

Dear Bellevue School Board,

The KingCo Conference Self Report Committee has looked extensively at the information that has come out of the reports of the Wiaa investigation and the BSD report. Wiaa regulations have been violated by the Bellevue Football Program and the Wolverine Football Booster Club.

We believe this should be the beginning of an extensive effort by the Bellevue School District to take serious action to ensure that Bellevue High School runs a football program that is beyond ethical question. The history of the school districts' lack of an in-depth response to serious rumors and allegations regarding the circumstances of the unprecedented number of star athletes transferring into the program has been apparent for years. The out of district transfer players are the true legacy of the Bellevue football dynasty. We believe that the coaches, and particularly the head coach, are the first in line to know who their players and families are, where they reside, and that there is no question that outside influences have had no impact on their decision to change high schools. The coaches are in the best position to monitor their program and should be held to the highest standard to lead it in a spirit of fair play and respect for all other programs across the state. In our viewpoint, this responsibility has intentionally been avoided by the Bellevue coaches for a number of years.

We're concerned that a culture exists within the Bellevue High School football community that encourages individuals and/or groups to covertly assist families and individuals to circumvent regulations in an effort to create a national championship caliber program. The negative impact this has had on the other high school football programs within the Bellevue School District, within the KingCo Conference, and across the state is significant and can only be described as a serious lack of regard for honest competition and respect for competing within the spirit of the rules that govern high school football, and has created a widespread and unfortunate feeling of animosity toward those associated with Bellevue football. Winning, above all else, seems to be the most important value of the Bellevue Football Program and it has tremendously impacted the way it is viewed by other programs in Washington State.

BSD officials have suggested that anonymous reports and unidentified individuals who speak out are either not credible, or the reports do not call for follow up due to the anonymous nature of the allegations reported. We believe the current culture has created an atmosphere in which individuals feel fearful and resistant of talking freely about their ethical concerns and that reporting potential violations could result in serious potential repercussions by those so strongly invested in maintaining a perennial state championship program. With the repeated allegations beginning as early as 2006 causing an internal investigation of the football program, which appears to have had no visible follow up despite the investigators concerns about perceived recruiting, and continuing with the silence of the players and families in the current investigation, we strongly urge the Bellevue School District to continue to investigate all concerns that have been raised

about student transfers, players using false addresses and recruiting practices, and to take immediate and strong steps to ensure that guidelines and policies are developed and adhered to by the coaches, administrators and others associated with Bellevue football throughout the program and football community.

We speak from a viewpoint of the many individuals who have expressed objections of the practices of this program over the years, for the communities and schools that have lost opportunities due to their athletes leaving to go to Bellevue High School under questionable circumstances, and most importantly, for the student athletes on all teams who know that the playing field is severely tilted against them as they line up to play a quasi-college team whose number one measure of success each year is whether they win the state championship. Anything less appears to be unacceptable and is protected by those connected in various ways to the program, and the systemic and unprecedented pattern of questionable transfers, as well as those actions identified in the Wiaa investigation will undoubtedly continue unless there is strong action taken by the leadership within the Bellevue School District.

Sincerely,

The Kingco Conference Self Report Committee

George Crowder, Skyline  
Yonni Mills, Bothell  
Greg Hart, Mount Si  
John Appelgate, Redmond  
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