbury Prep Coach 02, one spectator lingered while the field was being cleared and approached Roxbury Prep Coach 02 on his way out, saying, “you don’t belong in our town, get the hell out of here.” This was said by one of the same students who had approached

Roxbury Prep Coach 02 earlier in the game, although he could not identify whether it was Georgetown Student 07 or 08.

Both teams huddled up, and the coaches for each side spoke to their respective teams. Georgetown Coach 01 stated that he addressed the allegations with his team for the first time at that moment. He stated he told them that the accusations better not be true, and that the behavior was unacceptable. He further told his team to keep their mouths shut for the rest of the game. While Georgetown Coach 01 claimed he addressed the allegations with his team at this moment, the majority of the Georgetown High team stated that they were unaware of the allegations of racial slurs until days later. While many of the Georgetown High players recalled Georgetown Coach 01 telling them to keep their mouths shut, no players recalled Georgetown Coach 01 addressing the allegations of racial slurs in the post-fight huddle.

The Roxbury Prep team was in a huddle, trying to decide whether or not they wanted to continue the game. The Coaches addressed the team and the players all voted. Roxbury Prep Player 10, Roxbury Prep Player 06, and Roxbury Prep Coach 04 did not think continuing the game was a good idea, but the majority of the team wanted to keep playing. Roxbury Prep coaches instructed their own team that there would be no revenge, and that they were only going out to play football if the game continued.

While the field was being cleared of spectators, Official 01 approached the Georgetown School Administrators 01 and 02 and asked what they wanted to do. They said to talk to Roxbury Prep. Roxbury Prep indicated that they wanted to keep playing.

Once the field was cleared of spectators, the fourth quarter began, but the game was halted again after only four plays and eventually cancelled.

Game audio picks up a spectator yelling “you’ve got a long way to go home” on the second-to-last play of the game. Further, two Roxbury Prep players alleged the N-word was used on this final play, by two different Georgetown High players.

Roxbury Prep Player 01 reported that he blocked a Georgetown High lineman to the ground, and that the player called Roxbury Prep Player 01 the N-word as he got back up. Roxbury Prep Player 01 then walked off the field and told his coaches he didn’t want to play anymore, and was in tears.

Roxbury Prep Player 11 alleged that Georgetown Player 06 said “you fucking nigger” to him on the last play of the game. Georgetown Player 06 denied stating any racial slur, and said he merely turned to the official and complained about a block in the back during that play. Georgetown Player 11 also stated that Georgetown Player 06 only said that he was blocked in the back. Video footage showed a light push on Georgetown Player 06’s back by Roxbury Prep Player 11, and then Georgetown Player 06 raising his arms and turning to the official. Roxbury Prep Player 11 can then be seen cupping his ear and walking toward Georgetown Player 06 before the players were separated by teammates. Roxbury Prep Player 11 claimed Official 01 called the game off then, after seeing Roxbury Prep Player 11 approach Georgetown Player 06. However, Roxbury Prep Player 11 said he doubts the official heard Georgetown Player 06 use the N-word.

Georgetown Player 06 was eventually confronted by Georgetown Coach 03, and denied making any racial slurs at the time.

Once Roxbury Prep Coach 01 heard about these allegations, he went up to Official 01 and stated his team would not continue to play. Official 01 then stopped the game early and the teams left the field.

h. Post-game

Once the game ended, the players went to their respective benches. The teams did not shake hands. In order to avoid any further altercations, Police Officer 04 decided that Georgetown High would leave the field first and go directly to their locker room, which they accessed through an entrance on the side of the school at the top of the hill, and stay there until Roxbury Prep had left. Georgetown Player 05 stated that Georgetown High players “trickled in” to their locker room, as opposed to entering as a big group. Roxbury Prep left the field after Georgetown High and went to the away team locker room, which they accessed through the front entrance.

The media reported that Georgetown High players were “chanting” the N-word as they went in to their locker room and as Roxbury Prep was leaving the field—allegations also repeated by Roxbury Prep witnesses during interviews.¹⁴ Witnesses’ memories as to what, if anything, Georgetown High players said as they entered the locker room varied widely.

