

MEMORANDUMT 206.516.3800
F 206.516.3888

TO: John Miller
Assistant Executive Director
WIAA

Brian Smith
Assistant Executive Director
WIAA

FROM: Carl Blackstone
Robert Westinghouse

DATE: May 18, 2016

RE: WIAA Response to Bellevue School District Violation Report dated May 11, 2016

On March 22, 2016, Carl Blackstone and Robert Westinghouse submitted an Investigative report to the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (“WIAA”) relating to the Bellevue High School (“BHS”) football program. The WIAA Investigative Report (“Investigative Report”) contained findings that BHS and the Bellevue School District (“BSD”) had violated a number of WIAA rules. WIAA provided the Investigative Report to BSD on April 1, 2016. On May 11, 2016, BSD/BHS presented a WIAA Violation Report (“Violation Report” or “District’s Report”) to the KingCo League during a self-report hearing. On May 13, 2016, George Crowder, KingCo League President, requested that WIAA and its investigators evaluate the information contained in the BSD/BHS Violation Report.

The Violation Report identifies 10 allegations in the Investigative Report. The Violation Report provides substantive responses to only six of the allegations. BSD reports that it is continuing to investigate the remaining four violations and represented that it would respond by May 16, 2016. To our knowledge, BSD did not respond by that date.

In this memorandum the WIAA investigators will respond to the six allegations addressed in the Violation Report. The investigators will submit a supplemental response after BSD provides a substantive response to the four remaining allegations.

investigation, as it has now done in response to the Investigative Report. With all the facts, there is little doubt that the decision of the eligibility panel would have been different.

Finally, the fact that the panel was not fully informed can be blamed in part on BSD's failure to exercise proper oversight. If it did not choose to investigate this mid-year transfer when Mr. █████ registered, then certainly in June 2014, when the letter mailed to Mr. █████ at the above address was returned to BHS, BHS should have conducted a thorough investigation into the matter. Instead, BHS's inquiry was limited to contacting Mr. █████' mother who claimed that she and her son lived at the address and she agreed to produce a new lease agreement for the property. One week later Ms. █████ told BHS that she and her son were homeless. In light of this information, compliance with WIAA rules would dictate that BHS probe further by at least contacting the landlord and owner of unit L6 to determine if Mr. █████ and his mother had ever lived at that address. Had BHS undertaken this minimal effort, it would have discovered that Mr. █████ did not live at this address as he represented and that he had provided a false lease agreement in support of his enrollment.

c. █████

BSD agrees that █████ provided at least one false address. Moreover, BSD states that "BSD further investigated [other] addresses associated [with Mr. █████ which] led to a subsequent search through records storage and the discovery of athletic eligibility folders, which produced a finding that a number of addresses for [Mr. █████] caused additional questions to arise."⁴ This admission raises two concerns. First, Jeff Lowell had represented to the WIAA investigators that BSD had destroyed all records relating to residency for students who had graduated. (Investigative Report at 26 and Exhibit 40). Mr. █████ graduated from BHS in 2013. Other than the address used by Mr. █████ at the time of his graduation, BSD provided the WIAA investigators with no other addresses or any documentation relating to Mr. █████'s various residences during the time he attended BHS. The fact that BSD has now located "athletic eligibility folders" for Mr. █████ certainly calls into question the veracity of Mr. Lowell's representation that BSD had destroyed all such records. It also speaks volumes about BSD's lack of cooperation and obstruction with the WIAA's investigation.

The second and more pressing concern relates to the fact that BSD apparently failed to self-report Mr. █████'s false addresses as they were required to do so under WIAA Rule 28.1.0. Additionally the failure to self-report these violations also supports a finding that BSD failed to exercise proper oversight and monitor compliance with the WIAA rules.

⁴ BSD's report cites to exhibit 20 as supporting this statement. There does not appear to be any exhibit 20 attached to the report. The KingCo Committee should request that BSD provide the Committee with a copy of exhibit 20.