

May 27, 2016

Bellevue Wolverine Football Community

Attached is a May 27, 2016 letter I received today from the Bellevue School District. The letter is informing me that they have decided not to renew my contract for the upcoming school year and that I am to return my keys by next Wednesday June 1, 2016 to our athletic director. Further, the investigation letter of Dr. Thomas dated May 17, 2016 has determined that I violated BSD policies for actions I have participated in during the summer since 2009. As someone who started as a coach back with BHS back in the fall of 1982, I am naturally very disappointed and honestly rather disgusted with my long time fall employer's actions in this matter and how they are handling this.

During the meeting, I pointed out to Dr. Thomas that last week when I asked our athletic director if I should hand out the football gear and proceed with spring practice, Ms. McDaniel told me yes and that I would be continuing with coaching. I did as directed. Naturally this is in direct opposition to the intent of the letter received today from Dr. Thomas. Dr. Thomas informed me at the end of the meeting that BSD "may" now have to change the letter given this new information. I understood that to mean changing it from a non-renewal of contract into a termination letter. I do not know when that will or will not happen and I am again in limbo.

Today's letter from BSD actually proves what I have been telling them for years. I am NOT an employee of the Bellevue School District in the summer. I am a seasonal employee and I am an employee during the Fall season. For them to argue that because I (or any BSD employee) make any money or hire any other fall coaches in the summer time (June and July) that I have violated their Conflict of Interest Policy is not a correct interpretation of the Conflict of Interest Policy. For years we have asked BSD to make us employees in the summer and to pay us for the work that we do. Each time they have refused to do so (including this past fall when we asked yet again during our union contract negotiations). They have refused to pay for work in the summer, they have declined to provide any required tasks, or obligations for their coaches in the summer. If BSD truly felt that my role as a coach for the 2015/2016 season did not include the upcoming summer per the BCA contract, then how could their letter today make any sense given they are telling me they are not renewing me for the season that starts this fall (2016/2017) but I am to turn in my keys on Wednesday June 1, 2016 because I am not being renewed for this fall? They cannot have it both ways. What this letter proves is that they have understood all along that my duties for the fall season as a coach do NOT include any required duties in the summer nor are they paying me for the summer. Why? Because I am not an employee of BSD in the summer. That "position" for me right now would start in August. This

period from next Tuesday up to and including July 31, 2016 is not a time period where I am employed or paid by BSD and they know it.

I will continue to fight. This is wrong. What is so ironic is just last week while sitting on a selection committee for the hiring of another sport's head coaching job, the applicant asked what he was and was not allowed to do in the summer with regard to him having camps and clinics. Our BHS athletic director told him that he could have his own company and run his camps and clinics through that, or he could also run his camps and clinics through the booster club in order to get a more affordable gym rental rate. Our athletic director was telling a potential head coach in our school less than one week ago, in my presence, to do exactly what I have been told to do by BSD since 2007. Yet Butch is being fired and I am not being renewed for doing precisely what it is that is still being recommended as the way to run camps and clinics in the summer by BSD today to potential job applicants. I have attached two emails from the two other selection committee members who were in the room that day with our athletic director. Both have granted their permission for me to provide this information, and the mother of the student who wrote granted permission for her child's name to be provided without redaction. They both confirm what the BHS athletic director represented as the school district approved action. It is important to note that our athletic directors are the persons who assist in the annual coaches training on what is and is not allowed by current BSD policies and procedures.

In closing, back in 2007 the Superintendent Dr. Mike Riley conducted an incredibly detailed process to make sure all the schools in his district were seeing things the same way. It involved all four principals, all four athletic directors and 8 booster club members (two from each high school). Dr. Riley was proactive and on top of things. Today our Superintendent and school board seem to be far more reactive and would rather tell people they are guilty of something after the fact, following a very limited and poor explanation of potential issues, rather than making sure in advance that all are on the same page. If BSD did such a great job of explaining their new "conflict of interest" policy and how they were going to interpret it even for non-certificated seasonal employees (i.e. coaches), then why have so many coaches in BSD continued to participate in camps and clinics in the summer? Why then are current applicants for head coaching jobs being advised even to this day in BSD that creating their own company to run their summer camps and clinics through is recommended? Or that running their summer camps and clinics through their booster club in order for the coach to get a better rate on his/her gym space is also a good way to go. Is BSD saying that specific school board approval was provided for the baseball coach to do hitting lessons last summer? Did all the BSD basketball coaches get specific prior school board approval to run a camp where athletes were charged a fee for attending the camp two summers ago? Given many things like that did not happen, are we about to have to fire many of our BSD athletic coaches as clearly this rule interpretation of the BSD Conflict of Interest Policy cannot only apply to Butch Goncharoff and

Pat Jones? My answer is not that other coaches need to be fired as well, it is that the persons who have decided to interpret the policy in this manner with regard to myself and Butch need to reevaluate their decision(s) here. I have heard the school board say that they don't want to hurt kids. On that we can completely agree.

Pat Jones

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Jones', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Attachments

May 27, 2016 letter from Jeff Thomas

Email from Karen Prins

Email from Kathryn Roberts