Roxbury Prep Coach 01 reported that he heard the Georgetown High players “chant” racial slurs as they entered the locker room. Roxbury Prep Coach 03 reported Georgetown High players saying “Fucking niggers” in a sing-song voice, repeated several times, as they entered the locker room. Roxbury Prep Coach 04 heard a group of Georgetown High players on the hill shout “Fuck you niggers” or “Get the fuck out of here niggers.” Roxbury Prep Coach 04 stated that he met a police officer’s eyes when this was said, and the police officer did nothing but look down. Roxbury Prep Coach 02 stated that he heard chanting which he described as “celebrating as if [Georgetown High] had just won the Super Bowl,” but did not report that he heard the N-word being used. Roxbury Prep Coach 02 did say that a group of 3-4 Georgetown High parents nearby said something to the effect of, “we aren’t all like this,” presumably in response to Georgetown High players’ cheering. Roxbury Prep Player 03 heard a Georgetown High player say, “Bye niggers,” as he was entering the locker room. He stated that the Georgetown High player who said that was one of the last to enter the locker room. Roxbury Prep Player 01 heard Georgetown High players “chanting that they won” and reported hearing them say the N-word, although he does not specifically remember what was said. Finally, Roxbury Prep School Administrator 02 reported that she heard the other team cheering and celebrating.

Georgetown High players universally denied a “specific cheer” or “chant.” Some Georgetown High players even described the mood as somber. However, other Georgetown High

¹⁴ See, e.g., Jonathan Edwards, “A high school football game was called off after a brawl. A coach says his players were called racist slurs.” The Washington Post, Sept. 28, 2021 (available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/09/28/massachusetts-high-school-football-game-cancelled-racial-slurs/>).

players reported that the team was excited they had won. A Georgetown High parent, who had lingered in the parking lot after spectators had been cleared, also reported that Georgetown High players were “excited” and had “a different energy than they normally have,” cheering things like “let’s go!” and “here we go!” She watched Georgetown High players go into the locker room and did not hear anything racially charged. Another Georgetown High parent reported that he heard the Georgetown High team yell “Awww yeahhh” as they entered the locker room. He stated it was at this point that he heard a Roxbury Prep parent state “I can’t believe they just said the N-word.” Georgetown Parent 02 also reported hearing “cheering” by the locker room at the end of the game, but did not hear what was said. Georgetown Parent 03 heard “hooting and hollering” from the Georgetown High players before they entered the locker room.

Many Georgetown High witnesses agreed that Georgetown High’s cheering was unsportsmanlike and unnecessary, but said they did not hear any racial slurs being used.

In the locker room, Georgetown Player 05 stated that Georgetown Coach 01 addressed the team collectively, noting that he did not believe that anyone had “said anything.” The Georgetown High players confirmed that they had not. Georgetown Player 03 reported that the coaches and captains stated not to “make this worse” for yourself by getting on social media. Other Georgetown High players stated that they did not recall Georgetown Coach 01 discussing the allegations of racial slurs at all after the game. Still, other Georgetown High players stated that they did not hear about the racial allegations until the next day in the media. At the very least, multiple accounts indicate that Georgetown coaches and administration failed to make a serious inquiry into the allegations following the game.

As the Roxbury Prep Coach 01 was walking by, visibly upset, an individual in a group of Georgetown fans taunted him, saying “are you crying?” Police Officer 03, who was accompanying the Roxbury Prep team to the locker room, confirmed this interaction.

In addition, three Roxbury Prep players reported an incident in which an unidentified white woman accused one of the Roxbury Prep players of looking at her in a “weird way.” The woman, a Georgetown High spectator, then approached one of the police officers to complain. Although the Roxbury Prep players remembered what the unidentified white woman said to the police officer somewhat differently, two recall that the police officer was helpful in shutting the situation down and that the Georgetown High spectator left. Police Officer 04 did not mention this incident during her interview.

According to Police Officer 02, Police Officer 04 directed other officers to clear the parking lots so the teams could get into their locker rooms. Many people left the parking lot (and the school generally) at that time. Some people remained, including certain players’ parents on both sides, as well as other unidentified spectators. Tensions remained high following the game. For example, Georgetown School Administrator 02 reported that he heard a truck belonging to a Georgetown High student revving its engine. A Roxbury Prep parent also separately reported hearing revving engines. Georgetown School Administrator 02 described the way certain Georgetown students were hanging around as “threatening.” In addition, two Georgetown High witnesses reported to Georgetown School Administrator 02 that they overheard a Georgetown student saying, “those

niggers started it, we finished it.”¹⁵ No Roxbury Prep witnesses reported hearing this statement, and it is unclear whether any Roxbury Prep witnesses were in the vicinity when these comments were allegedly made.

Several other notable events occurred following the game. First, multiple witnesses observed that Roxbury Prep School Administrator 02 was wearing a Black Lives Matter t-shirt. One Georgetown witness stated that he did not observe her wearing the t-shirt before and thought she might have changed into it, further citing the shirt as supporting evidence that Roxbury Prep came to Georgetown High with an agenda. When interviewed, the Roxbury Prep School Administrator 02 stated that she had worn it under her other shirt, and admitted that she removed her top layer to make a point following the events of the game as she perceived them. One police officer stated that he observed Roxbury Prep School Administrator 02 “[peel] up her shirt at us,” but did not think anything of it.

