



12111 NE First Street, Bellevue, Washington 98005 /P.O. Box 90010
Bellevue, Washington 98009-9010

Friday, October 23, 2015

Dear Bellevue High Football Families:

On August 22, 2015, the Seattle Times published an article entitled "Bellevue High's Football Success aided by 'Diploma Mill'" which raised allegations against the Bellevue High School football program. As a result, Bellevue High School and the Bellevue School District made a request to the WIAA to conduct a fact finding investigation specific to the allegations raised in the article. There were five specific allegations shared with the WIAA that defined the scope of the investigation. These were:

1. Investigating whether coaches directed athletes to attend the Academic Institute
2. Investigating whether boosters had paid for tuition of athletes at Academic Institute
3. Investigating whether athletes used false addresses to gain eligibility
4. Investigating whether athletes received subsidized housing to gain eligibility
5. Investigating whether coaches are coordinating tuition payments for athletes

Concerns about the method and scope of the investigation have been expressed by members of the Bellevue High School community to our School Board and District administrators. Concerns included the methods employed by one of the investigators working for the firm hired by WIAA. The District contacted WIAA and shared these concerns. The WIAA has agreed to prohibit this individual from further participation in the investigation.

Additionally, to protect the privacy of our students, the WIAA has agreed that all requests for records or documents will be directed to myself, John Harrison, Executive Director of Schools. I will be consulting with District's General Counsel's Office to ensure that any and all disclosures comply with FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and other federal and state laws, and District policy.

In order to ensure that the rights of our students and employees are protected, all requests to interview District employees or students will be also be directed to me. I

will consult with the District's General Counsel and contact employees in advance of any contact by the investigators.

Finally, my office will ensure that the District receives the written consent of each student and their parent/guardian prior to arranging any interviews with the investigators. No student should be contacted directly by anyone other than Bellevue High School administration or myself regarding this investigation. If this does happen, please contact either Lauren McDaniel, Athletic Director or Scott Powers, Principal immediately.

It is the District's intent that the WIAA investigation be completed fairly, thoroughly, professionally and in a timely fashion. The Bellevue High School football program is an incredibly successful program and we remain fully supportive and appreciative of the coaching staff, parents, boosters and especially our student athletes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Harrison". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John R. Harrison
Executive Director of Schools

Cc Scott Powers, Principal, Bellevue High School
Lauren McDaniel, Athletic Director, BHS