

November 16, 2016

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Investigative Summary

Dunbar High School – Football Team / Ineligible Player

On Monday October 31, 2016 the Office of Safety & Security was asked to investigate the issue where the Dunbar High School football team played an academically ineligible student athlete, in a football game against Belmont High School on Friday October 28, 2016 against the directive issued by Chrystal Phillips, Principal of Dunbar High School. The aforementioned actions and decisions of the coaching staff disqualified the Dunbar High School football team from competing in the 2016 Ohio High School Athletic Association's State football playoffs.

On Monday October 31, 2016 I made contact with the following Dayton Public School staff and scheduled in-person interviews; Melanie Walter, Principal of Belmont High School; Earl White, Athletic Director – Belmont High School; Chrystal Phillips, Principal of Dunbar High School; Peter Pullen, Athletic Director – Dunbar High School, Darren Powell, Head Football Coach – Dunbar High School; LaMark Barker, Athletic Director, Dayton Public Schools.

All interviews were conducted in my office within the Safety & Security offices. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Coach Darran Powell, (9:48 AM) (see full statement attached)

Coach Powell acknowledged that he had been told by his principal, Chrystal Phillips that was academically ineligible and that she told him not to play him. Coach acknowledged that he spoke to that he was ineligible and that he would not be playing against Belmont. Coach acknowledged that he spoke with mother and told her that was ineligible to play in the game that night. In Coach Powell's statement he acknowledges that he did not start because "It was more so Ms. Phillips said don't play him". Coach stated "I should've listened to my principal and not played him because she was adamant about not playing him and that's what I did at the beginning of the game, not play him".

Chrystal Phillips, Principal Dunbar High School, (10:29 AM) (see full statement attached)

Chrystal Phillips stated that this was brought to her attention on Friday October 28, 2016 at 4 PM by Melanie Water, Principal of Belmont High School. She immediately contacted Darran Powell, Head Coach for the Dunbar Football team to discuss the matter. At approximately 4:15 PM she called Peter Pullen, Athletic Director for Dunbar High School but could not get in touch with him so she sent him a text message at 4:16 PM "call me". At 6:20 PM she sent another text message to Peter Pullen regarding a bus for the band. She received text back from Pullens

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at 6:37 PM. She sent another text message to Pullens at 6:39 PM "I already took care of that what did you say to Mark about _____" at 6:45 PM Ms. Phillips text to Coach Darren Powell "Don't put _____ in the game until I tell you can, He is ineligible". At 7:01 PM Ms. Phillips text "He is ineligible!!!!" at 7:01 PM "I'm done". At 7:15 PM Peter Pullen responded, "Just found out he is eligible from the state". Ms. Phillips responded at 7:20 PM "Don't tell anyone else that", Who told they could _____ in?

Ms. Phillips texted at 8:03 PM, Who told y'all to put him in the game!!!! Why didn't y'all listen to me!! Uncle Alfred Powell texted "I'm in the booth Pullen must have gave the green light."

Ms. Phillips texted " He just fucked us watch", Uncle Alford Powell texted, " Pullen and Mark gave the green light, yes the shit was due last week. Lil Al texted, "Mark wanna c uncle deek". Uncle Alford Powell texted "Okay", "We have to let Belmont win because they will bring up the issue that he was ineligible last week." Lil Al texted "That shit will still get out"

Ms. Phillips stated " I gave them a direct order and it wasn't followed and that's why we are in this position today, I'm disappointed in my staff".

Melanie Walter, Principal Belmont High School, (11:02 AM) (see full statement attached)

"It was brought to my attention on a rumor going around Friday October 28, 2016 afternoon at Belmont High School". I called Chrystal Phillips, Principal of Dunbar High School and told her that Dunbar's quarterback _____ was ineligible to play in tonight's game.

While standing on the playing field (not sure of the time) LaMark looked at the score board and said, "the best thing that could happen for him would be that Belmont High School win the game".

LaMark Baker, Athletic Director, Dayton Public Schools (3:37 PM) (see full statement attached)

Mr. Baker stated that the matter of Dunbar potentially having an ineligible player was brought to his attention prior to the start of the game between Belmont and Dunbar. He stated that Coach Darren Powell also came up to him stating that he has the report card and _____ is eligible. I immediately called Ms. Phillips and asked her if she had any information about an ineligible player? And did see receive a phone call? Mr. Baker asked Ms. Phillips again, " was she aware of this ineligible player, she replied "yes, But what did Pete (Pullen) say?

AD Pullen walked up to Mr. Baker on the field with a piece of paper in hand with the students GPA calculations on it stating that he _____ is eligible. We went to Mr. Bakers office where we continued to go thru the calculations, and Mr. Baker called a Colleague in Columbus, Ohio to get his take on the numbers, grades and the process because he has been an AD in Columbus for several years.

Pullen continued to express that _____ was eligible and left the office to go back to the field. When Mr. Baker finished with the Columbus AD it was determined that _____ was ineligible. Mr. Baker went out to the field and told Pullen that _____ was ineligible.

On Monday October 31, 2016 or the weekend prior the Dunbar coaching staff had written a letter of appeal (see attached) to the Ohio High School Athletic Association without the permission of either Chrystal Phillips or Peter Pullen and typed their names on the signature line. All parties traveled to Columbus, Ohio that day and argued the appeal, unsuccessfully.

Conclusion:

The Dunbar High School football coaching staff were made aware that _____ was academically ineligible as demonstrated by the fact the Ms. Phillips, the Principal notified the head coach, Darren Powell and the High School Athletic Director, Peter Pullen in a verbal statement and supported by text messages between all three. She further gave them an order, DO NOT PLAY HIM!

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Both Powell and Pullen refused to accept the fact the their superior had notified them that the student (_____) athlete ineligible continued to "Shop around to other individuals until they got the answer that they wanted, even though it was the wrong answer".

It is demonstrated through other text messages that other members of the coaching staff knew that _____ was ineligible including the week before in a game against Cincinnati Taft.

LaMark Baker, being new to the Dayton Public School District as the Athletic Director had received training from the OHSAA regarding the calculations but had not had any experience in dealing with the grade calculations of student in a block schedule and was pushed and pulled by an experienced AD in rushing to a decision. To his credit he reached out to a colleague of another school district and got the correct decision.

I find that the entire coaching staff of the Dunbar High School football team and the Athletic Director of the school failed this student athlete, _____ and the football team for the sake of sports (football) above academics.



Jamie L. Bullens

Executive Director
Officer of safety & Security