Second, several witnesses reported hearing shouting in the parking lot. Georgetown School Administrators 02 and 03 stated that they heard someone shout, “Get out.” This turned out to be a domestic dispute between one of the officials and his wife. Someone reported the interaction to Police Officer 04, who went to the scene with Police Officer 03. Instead of approaching the couple, the officers first approached Roxbury Prep Coach 05, who was seated in the car next to the couple. The Roxbury Prep coach told the officers that the issue was in the car next to him. Police Officer 04 corroborated this account. Roxbury Prep Coach 05 was offended that he had been approached and referenced the interaction in his Facebook post, when he stated “I was approached by police for absolutely no reason.”

Finally, a group of Georgetown High students waited on a nearby street for the Roxbury Prep bus to leave, and Police Officer 02 had to disperse them. Thereafter, another group of Georgetown High students gathered by a nearby building close to the school and shouted at the Roxbury Prep bus as it left. Police Officer 02, who was escorting the Roxbury Prep bus to the highway, stopped and started heading toward the Georgetown High students, at which point the students began to walk away. This incident was further confirmed by Roxbury Prep witnesses. Roxbury Prep Player 07 stated that a group of Georgetown High students were screaming “get out” as the bus was leaving Georgetown.

i. School Responses

i. Georgetown High’s Response

The week following the game, Georgetown School Administrator 04, Georgetown School Administrator 02 and Georgetown School Administrator 01 met with the entire football team in the school auditorium. Georgetown School Administrator 01, who attended the game but was not made aware of the allegations until after the game had ended, questioned the players regarding the accusations. All allegations were universally denied.

¹⁵ One of these witnesses wanted to remain anonymous and the other Foley Hoag was unable to speak with.

Georgetown School Administrator 02 also hosted a meeting with the entire high school and middle school, explaining the allegations that had been made and the media presence at the school.¹⁶ At both of these meetings, students were encouraged not to talk to the media and to stay off social media.

According to Georgetown High players, Georgetown Coach 01 led a separate meeting on the Monday following the Game during which the allegations were also discussed. Georgetown players reported that Georgetown Coach 01 took the players at their word that none of them used the racial language they were being accused of using, stating that he did not hear anything himself and that he believed them.

Finally, Georgetown High administrators, including Georgetown School Administrator 02 and Georgetown School Administrator 04, conducted their own investigation of the allegations by interviewing several Georgetown High students who were present at the Game and reviewing the video evidence in their possession. Georgetown High was unable to make a determination regarding many of the allegations. Georgetown High decided to defer taking disciplinary action pending the results of this investigation.

ii. Roxbury Prep's Response

The day after the game, the Roxbury Prep athletic director, who was not at the game, reported that he had spoken with the Roxbury Prep coaches regarding the events of the game and the next steps that should be taken. The Roxbury Prep athletic director reported that he had spoken with Georgetown Coach 01 and Georgetown School Administrator 04, who explained (in the athletic director's mind, incredulously) that they had not been aware of the situation and that had they known, they would have stopped it from happening.

The week following the game, Roxbury Prep provided Roxbury Prep players with a room to gather and discuss their experience. Many Roxbury Prep players joined the discussion and players shared how they felt throughout the game. Roxbury Prep later made outside trauma counselors available to Roxbury Prep players.

Finally, Roxbury Prep Coach 03 also addressed the entire school regarding the events of the game. Roxbury Prep Coach 01 stated that he was not in a position emotionally to address the school at that time.

j. Georgetown Police Involvement

The Georgetown Police Department provided two police officers on detail during the game, which is standard practice for Georgetown High football games.¹⁷ Two additional police officers joined in response to a call for back up after the third quarter fight.

¹⁶ See Appendix Section II

¹⁷ One of the two detail officers was actually filling in from the Groveland Police Department, although he was a Georgetown resident.

Most Roxbury Prep players found that, on balance, the police were in unhelpful in protecting Roxbury Prep from the Georgetown High crowd during the game. A few Roxbury Prep players noted that it seemed that the police were more focused on protecting the crowd from Roxbury Prep. On the other hand, after the game, at least one Roxbury Prep player found the Georgetown Police Department's presence helpful in escorting the Roxbury Prep players off the field and two Roxbury Prep players found an officer helpful in shutting down one woman's vague and unsupported complaint that a Roxbury Prep player was looking at her in a "weird way."

