
 YARMUTH WILSDON PLLC

**INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
RE: BELLEVUE HIGH SCHOOL
FOOTBALL PROGRAM**

**Carl
Blackstone**

**Robert
Westinghouse**

c. Lack of Oversight by the District

With minimal cooperation from the District, our investigation has developed substantial evidence that several current and former BHS football players have used false addresses or other false information regarding their living situations. Further investigation, aided by District and BHS administrators and student cooperation, may well lead to additional examples of such cheating.

The investigation has not disclosed whether there is someone orchestrating or **masterminding this deception**, although there are obvious similarities among the separate cases. The evidence developed in this investigation, however, raises serious questions about why District administrators, BHS administrators, and coaches did not conduct thorough inquiries at the time these and other stellar football players arrived at BHS's door. We have identified no fewer than 42 players who have transferred into the Bellevue High School football program.³⁸ (Exhibit 8). Additionally, in 2006, Karin Cathey determined that 30 players lived outside the BHS attendance area. (Exhibit 24). Many of these players were extremely gifted athletes who started for the high school team and went on to earn Division I athletic scholarships.

Given the staggering number of football players who have transferred to BHS over the years, the District should have thoroughly investigated each player's residency and the circumstances surrounding the player's transfer to BHS. This was not the case. For more than a decade, even when rumors and allegations swirled, the investigative efforts were perfunctory at best. By any standard, this constitutes willful blindness. The failure to exercise appropriate oversight is systemic and begins at the top with Superintendent Mills. He was told shortly after taking office by a high level District employee that there were problems with the BHS football program that he needed to address. Superintendent Mills undertook no investigation and had no memory of this meeting. He was also told shortly after taking office by another district's school superintendent that he should conduct an investigation of the BHS football program. Although Dr. Mills claims that John Harrison undertook an investigation, Mr. Harrison did not confirm this and there is no documentation supporting such an investigation.

Dr. Mills also told us that in the fall of 2012, he had been approached by Mike Colbrese, the WIAA Executive Director, who mentioned rumors about the BHS football program. Again, according to Dr. Mills, no specifics were provided and he took no action. He also acknowledged that a "few community members" had raised issues about the BHS football program, but nothing specific was offered.

Finally, Dr. Mills acknowledged that he had received one or two anonymous letters about the program. One such letter, received in December 2012, contained a list of 20 players and alleged that they had been recruited to play football at BHS and that some of the players had used "a relative's address, or false addresses or used a subsidized rental." (Exhibit 32). Dr. Mills again claimed to have referred this to Mr. Harrison, who allegedly reported back that he had followed up on all the addresses and found no registration irregularities. It is not at all clear

³⁸ We have identified these players through our own investigative work. To date, the District has failed to provide us with a list of all current and former football players who transferred to BHS from outside the district. We assume that the total number of such players exceeds the 42 we have identified.