



August 22, 2018

Mr. Matt Arnold, Principal  
Winter Park High School  
2100 Summerfield Rd  
Winter Park, Florida 32792

Dear Mr. Arnold:

**Subject: Winter Park High School – FHSAA Findings Notification – Football**

On behalf of the FHSAA, I would like to express our gratitude for the cooperation of Winter Park High School (WPHS) and the Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) with resolving eligibility issues surrounding the football program at WPHS. Specifically, Mr. Matt Arnold (Principal), Mr. Michael Brown (AD) and Mr. Doug Patterson (Sr. Administrator for Athletics and Activities) for taking the time to meet with FHSAA staff on Tuesday, August 21, 2018 and make pertinent information available in regard to the eligibility of the student-athletes in question.

The Florida High School Athletic Association appreciates your efforts to make sure the student-athletes in our state all receive equal and fair opportunities.

The following information is organized as follows:

- I. **Background Summary / Findings of Fact**
- II. **Pertinent Bylaws, Policies and Administrative Procedures**
- III. **Corrective Action(s)**
- IV. **Violations & FHSAA Actions**

**I. Background Summary / Findings of Fact**

Based on the written communication received from your school and the facts from our conversation, we find the following to be fact:

*From the spring of 2018 through the beginning of fall sports for the 2018-19 school year, WPHS received multiple transfers/new enrollments into the school. In reviewing the enrollment documents, concerns surfaced for several of the student-athletes. Mr. Brown, after speaking with Mr. Arnold, reached out to the district office for assistance in verifying the enrollment status of the student-athletes in question. WPHS decided to restrict the student-athletes in question, withholding participation in interscholastic athletic contests until a final eligibility determination could be made.*

*Mr. Arnold, Mr. Brown and Mr. Patterson met with FHSAA staff member, Mr. Craig Damon, and the following consensus was reached:*

**Facts:** This student-athlete attended [REDACTED] during the 2017-18 school year under the [REDACTED] program. However, a lease was discovered indicating a home was leased by the mother of the student-athlete with a term of April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018. The residence is zoned for [REDACTED]

**Findings:** In accordance with FHSAA Bylaw 9.1.2.2, false information was provided to the district to gain enrollment in a school the student was not zoned for.

██████████  
**Facts:** On April 2, 2018, enrollment documents were submitted to WPHS indicating the student-athlete resided at ██████████, which is zoned for WPHS. A copy of a lease was provided indicating ██████████ was the landlord/owner of the property. ██████████'s son is a member of the WPHS football program therefore making ██████████ a representative of the school's athletic interest.

**Findings:** In accordance with FHSAA Policy 37.2.1, the student-athlete's family leased a home from a representative of the school's athletic interest.

██████████  
**Facts:** A copy of a lease was provided during the enrollment of this student-athlete. The lease appears to have been altered. The name at the top of the lease is a different font; other areas on the lease show signs of alterations. WPHS has requested the original lease, but, as of August 21, 2018, it has not been provided.

**Findings:** In accordance with FHSAA Bylaw 9.1.2.2, false information was provided to the district to gain enrollment in a school the student was not zoned for.

██████████  
**Facts:** On March 27, 2018, enrollment documents were submitted to WPHS indicating the student resided at ██████████, which is zoned for WPHS. A copy of a lease was provided indicating ██████████ as the landlord. ██████████'s son is a member of the WPHS football program therefore making ██████████ a representative of the school's athletic interest.

**Findings:** In accordance with FHSAA Policy 37.2.1, the student-athlete's family leased a home from a representative of the school's athletic interest.

## II. Pertinent Bylaws, Policies and Administrative Procedures

The above-stated facts, as you have given them, are controlled by the following Bylaws, Policies and Administrative Procedures.

**Bylaw 3.5.1 Administrative Control.** A member school must control its interscholastic athletic programs in accordance with the regulations of the Association. Responsibility for this control rests with the principal, who is responsible for the administration of all aspects of the school's interscholastic athletic programs.

**Bylaw 3.5.2 Compliance with Rules.** A member school must comply with all bylaws and other rules of the Association. The school must monitor its athletic programs to assure compliance with all bylaws and regulations must identify and report to the FHSAA Office instances in which compliance has not been achieved and must take appropriate corrective actions regarding such instances of non-compliance. Staff members, student-athletes, and other individuals and groups representing, supporting or promoting the school's athletic interests must comply with applicable bylaws and rules. The school is responsible for such compliance.

**9.1.2.2 Falsification of Information.** A student and/or parent/legal guardian appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction who falsifies information to gain eligibility shall be declared ineligible to represent any member school for a period of one year from the date of discovery.

**36.2.3 Impermissible Benefit.** An "impermissible benefit" is any arrangement, assistance or benefit that is not offered or generally made available to all students and/or their families who apply to or attend a school, or that otherwise is prohibited by FHSAA rules. Receipt of a benefit by a student-athlete or his/her family is not a violation of FHSAA rules if it is demonstrated that the same benefit is generally available to the school's students or family members and is not based in any way on athletic interest, potential or performance. See Policy 37.

### **37.2 IMPERMISSIBLE BENEFIT**

**37.2.1 General Regulation.** No school employee, athletic department staff member, representative of the school's athletic interests or third parties, such as an independent person, business or organization, may be

involved, directly or indirectly, in giving an impermissible benefit to any student or any member of his/her family for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics, or to any student-athlete who already attends a school.