There is no evidence that the Georgetown Police were hostile to Roxbury Prep players. A few Roxbury Prep coaches and players stated in interviews that they found the Georgetown police officers' presence and posture threatening. One coach in an interview provided the context that some players and coaches have had prior negative experiences with law enforcement, including a negative confrontation with a police officer at the Roxbury Prep school itself.

Further, the Georgetown Police Department conducted an investigation and wrote a report concerning the game. The scope of that investigation appeared to focus on (1) whether Georgetown police officers violated anyone's rights and (2) the Roxbury Prep coaches' conduct, as opposed to this Report, which focuses on whether racial slurs were used by Georgetown High. Unfortunately, it does not appear that the Georgetown Police Department communicated the limited scope of its investigation to Georgetown High interviewees, some of whom believed the Georgetown Police Department had conducted a comprehensive investigation including the question of use of racial slurs.

VI. Findings

a. Georgetown High Students Used Racial Slurs During the Game

- i. Two Georgetown High student spectators approached the bench and used racial slurs towards Roxbury Prep coaches.

Multiple witnesses confirm two separate instances of Georgetown High spectators approaching the Roxbury Prep bench and using racial slurs. The first instance was when Georgetown Student 02 yelled, "check the scoreboard nigga" to Roxbury Prep Coach 05 in the middle of the third quarter. Not only does Roxbury Prep Coach 05 specifically remember this interaction with the student spectator, but Georgetown Student 03 also recalls Georgetown Student 02 saying those same things to Roxbury Prep Coach 05. Further, Georgetown Player 11 recalls Georgetown Student 02 admitting to using the N-word during the game. Georgetown Student 02 did not respond to Foley Hoag's interview requests. Georgetown Student 02 denied using the N-word when he was questioned by Georgetown High administrators during the school's internal investigation.

In the second instance, Roxbury Prep Coach 03, Roxbury Prep Parent 01, and Roxbury Pre Player 05 recall a young Georgetown student approaching the Roxbury Prep bench and saying "you niggers suck." This altercation is what prompted Roxbury Prep Coach 03 to swear at the Georgetown High fans, demanding they all "get the fuck back." Georgetown High administrators, in conducting their own investigation surrounding these incidents, identified the student as either Georgetown Student 07 or Georgetown Student 08. Georgetown School

Administrator 02 stated in his interview that Georgetown Student 07 admitted to calling the Roxbury Prep team the N-word on the sidelines and in the parking lot. However, the description of the young student given by the Roxbury Prep witnesses more accurately describes Georgetown Student 08, who was seen briskly walking away from the Roxbury Prep bench. At the time, Georgetown School Administrator 01 stopped Georgetown Student 08, who told Georgetown School Administrator 01 that he was just going over to the Roxbury Prep bench to see if a player that got hurt was okay. Georgetown School Administrator 02 indicated that Georgetown Student 08 did not seem like a kid concerned about the injured player's welfare.

Both Georgetown Student 07 and 08 denied these accusations in their interviews with Georgetown High administrators, but admitted to interacting with the Roxbury Prep bench and coaches, and each stated that the other was using swear words towards the Roxbury Prep coaches, such as "you suck" and "fuck you." Georgetown Student 07¹⁸ admits to swearing at one of the Roxbury coaches. This lines up with Roxbury Prep Coach 02's statement that the students confronted him multiple times in the game.

ii. The N-word was used during the fight in the third quarter.

Roxbury Prep Player 05, Roxbury Prep Player 09, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 confirm that the N-word was said during the fight in the third quarter. However, which Georgetown High player said the N-word remains unknown. Two of the witnesses described Georgetown Player 03 as the player who used the N-word. One witness, Roxbury Prep Coach 01, grabbed Georgetown Player 03 after hearing him say the word, and brought him to Georgetown Coach 02. This contemporaneous action, which was confirmed by both the player he grabbed and the coach he was brought to, corroborates Roxbury Prep Coach 01's account that he heard the N-word during the fight. Roxbury Prep Player 09, a Roxbury Prep linebacker, recalls the N-word coming from a Georgetown player with whom he was tangled up with during the fight. Video evidence suggests that this was also Georgetown Player 03. However, Roxbury Prep Player 05, who witnessed the interaction, expressly stated that it was not Georgetown Player 03 who said the N-word to Roxbury Prep Player 09. Instead, he recalled a second unidentified Georgetown player, who was also tussling with Roxbury Prep Player 09, using the N-word. Separately, Roxbury Prep Player 05 alleged that Georgetown Player 03 did use the N-word on a play prior to the third quarter fight.

