

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Riley, Mike (Michael N)" [REDACTED]
Subject: Athletics
Date: October 29, 2007 at 11:37:10 AM PDT
To: <[REDACTED]>, <[REDACTED]>, <[REDACTED]>, <[REDACTED]>, <[REDACTED]>, <[REDACTED]>
Cc: "Welch, Spencer H" <[REDACTED]>, "Howard, Sharon S" <[REDACTED]>

Greetings Booster Representatives,

First let me apologize for sending this to you later than I planned. I've been traveling more than expected and it's thrown me off schedule.

What you'll find below is my attempt to capture the outcomes of our meeting. I would like each of you to review the notes carefully and then get back to me with any corrections. As I explained during our meeting, I intend to use this document publicly to represent the views of each of the people with whom I've met.

Even if you think I've captured everything correctly, please let me know. I won't go public with this document until I've heard from all eight of you.

You'll see I've posted your comments on the document we used for our discussion. At the end of the six points, I've listed other comments I captured. Again, please feel free to add to or correct these as well.

Thanks in advance for your help.

Mike

On Monday, October 15th, two booster club representatives from each of our four high schools, Spencer Welch, and I met to discuss the WIAA's new policy about compensation/gifts for coaches and the school district's implementation and management of that policy.

The booster representatives from each school are listed below:

Belleve High School:	Tom Castle and Stephen Guzek
Interlake High School:	Guy Galland and Val Rabitoy
Newport High School:	Debbie Romero and Ann Imus
Sammamish High School:	Rich Mincie and Mark Stillwell

The group reviewed the communication to principals and athletic directors posted below, which reflects the responses of these two groups gleaned from earlier conversations with them.

The boosters' responses are noted in black. Athletic directors' responses are noted in blue. Principals' responses are noted in red.

Greetings Principals and Athletic Directors,

On Wednesday, September 19th, I met with an administrator from each of our four high schools to discuss the information about coaches' compensation that was agreed to by our athletic directors. Representing the schools were Sharon Collins from Interlake, Andrea Pfeifer from Sammamish, Bethany Spinler from Newport, and Keith Schacht from Bellevue. Sharon Howard and Spencer Welch also attended.

I asked the principals to review the summary previously approved by the athletic directors and to respond with any questions, concerns, or additions. Below you'll find a copy in blue font of the original document generated by the athletic directors. You'll find in red font my interpretation of the comments from the principals.

I'd like everyone to review the information very carefully and get back to me with either an approval of the wording or a correction. Make sure I get this right since I will be using this language to describe the position of both athletic directors and principals.

Points of Agreement:

- When considering whether coaches should be awarded additional money or other forms of compensation for their work as Bellevue coaches, we agreed that the terms "compensation" and "gift" are equivalent.

Principals in full agreement.

Boosters in full agreement.

- All four of you are in agreement that coaches should be allowed to receive gifts/additional compensation from boosters (or other benefactors) up to the amount suggested by the WIAA, which is \$500.00 per season. We all recognize that
 - \$500 is the limit and total for *all* gifts/compensation, whether the amount comes from one source or more than one source. In other words, fifty gifts of ten dollars each would put the coach at the limit.
 - For gifts other than cash, we would assume a cash-equivalent amount and count this toward the \$500 limit. A dinner for two, for example, might be worth \$100. That \$100 would count toward the \$500 limit.

Principals in full agreement.

The principals offered an additional comment under this section. They are concerned that the arrangement described above by which coaches may receive up to \$500 dollars in gifts/compensation from sources other than the school district is not consistent throughout the district for other employee groups. The principals believe that the school district should make an effort to provide such consistency.

I explained to the principals that should the Board of Directors go forward with an arrangement that allows coaches to receive gifts/compensation totaling \$500 per season, we would examine our policies to determine what, if anything, could or should be done for other employee groups. I went on to say because the issue has many implications, we were not in a position to promise a similar arrangement would be made for other groups.

Boosters in full agreement.

- While we have no intention of preventing anyone from approaching the board to ask for an exception to the guideline, the athletic directors favor wording that sends a clear signal that we do not expect there to be exceptions. We might say, for instance, that the board would only consider requests for exceptions in the "most unusual of circumstances."

The principals were in unanimous agreement with wording that "sends a clear signal that we do not expect there to be exceptions."

Tom Castle, BHS, was not in favor of language "that sends a clear signal that we do not expect there to be exceptions." Tom expressed that belief that coaches should be able to receive additional compensation, that restricting compensation to \$500 will result in mediocrity in coaching, and that it is reasonable for the board to consider a "single" presentation for increasing coaches' compensation. Tom emphasized a "single" presentation because he did not think the board should be harassed by multiple presentations pleading one coach's case.

