Rhode Island Interscholastic League
Principals’ Committee on Athletics
Special Meeting
Friday, October 11, 2019 @ 10:00 am
RIIL Office
875 Centerville Road, Building #3
Warwick, RI 02886

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chairman Kelly; Mme., Gribbin, Henneman, Keegan and Ponte; Messrs., Barbieri, Barr, Cobain, Habershaw, Kavanagh and Warner.

Also Present: Thomas Mezzanotte, Executive Director; Michael Lunney, Assistant Executive Director, Carolyn Thornton, Director of Multimedia Content and Burrillville and Central Falls Administration

Absent: Mme., Wallace

The Special meeting of the Principals’ Committee on Athletics was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

A special meeting of the Principals’ Committee on Athletics (PCOA) was held today regarding the varsity girls volleyball match between Central Falls and Burrillville High Schools that took place on September 24, 2019 at Burrillville High School. The PCOA, the Central Falls School Administration and the Burrillville School Administration reviewed and discussed the events and results of their investigations and have agreed to the following:

Findings:
- The PCOA and administrators from both school districts agreed that the Burrillville student spectators were exhibiting behavior (singing, yelling and demonstrating loud, boisterous behavior during play) that was intimidating and distracting to the opposing team and created an unsportsmanlike and culturally insensitive environment.
- It was acknowledged that the Central Falls student-athletes heard culturally insensitive comments during the course of the contest. These comments were intimidating and disrespectful to the players and coach. The Central Falls athletes and coach did not feel welcomed and respected throughout the game and in the parking lot after the contest.
- The environment in the gym was not welcoming, respectful or sportsmanlike.
- Burrillville administration thoroughly investigated the matter and concluded that the actions of the students attending the game were unsportsmanlike, culturally insensitive and did not support the core values of Burrillville High School.

Decision:
On a motion made and seconded, the PCOA unanimously approved the following sanctions:
- Burrillville High School has been placed on probation for a period of one year for sportsmanship.
- All Burrillville High School students are prohibited from attending the next regularly-scheduled home girls volleyball match (JV/Varsity) on October 16, 2019.
• The PCOA accepted the following corrective action plan submitted by the Burrillville High School Administration:
  o Burrillville will continue to review any new information as it becomes available and should any student have made specific culturally insensitive comments, they will be disciplined in accordance with district policies.
  o All future game themes must be approved by the Burrillville High School Administration.
  o Administrators and additional game supervisors will be present at all remaining home games.
  o Visiting teams will be escorted in the parking lot by an administrator/game supervisor.
  o Burrillville High School will coordinate with the Burrillville Police Department to patrol the parking lot after games.
  o Burrillville High School will partner with the Nonviolence Institute and the Rhode Island Commission on Prejudice and Bias to run assemblies and workshops on cultural competence.
  o The Burrillville High School Diversity Council will be included in discussions around a number of activities to address cultural competence.

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League (RIIL) will monitor the corrective actions provided by the Burrillville Administration to avoid further issues.

The RIIL will continue to support its member schools in establishing and enforcing high standards of appropriate behavior at all athletic events. As educators, it is our job to encourage ways to promote and exhibit good sportsmanship, to identify inappropriate behavior and to take steps to correct any unsportsmanlike behavior when necessary. In addition, we expect all member schools to educate and embrace the cultural diversity of students throughout the state.

The RIIL/Principals’ Committee on Athletics commends the Central Falls and Burrillville School Administrations for working collaboratively during this difficult period.

_The Committee then adopted the following closing motion:_ **That any and all motions, amendments and actions by the Principals’ Committee on Athletics and the Executive Officers of the Principals’ Committee on Athletics to this date be reaffirmed and ratified.**

_The Special meeting of the Principals’ Committee on Athletics was adjourned at 12:30 P.M._

Signed: __________________________________________________________________________

Date: ______________________________

Susana Borges, RIIL Board Secretary