The bulk of the evidence points to Georgetown Player 03 having used the N-word during the fight. After the fight, he was confronted by Georgetown Coach 02 about using the N-word and denied using the word. He also denied using the word when asked in his interview. Because there were many players in the scuffle and all players wore helmets with masks, it is quite possible that witnesses would have different impressions concerning who used the N-word. The video evidence only shows Georgetown Player 03 scuffling with Roxbury Prep Player 09—but the video cuts out before the scuffle ends and before Roxbury Prep Coach 01 grabs hold of Roxbury Prep Player 09.

¹⁸ Foley Hoag requested to interview this student but did not receive a response.

For these reasons, we find that the N-word was used against Roxbury Prep Player 09 by an unidentified Georgetown High player.

iii. At least one Georgetown High Player used the term “monkey.”

Georgetown Player 07 was specifically identified as saying “monkey” during the game in two instances. In one instance he was taunting Roxbury Prep Player 06, who was trying to make a sack, and in another he was making a joke about the Roxbury Prep team heard by Roxbury Prep Player 11. To support the conclusion that Georgetown Player 07 called Roxbury Prep Player 06 “monkey,” we credit two firsthand accounts of individuals who heard Georgetown Player 07 say the derogatory term to Roxbury Prep Player 06. Both Roxbury Prep Player 06 and Roxbury Prep Coach 05 describe in detail the play in which Georgetown Player 07 used the word “monkey.” Independently, both of their recollections describe a play where Roxbury Prep Player 06 attempted to make a sack on the Georgetown High quarterback, and that once the play had ended, a player called Roxbury Prep Player 06 a “monkey.” Roxbury Prep Player 06 specifically singled out Georgetown Player 07 as the player who said the word to him, while Roxbury Prep Coach 05 describes the player as an offensive lineman or running back. Video evidence confirms that Georgetown Player 07 played offensive line against Roxbury Prep Player 06 for most of the game.

There is evidence that Georgetown Player 07 referred to the Roxbury Prep team as monkeys in a second instance as well. Roxbury Prep Player 11 specifically singled out Georgetown Player 07 by jersey number as making a joke about the Roxbury Prep team that referred to them as monkeys. Roxbury Prep Player 11 claims that he went to the official after hearing the joke, and recalls the official saying, “he’s not lying.” No official that was interviewed recalls this exchange with Roxbury Prep Player 11. No other player recalls what Roxbury Prep Player 11 heard. Therefore, this evidence is not as strong as the first instance.

Further evidence that Georgetown Player 07 used the word “monkey” is that he admitted to hearing the word used. However he denied it was said by him or other members of his team, instead suggesting that Roxbury Prep players were the ones using the term, which seems unlikely. We do not find Georgetown Player 07’s explanation of hearing “monkey” but not having used it himself credible.

Generally, Roxbury Prep Player 06 was also not found to be credible. There were multiple instances during his interview where he made claims that were far beyond and at many times contradictory to what other witnesses reported. For example there were multiple instances where Roxbury Prep Player 06 recalled the exact time – to the minute – of when certain events occurred in the game. However, when cross-referencing the claims with video evidence, his statements could not be corroborated. Additionally, Roxbury Prep Player 06 (and his mother, who was in the interview) recalled a player of color for Georgetown High yelling the N-word at the entire Roxbury team before the game started. No other witness from Roxbury recalls this incident.

While Roxbury Prep Player 06 was generally found not to be credible, his allegation of the word “monkey” against him by Georgetown Player 07 was corroborated by another witness, and a further witness specifically identified Georgetown Player 07 as using the word “monkey” at another point in the game. Further, video evidence showed that there was in fact a particular

play fitting the description given by Roxbury Prep Player 06 as the play after which Georgetown Player 07 used the slur. This additional information leads us to credit Roxbury Prep Player 06's allegation in that particular instance, despite a finding of general lack of credibility.

Georgetown Player 07 was also a player who was accused by a few Roxbury Prep witnesses as playing dirty, instigating helmet-to-helmet contact, and using the N-word, though all the N-word allegations were based on second-hand accounts. No player reported personally hearing Georgetown Player 07 use the N-word. Given the absence of any first-hand accounts, we find the evidence inconclusive on whether Georgetown Player 07 used the N-word.

- iv. The evidence was inconclusive concerning whether other players used the N-word.

