



Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association

P. O. BOX 319 • 3333 LEBANON ROAD • HERMITAGE, TENNESSEE 37076
615/889-6740 • Fax 615/889-0544 • www.tssaa.org

August 1, 2011

Dr. Tom McCullough, Principal
Signal Mountain High School
2650 Sam Powell Trail
Signal Mountain, TN 37377

Dear Dr. McCullough:

This is in regard to the incident that took place at Signal Mountain High School during a football scrimmage between Signal Mountain High School and Soddy-Daisy High School on Saturday, July 16, 2011. TSSAA requested and received written reports from the administration of both schools giving their knowledge of the incident and action taken by each school.

In reviewing the information submitted by Signal Mountain High School, it is our opinion that the action taken by Signal Mountain High School did not address the seriousness of the situation. It has been verified that there were Signal Mountain players, coaches, and fans on the field during the skirmish. It is still unclear how the administration is addressing the fans who reportedly participated. The first report stated that two parents were identified as participants and prohibited from attending any Signal Mountain High School athletic event for one year. The follow-up report from the administration stated only one parent had been identified.

Article I, Section 7 (Responsibility of the Principal) of the TSSAA Bylaws states as follows:

The principal of each school, in all matters pertaining to the athletic relations of his/her school, is responsible to this Association. Administrators must realize that they have more responsibilities than the general public to understand the purpose of high school athletics and the principles behind the TSSAA rules, and they must maintain that level of understanding and purpose when dealing with the general public and students. The principal shall exercise control over all finances, the scheduling of contests, and all other matters involved in the management of the school's athletic program. Any school whose athletic program is managed by a non-school group shall not be eligible to hold membership in TSSAA.

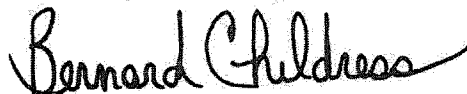
The principal shall furnish to the Executive Director such information as may be desired concerning eligibility of contestants, participation and reports on officials. Failure to comply within a reasonable time shall subject the school to suspension, fine or other penalty. Any eligibility list shall remain on file in the principal's office for a period of not less than five years...

It appears that the Signal Mountain High School administration did not hold the football coaching staff and players accountable for their actions. The coaching staff was in charge and responsible for the actions of their players. The administration chose, however, to ignore the fact that the coaches failed to provide the appropriate sportsmanlike environment. Similar situations have occurred in practice settings in the past. Cordova High School and Munford High School were involved in a similar incident during a preseason scrimmage approximately two years ago. Both administrations took a strong stand and dealt with the situation by holding their coaches and players accountable. They held a sportsmanship summit which involved both coaching staffs and teams. Motivational speakers were brought in to stress the importance of sportsmanship. Everyone in attendance was reminded of their role during athletic events, regardless of practice or regular season contests. The Soddy-Daisy administration has taken similar steps to effectively address the situation. The second letter from the Signal Mountain administration tends to excuse the incident rather than holding those involved responsible for their actions.

The incident that occurred was during a summer 7-on-7 practice. The TSSAA sportsmanship bylaws do not extend to events occurring at practices or summer workouts. These situations must be handled by the administration of the school. It is our opinion that the lack of action taken by the Signal Mountain High School administration to address the seriousness of the situation did not set the proper tone needed by the total athletic program moving forward.

If you have any questions regarding this, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard Childress". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'B' and a long, sweeping underline.

Bernard Childress
Executive Director

BC:wmb



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August 1, 2011

Mr. John Maynard, Principal
Soddy-Daisy High School
618 Sequoyah Access Road
Soddy-Daisy, TN 37379

Dear Mr. Maynard:

This is in regard to the incident that took place at Signal Mountain High School during a football scrimmage between Signal Mountain High School and Soddy-Daisy High School on Saturday, July 16, 2011. TSSAA requested and received written reports from the administration of both schools giving their knowledge of the incident and action taken by each school.

In reviewing the information submitted by Soddy-Daisy High School, it is our opinion that the situation was taken seriously and dealt with in that manner by the administration. The plan outlined by the administration holds the coaches responsible for sportsmanship, conduct of student-athletes, and fan behavior. Suspending your head football coach, requiring every player to perform community service and participate in a sportsmanship program, and requiring all Soddy-Daisy athletic teams to only participate in scrimmages where security and officials are present indicates that Soddy-Daisy High School intends to conduct their athletic programs in a sportsmanlike manner.

The incident that occurred was during a summer 7-on-7 practice. The TSSAA sportsmanship bylaws do not extend to events occurring at practices or summer workouts. These situations must be handled by the administration of the school. As Principal of Soddy-Daisy, you have taken corrective measures that we feel will be beneficial to the total athletic program moving forward.

If you have any questions regarding this, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Bernard Childress
Executive Director

BC:wmb

cc: Mr. Danny Gilbert, Athletic Director
Dr. Lee McDade, Hamilton County Board of Education