Mark Stillwell and Rich Mincie, both from SHS, agreed with Tom Castle's position.

The remaining five representatives favored language that "sends a clear signal that we do not expect there to be exceptions."

- We are all clear that this guideline and discussion apply *only* to gifts/compensation given directly to coaches for their school-assigned coaching duties. We have no intention of changing practice in terms of boosters' support to teams and programs.

Principals in full agreement.

Boosters in full agreement.

- We all agree that boosters and other supporters may donate money to schools/programs to pay for *additional* coaches. Additional coaches would be hired by the district and be compensated in accordance with the district salary schedule for coaches.

Principals in full agreement.

Guy Galland and Val Rabitoy, both from IHS, offered "strong, vehement objection" to allowing boosters to fund additional coaches. They believe each team should be coached by only the number of coaches allocated by the school district.

The remaining six boosters were in agreement with allowing boosters and other supporters to donate money to pay for *additional* coaches with the understanding that these coaches would be hired by the district and compensated in accordance with the district salary schedule for coaches.

- We all agree that the school district will not interfere with coaches' opportunities for employment outside of their regular school-assigned coaching duties. If, for example, a coach were to run a camp sponsored by an outside agency, the district would not be involved in the administration of the program, including setting salaries for the employees of the camp.

While the principals agreed that the school district probably has no right to interfere with the coaches' opportunities for employment outside of their regular school-assigned coaching duties, they were concerned about the potential for inequities among schools when booster groups and other supporters can provide "backdoor" opportunities for coaches that, despite their acceptable legal status, do in effect serve as rewards for their school-assigned coaching. The principals were especially concerned about these opportunities because they believe it is highly unlikely, if not impossible, for our four school communities to provide the same financial opportunities to their coaches.

Despite their discomfort, every principal expressed the understanding that there was nothing the schools or the district could do to prevent coaches from participating in employment outside their school-assigned duties.

The boosters were in unanimous agreement with this item but suggested that only the first sentence was needed: "We all agree that the school district will not interfere with coaches' opportunities for employment outside of their regular school-assigned coaching duties."

Additional Questions and Comments

The discussion with the boosters surfaced a few questions and a number of "for the record comments."

Questions

1. May boosters send coaches for training and other professional development opportunities?
2. Do job descriptions exist for coaches?
3. How will we sort out gifts associated with a personal relationship from gifts that serve as a reward or as compensation for coaching?

Comments

From the entire group: We all wish we could pay coaches more.

Tom Castle: We are establishing rules for the Bellevue School District, within the Bellevue School District, rules that are stricter than WIAA's regulation. Private schools will do as they wish and, as a result, we are handing them a competitive advantage. We are putting our schools at a disadvantage. We are agreeing only about what Bellevue schools will do, not what other schools will do, public or private, and we need to question why we'd impose rules on ourselves that other schools and districts will not face.

Stephen Guzek: Are we placing ourselves at a disadvantage because we're taking this action? How will people interpret this policy with integrity, not just in Bellevue, but throughout the state.

Guy Galland: We are dealing with high school sports, not college athletics, not people who get paid extraordinary amounts. All coaches go above and beyond the call of duty. My own son played on a weak high school team but now plays college ball in a Division One school. Compensation doesn't mean much to me. Coaching is something you do because you love it.

Mark Stillwell: I agree with Tom Castle. Coaches should be paid more and I wish we could find a way to do that. We should be able to go to the board, we should be able to pay coaches more.

Rich Mincie: Coaches are underpaid. I'm in favor of paying coaches \$3,000 to \$4,000 more. I am happy with the likely decision that we can pay for additional coaches. At Sammamish, this is the bigger issue. We want quality instruction for our athletes, and having more coaches allows us to provide better, more personalized instruction.

Debbie Romero: Asks the group, "Have other schools been pressured to pay coaches more because of Bellevue's practice?" Others all respond no.

Val Rabitoy: How do we keep good coaches over time. We have constant turnover and that prevents us from building strong programs. Compensation would help. I want to pay coaches more, but I want compensation to be equitable across all schools.

Tom Castle: For the record, Butch never pressured us for pay. Also, I agree with Stephen Guzek about letting the WIAA rule work. Bellevue need not take any other action.

Ann Imus and Debbie Romero: The process you're using to work through this problem is very good and we support it fully. You're trying to establish rules across all the schools. Boosters will

then still have to take responsibility to do what they need to do. Also, we lose good coaches and wish we could pay them more. A merit pay system would be great. It would be nice to be creative.