At the very end of the game, Roxbury Prep Player 11 accused Georgetown Player 06 of saying a racial slur to him. On that play, Roxbury was on offense and Roxbury Prep Player 11 went to block Georgetown Player 06. The play (which can be seen on video) shows Roxbury Prep Player 11 slightly pushing Georgetown Player 06 in the back for a block. Roxbury Prep Player 11 then stated that Georgetown Player 06 said "you fucking nigger." Georgetown Player 06 claimed he said "that's a block in the back." Georgetown Player 11, who was in the area, also says he heard Georgetown Player 06 say that it was a block in the back. After he heard what was said, Roxbury Prep Player 11 can be seen cupping his ear and approaching Georgetown Player 06, as Georgetown Player 06 has his arms raised in the air as if complaining to the officials. Roxbury Prep Player 11 stated he told the official what happened and then left the field, telling his coach to take him out of the game. In response, Roxbury Prep Coach 01 called the game, bringing it to an abrupt and premature end. Georgetown Coach 03 confronted Georgetown Player 06 about the accusation that he had used the N-word after the play, and Georgetown Player 06 denied saying anything. Georgetown High coaches and players uniformly described Georgetown Player 06 as a very quiet, kind and introverted young man, and all agreed that it would be very out of character if he said anything like that to a Roxbury Prep player.

Roxbury Prep made many other allegations concerning use of the N-word. Players were typically able to recall some details about the plays or circumstances surrounding when they were allegedly called the N-word. However, for multiple reasons, Foley Hoag was unable to confirm these events by corroborating evidence, and in many instances, other evidence contradicted the allegations. Because the teams were meeting for the first time and the N-word was allegedly used by players in quick moments at the end of plays, Roxbury Prep witnesses were often unable to remember jersey numbers, sometimes guessing at starting digits (started with a "4") or simply recalling a double-digit jersey number. In other instances, the Roxbury Prep allegations were inaccurate with respect to player identification by number. For example, Roxbury Prep Player 06 and Roxbury Prep Parent 01 recalled a specific player number who was purportedly using the N-word for most of the game. However, in interviews, it was discovered that the particular player was injured, and did not play at all in the game. In other instances, Roxbury Prep players gave specific examples of plays during which the N-word was used, but video evidence contradicted the description of the play, thereby undermining the credibility of the accusation. In at least one other instance, a Roxbury Prep player claimed the N-word was used against a particular player, and that player himself did not recall the incident.

To be sure, some of the discrepancies with respect to details resulted due to the passage of time. We also found that certain Roxbury Prep witnesses lacked credibility and were exaggerating claims. This does not detract from the findings that the N-word was used in other specific instances.

- v. No Georgetown High coaches or faculty used racial slurs, despite the claim made on social media to the contrary.

Roxbury Prep Player 06 claimed that coaches from Georgetown High were calling him the N-word when he made tackles on the Georgetown High sideline, or when he chased a player to the sideline. Roxbury Prep Player 06 describes that when missing a tackle on the sideline, a Georgetown High coach told him “you thought you was gonna get my boy nigger – he’s too fast for you.” However, no other witness suggested this was said by Georgetown High coaches or faculty. The coach that authored the Facebook post¹⁹ clarified that he did not hear the N-word from those groups of people. Rather, he explained that he believed that they were complicit in the actions of their fans and players because he did not believe that their response to the complaints was sufficient.

b. Two Roxbury Prep Players Used the Word “Nigga” Toward White Georgetown Spectators

Roxbury Prep players used the word “Nigga” in an apparently confrontational way. After the fight in the third quarter, two Roxbury Prep Players are recorded on videotape using the word “Nigga.” As he returned to the Roxbury Prep bench after the fight, Roxbury Prep Player 13 said “bitch ass nigga, [you don’t even know] what you’re talking about,” directed at an off camera Georgetown High spectator. Additionally, Roxbury Prep Player 03 stated on his return to the sideline from the fight “Ay yo, [Imma] see that nigga after the game” directed at an off camera Georgetown High spectator. Roxbury Prep Player 03 conceded that he made this comment toward a white Georgetown High spectator.

While Roxbury Prep Player 03 stated he was responding to racially derogatory language from the crowd, any use of the N-word in a derogatory and confrontational manner only served to exacerbate tensions. While the word “Nigga” in these instances as used toward white people was not intended as a racial slur, the word was intended to be antagonistic. This is distinct from Roxbury Prep players’ use of the word “Nigga” amongst themselves in a friendly and conversational manner during the course of the game.

c. The Responses to the Events of the Game were Inadequate and in Some Instances Exacerbated the Tensions

Roxbury Prep players and coaches were clearly, and increasingly, angry and emotional throughout the game. Players complained to coaches in real time, and coaches complained to officials as early as the second quarter, that Roxbury Prep players were being verbally abused with

¹⁹ See Appendix Section II

racial epithets during the game. No party responded to the complaints in a manner sufficient to address Roxbury Prep's concerns or to curtail the conduct.

- i. Game officials failed to take appropriate action in response to Roxbury Prep's complaints.