**37.2.2 Specific Prohibitions.** Specifically prohibited arrangements, assistance or benefits include, but are not limited to, the following:

**37.2.2.1** School-based financial assistance of any kind that exceeds the amount for which a student has been approved by an independent financial needs assessment company that is recognized by the FHSAA or otherwise is in excess of any supplemental assistance provided by a school to each and every student who qualifies for financial assistance.

**37.2.2.2** Cash or like items, such as credit cards, debit cards, gift cards, gift certificates, coupons or vouchers.

**37.2.2.3** Gift of clothing, equipment, merchandise or other tangible items.

**37.2.2.4** Loans or assistance in securing a loan of any kind.

**37.2.2.5** Payment for any work or service that is not performed or that is in excess of the amount normally paid for such work or service.

**37.2.2.6** Free or reduced-cost transportation.

**37.2.2.7** Living on a full- or part-time basis, regardless of whether rent is paid, with any school employee, athletic department staff member, representative of the school's athletic interests.

**37.2.2.8** Free or reduced-cost rent for housing, vehicles or other items.

**37.2.2.9** Full or partial payment of moving expenses or assistance of any kind with an actual physical move.

**37.2.2.10** Employment or assistance in securing employment or contractual arrangement of any kind for which compensation may be paid.

**37.2.2.11** Free or reduced costs to attend a sport or skills camp.

**37.2.2.12** Any other form of arrangement, assistance, discount or benefit that is not generally available to other students in the school or their families or that is based in any way on athletic ability

**Policy 45 Monetary Penalties and Administrative Fees**

**Policy 45.1 Monetary Penalty Schedule.** The following monetary penalties are generally assessed member schools for the most common rules violations. This schedule is not all inclusive and does require the Executive Director to determine monetary penalties for violations not specifically covered herein. In all cases, these amounts are minimums and may be increased relative to the severity of the violation. The following chart is for reference only, when a conflict in language occurs the policies or administrative procedures will take precedence.

**III. Corrective Action(s)**

1. OCPS is amending enrollment packets to include an option for indicating plans to participate in extracurricular activities.
2. OCPS has alerted registrars of items to be aware of during the enrollment process at a school.

**IV. Violations & FHSAA Actions**

In accordance with FHSAA Bylaws and Policies, staff has identified and assessed the following violations and actions, respectively:

1. **Violation:** WPHS student-athlete [REDACTED] falsified information to gain enrollment in a school the student was not zoned for.

**FHSAA Action:** Student-athlete [REDACTED] is ineligible for a period of one year. In accordance with FHSAA Bylaw 9.1.2.2, a student and/or parent/legal guardian appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction who falsifies information to gain eligibility shall be declared ineligible to represent any member school for a period of one year from the date of discovery. **Expiration: August 21, 2019.**

2. **Violation:** WPHS student-athlete [REDACTED] accepted an impermissible benefit from a representative of the school's athletic interest.

**FHSAA Action:** Student-athlete [REDACTED] is ineligible for a period of one year. In accordance with FHSAA Policy 37.2.1, a student and/or parent/legal guardian appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction who accepts an impermissible benefit may be declared ineligible for interscholastic competition at all member schools for one or more years. **Expiration: March 23, 2019.**

3. **Violation:** WPHS student-athlete [REDACTED] falsified information to gain enrollment in a school the student was not zoned for.

**FHSAA Action:** Student-athlete [REDACTED] is ineligible for a period of one year. In accordance with FHSAA Bylaw 9.1.2.2, a student and/or parent/legal guardian appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction who falsifies information to gain eligibility shall be declared ineligible to represent any member school for a period of one year from the date of discovery. **Expiration: August 21, 2019.**

4. **Violation:** WPHS student-athlete [REDACTED] accepted an impermissible benefit from a representative of the school's athletic interest.

**FHSAA Action:** Student-athlete [REDACTED] is ineligible for a period of one year. In accordance with FHSAA Policy 37.2.1, a student and/or parent/legal guardian appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction who accepts an impermissible benefit may be declared ineligible for interscholastic competition at all member schools for one or more years. **Expiration: March 27, 2019.**

The decision by this office may be appealed to the Florida High School Athletic Association Sectional Appeals Committee as directed under Bylaw(s) 10.4.7 and 10.6.4 – Appeals of Executive Director's Findings (pages 34 & 37 of the 2018-2019 FHSAA Handbook). Please notify the FHSAA office in writing within five (5) business days of receipt of this email if an appeal is requested.

Sincerely,



Craig Damon  
Associate Executive Director  
Eligibility and Compliance Services

Cc: George Tomy, Executive Director, FHSAA  
Justin Harrison, Associate Executive Director for Athletic Services, FHSAA  
Jordanne Stark, Director of Eligibility and Compliance, FHSAA  
Scott Jamison, Director of Eligibility and Compliance, FHSAA  
Becky Torino, Executive Assistant, FHSAA  
Kyle Niblett, Public Relations Specialist, FHSAA  
Frank Beasley, Director of Athletics, FHSAA  
Michael Brown, Athletic Director, WPHS  
Doug Patterson, Senior Administrator for Athletics and Activities, OCPS