



Statement to the Press

President Sonya Christian

June 13, 2013 - 10:00 am

Thank you for joining us for today's press briefing.

I want to first update you on where we are in the process over the past 3-4 weeks, particularly since the last press conference of May 14th when we made public the sanctions letters that we had just received from the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCCAA) and Southern California Football Association (SCFA).

First let me tell you that BC has filed an appeal with the SCFA asking for a hearing on this matter. To refresh your memory, the infractions and sanctions outlined in the letters from CCCCCAA and SCFA were based on three broad allegations that the college: i) subsidized the football students, ii) inappropriately induced recruits, and iii) provided student athletes with special privileges.

In our appeal document that we sent to SCFA yesterday, June 12, 2013, which we have made available on the BC website, we detail how a more complete examination shows a lack of evidence for the alleged infractions, and shows that i) there were no subsidies, ii) there were no recruitment inducements, iii) there were at most technical violations, to which we responded immediately by issuing *Cease and Desist* letters until we established appropriate institutional protocol and controls.

I have said all along that the level of the sanctions is unfair, unreasonable and unwarranted, and that they inappropriately target our students. I say again today what I said in my press statement on May 14th:

“Let me be very clear at the outset – the non-compliance issues reside completely and solely on the shoulders of the institution and are in no way a reflection on the caliber or integrity of our student athletes. Our student athletes did nothing wrong. To this point, we believe that appropriate sanctions would not impact students. Sanctions against the institution are understandable and appropriate, but these student athletes should not be made to bear the consequences of institutional non-compliance issues.”

The sanctions as proposed are, *unprecedented*, and if I may say so, address the alleged infractions in a manner similar to using a shotgun to crack a nut. We trust the appeals process will rectify the situation.

I would like to take the opportunity to again recognize that BC has been and always will be an institution of integrity. There is no better place to come for an education, no more dedicated faculty. There are great opportunities for student athletes to play sports and compete in a manner that upholds the principles of fair play and sportsmanship – I remind you that we have 9 women’s sports and 9 men’s sports.

Our student athletes in the football program ***are*** the 2012 state champions – they won the championship fair and square. We look forward to our opportunity to gain a fair hearing before the appeals board. We will continue our work to officially restore the state championship to our students, and to ensure level of the sanctions is appropriate.

We appreciate the outpouring of support from the community. Bakersfield College and I are thankful for the passion that is evident in our community. At this point in our work, we cannot be divided. I ask our community to stay strong and united.

Thank you, and I would be happy to entertain questions