Game officials are largely untrained in responding to complaints of race discrimination. Although, when interviewed, officials credibly claimed that they would take any actual use of racial epithets seriously, during the game they did only the bare minimum responding to complaints. Only once, at halftime and after several complaints had already been made, did officials alert the Georgetown Coach 01 to the complaints. To their credit, in the second half, when the Roxbury Prep coaches complained of racial epithets from the Georgetown High fans, the officials then forced the Georgetown High fans to back away from the Roxbury Prep sidelines.

Beyond those two actions, however, officials not only did nothing; they dismissed Roxbury Prep's repeated complaints. In their near-contemporaneous written statements, moreover, each official claimed that they did not hear any racial epithets uttered by Georgetown High players—never acknowledging in their written statements that their ability to hear such statements was highly limited by their physical distance from the players, especially in between plays when the comments likely occurred. In interviews, the officials did, however, acknowledge the limitations in what they could hear, and further acknowledged that if such verbal abuse happened between players in between plays, they almost certainly would have been unable to hear it. Had officials been better equipped to take such allegations seriously, the events here could have been mitigated in any number of ways:

- Officials could have ended play early, realizing that continued play would be likely to lead to worse outcomes.
- Officials could have stopped play and had a discussion with coaches and/or players about appropriate behavior during the game.
- In not acting dismissively towards Roxbury Prep coaches regarding their complaints, officials could have mitigated negative effects by making Roxbury Prep coaches feel heard in the moment.

There is little doubt that the failure of game officials to take these actions, coupled with their definitive statements regarding not hearing any racial epithets without any acknowledgment of their limitations to hear verbal abuse on the field, exacerbated the outcomes here.

- ii. Georgetown High administrators and coaches largely did not take adequate steps in response to Roxbury Prep's complaints.

Similar to the game officials, Georgetown Coach 01 did not appear to take Roxbury Prep's allegations seriously during or after the game, and wrote defensive statements that directly or implicitly cast blame on Roxbury Prep.

Foley Hoag finds that central aspects of Georgetown Coach 01's testimony lacked credibility. At halftime, officials approached Georgetown Coach 01 to inform him of Roxbury

Prep's allegations. There is no evidence that Coach 01 mentioned this report to anyone, or addressed it with his players. According to the Georgetown Coach 01, he was unaware of the allegations until after the altercation. Foley Hoag discredits this assertion based on the more credible statements by Official 01. In particular, Official 01 recalls informing both Georgetown School Administrator 01 and Georgetown Coach 01 of the racial slur allegations during halftime. Georgetown School Administrator 01 confirms that he was informed specifically about alleged racial slurs and that Official 01 told Georgetown School Administrator 01 that he was going next to inform Georgetown Coach 01. In this context, Georgetown Coach 01's claim that Official 01 spoke to him about conduct but not specifically racial slurs lacks credibility.

Georgetown Coach 01's claim that he addressed the racial slur allegations with the team after the third quarter altercation also lacks credibility. While Georgetown Coach 01 claimed he addressed the allegations in a huddle after the altercation, no players recalled this occurring. In his own account, Georgetown Coach 01 only stated that he addressed his team by saying (1) the allegations better not be true; (2) that type of behavior is unacceptable; and (3) there was to be no talking about anything the rest of the game and that everyone was to keep their mouths shut. In a team meeting the following week, he asked if the allegations were true, received denials from the players, accepted them, and then said words to the effect of "I've got your back," with nothing more.

Georgetown Coach 02, when asked about the veracity of accusations, claimed that he never heard any epithets used, accepted denials, and defended Georgetown High players in his witness statement, stating unambiguously "[The use of the N-word by players] did not happen."

Based on this evidence, it is clear the Georgetown High coaching staff did not take Roxbury Prep's allegations seriously, and performed only the most cursory of investigations into the allegations. Their actions reinforced to Georgetown High players that there would be no significant investigation, no pressure to make any admission, and no repercussions so long as such racial epithets were not heard by or known to coaches or officials. The after-game meeting reinforced the clear message to the team that there would be no investigation and that the players would be defended by the coaches, again suggesting that coaches either did not believe or did not want to believe the allegations in the first place.

The lack of action from Georgetown School Administrator 01— who was the first Georgetown High employee to be made aware of the racial allegations— was equally concerning. Despite being told at halftime of the racial allegations regarding the Georgetown High team, Georgetown School Administrator 01 did not share this information with anyone. In fact, Georgetown School Administrator 01 did nothing at all with this information.

While the overall response from Georgetown High's administration was lacking, Georgetown School Administrator 02 at least took some actions when made aware of the racial allegations against the team. For example, Georgetown School Administrator 02 (1) moved back fans from the bench area after the incident with Roxbury Prep Coach 03; (2) asked parents in the surrounding area if they had heard anything; and (3) attempted to end the game after the third

quarter fight by talking to the game officials.²⁰ In light of the fact that Georgetown School Administrator 02 had only been employed by Georgetown High for a few weeks at this time, his actions were well intentioned and were necessarily limited by a lack of familiarity with students at Georgetown High.

