

# Deposition of Michael A. Colbrese

## Goncharoff v. Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, et al.

June 13, 2017



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1 **Q. And you mentioned at the end of your answer**  
2 **that John Olson led the selection process, but then**  
3 **there were interviews. Were you involved with the**  
4 **interviews?**

5 A. Yes.

6 **Q. And who was interviewed?**

7 A. I wish I could remember all of the names.  
8 What happened is on the day of the interviews, one of  
9 the parties backed out. And it was a firm out of  
10 Bellevue actually, who had done work with, I think it  
11 was the Mead School District.

12 **Q. Mead?**

13 A. Mead, yes, and some other school districts.  
14 So he -- his firm had knowledge of schools, but he  
15 wasn't an educator. The other, again, I don't  
16 remember the name of the firm, but she -- she was  
17 interviewed, and then -- and then Blackstone and  
18 Westinghouse.

19 **Q. All lawyers?**

20 A. Yes.

21 **Q. Do you remember when those interviews took**  
22 **place?**

23 A. I don't.

24 **Q. And Mr. Blackstone and Mr. Westinghouse were**  
25 **among the people who had reached out asking to do the**

1 A. Yes.

2 **Q. And had a background in criminal**  
3 **investigations because of that?**

4 A. Yes.

5 **Q. Were you aware that they had worked on**  
6 **hundreds of criminal cases over the years?**

7 A. No, I wasn't aware of how extensive that  
8 background was.

9 **Q. Did you feel that the WIAA needed people**  
10 **with long experience in criminal investigations to do**  
11 **this investigation?**

12 A. No.

13 **Q. Had you ever selected a former federal**  
14 **prosecutor for other WIAA investigations?**

15 A. No.

16 **Q. The three investigations that you talked**  
17 **about, Eastside Catholic, Bishop Blanchett and**  
18 **Lakeside, are those the only other WIAA investigations**  
19 **that you are aware of?**

20 A. No. There was one that was done about --  
21 about four or five years ago with the Taholah School  
22 District.

23 **Q. How do you spell that?**

24 A. T-A-H-O-L-A-H.

25 **Q. Where is the Tahola School District?**

1 **investigation?**

2 A. I don't remember how -- how Mr. Olson found  
3 them, if they had contacted him, contacted our office,  
4 or -- or how they were -- they were found.

5 **Q. What did you understand during this, you**  
6 **know, roughly, let's say August-September 2015, about**  
7 **Mr. Blackstone and Mr. Westinghouse's professional**  
8 **background?**

9 A. They were retired federal prosecutors. They  
10 had done work with the Tacoma School District, and the  
11 Seattle School District. And at that time the most  
12 recent work they had done was with the situation with  
13 the Garfield music teacher who had been released  
14 because of something that had happened when -- I think  
15 it was the choir, Garfield High School choir was on  
16 tour and something had happened, and she had been  
17 released.

18 **Q. And did you understand that that was the**  
19 **work that they had done for the Seattle schools, was**  
20 **this recent work on the Garfield music teacher?**

21 A. I knew that was one. I thought there was  
22 more, but that might -- but I knew that was one of the  
23 pieces of work they had done.

24 **Q. And did you understand that they had had,**  
25 **both of them, long careers as federal prosecutors?**

1 A. It's down on the coast, kind of over by  
2 Olympia, further west.

3 **Q. For any of the previous WIAA investigations,**  
4 **had you ever selected somebody with a background**  
5 **primarily in criminal work?**

6 A. No.

7 **Q. And before the Bellevue football**  
8 **investigation had you ever released the names of the**  
9 **investigators to the press at the outset of the**  
10 **investigation?**

11 A. No.

12 MR. CALFO: Object to the form.

13 BY MS. EATON:

14 **Q. Once -- let me back up. We were talking**  
15 **about the interviews of Mr. Blackstone and**  
16 **Mr. Westinghouse and the other candidate. After the**  
17 **interviews what process was used to reach a conclusion**  
18 **about who should be hired?**

19 A. We looked at the resumes. And there were, I  
20 think there were four of us on the interview team. I  
21 had a board member, and John Olson, and then John  
22 Miller and me, looked at the resumes again, and then  
23 just discussed what each person had indicated during  
24 the interview.

25 **Q. And did everybody agree to the ultimate**