

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: FILE

FROM: Jeffrey Thomas, Ed. D., Executive Director of Human Resources

DATE: May 17, 2016

RE: INVESTIGATIVE REPORT RE Follow-up from WIAA investigation regarding coaches _____

I. SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT

Dr. J. Tim Mills, Superintendent of the Bellevue School District requested an additional inquiry into items identified in the WIAA Report on Bellevue Football conducted by Carl Blackstone and Robert Westinghouse. Specifically, I was asked to focus on three areas; 1) allegations that the head football coach "directed and encouraged football players to attend or take classes at the Academic Institute;" 2) that "District and BHS administrators and coaches cultivated a close relationship with the Academic Institute;" and 3) that "BHS Coaches received excessive payments for coaching high school football."¹

II. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

- a. Who, what, when, where, how.
- b. Identify a reference after each statement of fact.
- c. Identify the credible evidence that supports the factual summary.
(Attach exhibits).

On April 25, 2016 I interviewed Victor "Butch" Goncharoff, head football coach at Bellevue High School. In this interview I asked Goncharoff ten questions aligned with the three areas of the WIAA report referenced previously. My summary notes of the interview indicate cooperation from Goncharoff (Exhibit A). Through correspondence with Goncharoff and his legal counsel, Malaika Eaton, Exhibit A is an agreed upon record between Goncharoff and the District.

On May 2, 2016 I conducted a follow-up interview with Goncharoff for additional information (Exhibit B). Goncharoff continued to be cooperative and openly answered questions (Exhibit B). The summary notes in Exhibit B are an agreed upon record between Goncharoff and the District.

On May 6, 2016, I interviewed Pat Jones, assistant head football coach at Bellevue High School. In this interview I asked Jones six questions based upon information

¹ The report and its Exhibits are several hundred pages long. Only specific pages of the report are included in this review. The report in its entirety is available with appropriate redactions. Carl Blackstone and Robert Westinghouse are the authors of the report and conducted the investigation on behalf of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA).

04/2014	Revision of Interscholastic Activities Procedure 2151	(Exhibit AB)
8/18/2014	Training for Coaches, includes Conflict of Interest Policy 5251	Training Materials, sign in sheet (Exhibit Z)
8/17/2015	Training for Coaches, includes Conflict of Interest Policy 5251, verification of attendance	Training Materials, sign in sheet (Exhibits X, Y)
09/2015	Revision of Interscholastic Activities Procedure 2151	(Exhibit AB)

The adoption of Policy 5251 changed how the issue of paying coaches should be addressed. It is understandable how the practice was determined to not be in violation of policy in 2007 because there was no policy. When the Board of Directors adopted Policy 5251, a different set of rules had been established. Whether or not the coaches agree with the Policy is irrelevant. The fact that there is no previous analysis of the payment of coaches through the lens of this policy does not mean that the policy was not violated, but rather the District had not reviewed this long standing practice when the rules changed in 2012. In 2016 that review is taking place.

Because Policy 5251 is in the personnel section, it makes it very clear its application. The citation of the \$500 limit in Policy 2151 which is mostly aimed at students appears to be misaligned if it is indeed personnel guidance.

III. CONCLUSIONS

My conclusions are straight forward.

- 1) Allegations that the head football coach “directed and encouraged football players to attend or take classes at the Academic Institute.”

I believe this allegation is unfounded. The WIAA Report did not investigate closely enough where students actually took classes. The conclusions were based upon faulty reasoning and a misapplication of WIAA Rules.

- 2) Allegations that “District and BHS administrators and coaches cultivated a close relationship with the Academic Institute.”