- iii. Roxbury Prep coaches largely failed to deescalate tensions in the midst of complaints about racial slurs.

Roxbury Prep coaches exacerbated the clear tensions on the field—some of them racial tensions—from the beginning of the game, when they yelled at officials and loudly suggested that poor officiating was the product of racial bias or animus. While tensions were clearly high during the game, Roxbury Prep coaches appeared to have lost control during the fight between the players, rushing the field and laying hands on Georgetown High players (albeit in an apparent attempt to separate players from each other in the scrum); this almost certainly made a bad situation worse. Finally, Roxbury Prep Coach 05 exaggerated the allegations in his post-game statements on social media, publicly enflaming tensions.

d. Members of the Georgetown High Football Team Engaged in Unsportsmanlike Cheering as the Roxbury Prep Team Left the Field

At the end of the game, as the Roxbury Prep team left the field, a group of Georgetown High players stood at the top of the hill overlooking the field and parking lot—before entering the locker room—and gave an unsportsmanlike cheer. Witness accounts of this event range from nothing being said at all, to the cheer consisting of racial slurs. Foley Hoag finds that there was an unsportsmanlike cheer, despite reports from the majority of the Georgetown High team that nothing was said. Foley Hoag instead credits the plethora of Roxbury Prep witnesses and significant Georgetown High witnesses, namely two Georgetown School Administrators, who reported there was unsportsmanlike cheering at the end of the game from a group of players by the locker room.

Foley Hoag does not have a finding concerning what was said during the cheer, or if said cheer contained racial slurs. The varying reports from this incident were wide-ranging and contradictory. While some witness definitively heard racial slurs being said, other witnesses in the same vicinity heard nothing but a more general cheer. Even Roxbury Prep witnesses who reported hearing racial slurs gave differing versions as to what exactly was said.

²⁰ It appears that Georgetown School Administrator 02 did not have the authority to call off the game, as the game continued after Official 01 also met with Georgetown School Administrator 03 and Roxbury Prep Coaches, who indicated they wanted to keep playing.

APPENDIX

I. Transcript

GT Student X: Bro, your quarterback looks like ass.

RP Player A: Bro what're you [inaudible]

RP Player A: Bro you is not touching me like that Bro!

...

GT Student X: He asked if our team was racist.

RP Player B: [laughs]

RP Player A: They've been saying that N-word all game.

GT Student X: Actually?

RP Player A: Yea

GT Student: This team?

RP Player A: Yea, swear to God

GT Student X: Our team's too white for this bro.

RP Player A: Literally they –

GT Student X: We have the whitest team.

GT Student Y: We are in sixth grade, I don't know.

GT Student X: [GT Student Y], we have the whitest team ever.

...

GT Student X: Where are your guys' cheerleaders?

RP Player A: It's an away game.

In background, Coach 01: Step away from the camera.

GT Student X: There were cheerleaders last time.

RP Player A: At an away game?

GT Student X: Yeah.

RP Player A: [inaudible]

II. Facebook Post

4:28



I'm still numb, but this is America. The fact that there was nothing I could do to protect my boys hurt the most. I broke down, I watched racism ruin what's something that was supposed to be good to them, Friday night lights but instead we were ridiculed, called N bombs by players, faculty, staff, spectators and were taunted all night. I was approached by police for absolutely no reason. There were reporters wanting to interview us, these same racist people that waited for a reaction. It was all a set up, cruisers and wagons. I'm angry that to this day things like this still happen, feeling powerless in a lose lose situation. I couldn't protect them and it hurt. I could go anywhere and coach the game that I love, but at Roxbury Prep we will fight for what's right. NO ONE should ever experience what we experienced last night. Georgetown High School has ignited a fire in me that will never go out.

III. Game Screenshots



Screen capture from 3:09 mark of full game video, note the position of the Roxbury Cameraman and Bench.



Screen capture at 22:34 mark of full game video, note location of Roxbury Prep bench in relation to Georgetown High Spectators



Screen capture at 19:20 mark of full game video, note Roxbury Prep Cameraman.



Georgetown Player 07 chasing Roxbury Prep Player 06 to Roxbury sideline – Second Quarter, 17:22 mark of full game video.



Screenshot of start of third quarter altercation from full game video.



Third quarter altercation (cont.)



Third quarter altercation (cont.)



Screen capture of the last play of the game with “block in the back” from full game video.



Last play of the game (cont.)



Last play of the game (cont.)

