



North Little Rock School District

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October 26, 2021

MEDIA RESPONSE TO AAA INVESTIGATION

The North Little Rock School District (NLRSD) has received numerous inquiries regarding its high school boys' basketball program, a student-athlete, and an ongoing investigation and appeal process with the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) related to player eligibility. NLRSD does not comment on student matters, but NLRSD feels it is necessary to clarify misinformation regarding the matter. This statement is an attempt to clarify facts and ensure the public is aware that the ultimate decision maker is the AAA. This matter is in the hands of the AAA and that governing body has a process in place. NLRSD will continue to support its student-athletes and stakeholders and will continue to fully cooperate with AAA in this matter.

Below are the facts and timelines associated with the AAA investigation and NLRSD's involvement.

- On August 5, 2021, NLRSD was notified by AAA that it had received a notice of violations from a representative with the Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD). In this letter, NLRSD was asked by AAA to conduct its own internal investigation.
- From August 18-20, 2021, NLRSD responded to AAA in a letter outlining the investigation, and thereafter, AAA notified NLRSD that the school system did not address all the allegations in its original letter.
- From August 24-27, 2021, NLRSD met with AAA to clarify information while AAA provided additional evidence. Based upon the new information provided, NLRSD responded in a second letter to AAA. NLRSD provided AAA information, as AAA requested. NLRSD has an obligation to cooperate with AAA as a member-school. Throughout the process, AAA shared information it had received from PCSSD and it was the responsibility of NLRSD to investigate the matter with the information AAA provided.
- On September 14, 2021, AAA confirmed to NLRSD that it had violated two AAA rules relative to a student-athlete. The violated rules include: 1.) Article III Section I

Rule 1, E., Non-school Coach and 2.) Article III Section I Rule 5, G., Recruitment. As a result of AAA conclusions, the student-athlete was determined to be ineligible to play for NLRSD and the high school boys' basketball program was placed on a one-year warning.

- On September 24, 2021, NLRSD requested an appeal to the AAA subcommittee on behalf of the student.
- On October 14, 2021, the AAA subcommittee met to hear the appeal in a public forum. The AAA subcommittee met to listen to the appeal and, by a vote of 6 to 1, affirmed that NLRSD had violated the two rules at issue and the student was ineligible to play for the 2021-2022 season.
- The AAA appeal process is found in the 2021-2022 AAA Handbook, and there are two additional levels available in the appeal process.
- The NLRSD is aware of a AAA form-- Changing Schools/Athletic Participation (CSAP)--which states an administrator of X school district stipulates that to the best of his or her knowledge X student was not recruited or is not changing schools due to athletic purposes. This form is not part of the AAA appeals process, and in this instance, the form appears to contradict the ruling by AAA that NLRSD violated Article III Section I Rule 5, G. Recruitment. Accordingly, at this time, NLRSD has not signed this form.

NLRSD continues to support all student-athletes and their parents/caregivers in ensuring a high quality education while supporting extracurricular activities to promote their future success.

This response is a comprehensive account of what has taken place as it relates to this investigation. There will be no further comment at this time.

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