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This year, stories of injustice are all over our newsfeeds. The moment we go on social media, we are flooded with devastating stories. Students who can't play in their sports because of their faith, to Muslim's who can't practice their religion. We are being hit in the head with too much to handle but we are able to rise above it. Let's go to the story of Najah Aqeel. It was September 15, 2020 when Najah Aqeel, a 14 year old freshman, was told that she couldn't play in her volleyball match because she wore a hijab for religious reasons. The referee told her that the rule for all high school sports stated that no hair device can be more than 3 inches tall. They told Najah that she needed to fill out the paperwork that explained that she needed to wear her hijab prior to the game. Later, Najah and her coach both stated that even without the paperwork, she had still been allowed to play at other tournaments. The referee told her to take off her hijab or sit out. Najah decided to sit out the game because her faith was important. Wearing a hijab is something that Muslim women do to show their faith, and the fact that she was told she couldn't play, is heartbreaking. As a Muslim girl, although I don't wear hijab, seeing how others of my religion are treated brings me tears. When I read this, I realized how much discrimination there is in the world to people whose views are different from others. How do we rise above this? In Najah's case, she got her friends to understand the prejudice this rule brought and they signed a petition to change the law. She also spoke to the NFHS and shared her point of view on the topic. Sometimes just getting others to understand our perspective helps them look at it in a different way. And that starts with the actions we take. Instead of just posting Black Lives Matter and Stop Asian American Hate and being performative activists, actually getting out there and

making change. Even just standing up for someone who is being discriminated against or sharing your opinions with others. Trying to get them to understand what we believe while also making sure we're taking the actions of the future. It isn't about teaching a lesson on race because the school told you too, but about feeling strongly about something that you know you need to change it. When we put our minds to solving the issues of the present instead of just leaving it for generations to try and solve. It's not about what we inherit, but what we do to make sure everyone feels accepted. Making sure that we are upstanding citizens. It's just one small step that everyone can take to guarantee that one day we can live in a world where skin color is accepted, differences are a blessing and we all care for each other.