

**BEFORE THE INDIANA  
CASE REVIEW PANEL**

<b>In The Matter S.T</b>	)	
<b>Petitioner,</b>	)	
	)	
<b>and</b>	)	
	)	<b>CAUSE NO. 140819-118</b>
<b>The Indiana High School Athletic Association,</b>	)	
<b>Respondent.</b>	)	
	)	
<b>Review Conducted Pursuant to Ind. Code</b>	)	
<b>§ 20-26-14 et seq.</b>	)	

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER**

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

On or about July 11, 2014, ST's ("Petitioner") parents completed the student portion of an Indiana High School Athletic Association ("IHSAA") Athletic Transfer Report ("Transfer Report"). The Transfer Report requested that the IHSAA make an athletic eligibility determination for the 2014–2015 school year relating to the Petitioner's transfer from Fort Wayne Carroll High School ("Carroll") to Leo High School ("Leo"). On July 16, 2014, Carroll, as the sending school, completed its portion of the Transfer Report. Leo, as receiving school, completed its portion of the Transfer Report on July 16, 2014.

On July 16, 2014, the IHSAA Assistant Commissioner determined that Petitioner transfer was a Rule 19-6.2 and ruled Petitioner had limited eligibility at Leo. The Petitioner appealed the Assistant Commissioner's determination to the IHSAA Review Committee ("Review Committee").

The IHSAA sent a letter to Petitioner acknowledging receipt of Petitioner's request for appeal and set the matter for a hearing before the Review Committee for August 7, 2014. Following the evidence presented at the August 7, 2014 hearing, the Review Committee issued its ruling on August 18 2014, upholding the decision of the Assistant Commissioner declaring that according to Rule 19-6.2, Petitioner have limited eligibility until October 21, 2014, and then on October 22, 2014, he would be fully eligible to participate in athletics at Leo, provided he is academically eligible and meets all other eligibility rules.

On August 19, 2014, the Petitioner appealed the Review Committee's decision to the Indiana Case Review Panel ("Panel"), and the Panel notified the parties that it would review the decision during a Panel meeting. The Panel requested and received the record from the IHSAA

on September 11, 2014. On October 2 2014, the Panel held a meeting,<sup>1</sup> and based on a review of the record and applicable rules and laws, the Panel made the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law.

### FINDINGS OF FACT

The Panel finds the following facts to be true and relevant to its decision.

1. Petitioner lives with his mother and father in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Petitioner attended Carroll his freshman - junior years. Over the summer, Petitioner transferred to Leo and was enrolled on July 11, 2014. While at Carroll, during his freshman (2011-12), sophomore (2012-13) and junior (2013-14) years Petitioner played freshman and junior varsity football. He last participated athletically at Carroll on October 21, 2013.

2. On July 11, 2014, Petitioner's parents completed the Transfer Report. On the Transfer Report, Petitioner indicated that the transfer to Leo was so Petitioner could go to a smaller school for social and academic reasons.

3. Petitioner failed a semester of Algebra. Carroll recommended he take summer school for this failed class, but Petitioner refused because he wanted to play football. It was also noted at the hearing Petitioner sought transfer regarding the issue of graduation credits. Carroll requires 44 credits while Leo only requires 40.

4. Carroll and Leo signed the transfer verification forms. Carroll recommended Petitioner have limited eligibility under rule 19.62 and neither recommended full eligibility under rule 17-8.5 nor signed the *Verification*. Leo, the receiving school, recommended Petitioner have full eligibility under 17-8.5 and signed the rule 17-8.5 *Verification*.

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Any Finding of Fact that may be considered a Conclusion of Law shall be so considered. Any Conclusion of Law that may be considered a Finding of Fact may be considered as such.
2. Although the IHSAA is a voluntary not-for-profit corporation and is not a public entity, its decisions with respect to student eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletic competition are considered a "state action" making the IHSAA analogous to a quasi-

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<sup>1</sup> The following members participated in the meeting: Dr. George Frampton (Chairperson), Mr. Bret Daghe, Mr. Michael Golembeski, Mr. Glenn Johnson, Mr. Chris Lancaster, Mr. Keith Pempek, and Ms. Dana Cristee. Ms. Kelly Bauder, staff attorney, was also present as legal counsel to the Panel.

governmental entity. IHSAA v. Carlberg, 694 N.E.2d 222 (Ind. 1997), *reh. den.* (Ind. 1998).

3. The Panel has jurisdiction in this matter. The Panel was established to review final student eligibility decisions with respect to interscholastic athletic competition. Ind. Code § 20-26-14. The Panel has jurisdiction when a student's parent or guardian refers the case to the Panel not later than thirty days after the date of the IHSAA decision. Ind. Code § 20-26-14-6(b). In this matter, the Review Committee rendered a final determination of student-eligibility adverse to the Petitioner on August 18, 2014, and Petitioner sought timely review on August 19, 2014.
4. The Panel may uphold, modify, or nullify the IHSAA Review Committee's decision. (Ind. Code § 20-26-14-6(c)(3)). The Panel is not required to review the IHSAA determination *de novo*. The Panel review is similar to an appellate-level administrative review. A full hearing to recreate the record is not required.
5. The Panel reviews the IHSAA determination for arbitrariness or capriciousness. See Carlberg, 694 N.E.2d at 233. A rule or decision will be found to be arbitrary and capricious "only when it is willful and unreasonable, without consideration and in disregard of the facts or circumstances in the case, or without some basis which would lead a reasonable and honest person to the same conclusion." Id. (citing Dep't of Natural Resources v. Indiana Coal Council, Inc.), 542 N.E.2d 1000, 1007 (Ind. 1989).
6. There are two waivers available to students under the IHSAA Rules: a Limited Eligibility Waiver pursuant to Rule 17-8.5 and a General Waiver of an IHSAA Rule pursuant to 17-8.1. Carroll did not sign the *Verification*, but Leo did sign the *Verification* on the Transfer Report, so Petitioner did not qualify for a limited eligibility waiver pursuant to Rule 17-8.5.
7. Generally, a student seeking a Rule 17-8.1 waiver must prove by clear and convincing evidence that: the primary purpose of the Rule will still be accomplished if the Rule is not strictly enforced (Rule 17-8.1(a)); a waiver will not harm or diminish the Rule's purpose or spirit (Rule 17-8.1(b)); the student will suffer or be harmed if a waiver of the Rule is not granted (Rule 17-8.1(c)); and a hardship condition exists as defined in Rule 17-8.3 (Rule 17-8.1(d)).
8. Petitioner failed to establish that the primary and secondary purposes of the rule would still be accomplished if the Rule is not strictly enforced. The rule's principle purpose is to deter athletically motivated transfers as well as promote the family unit. The secondary purpose of strict application of the transfer rule is to protect the opportunities of *bona fide* student-athletes.

9. The Panel finds that Petitioner did not establish through clear and convincing evidence that the transfer rule would not be offended or compromised by a waiver. The Transfer Rule is a prophylactic rule that limits the eligibility of all students without satisfaction of an exception listed in Rule 19-6.1. Petitioner's reasons for transfer are not significant, non-athletic events or conditions which, objectively, would compel a transfer. Petitioner's decision to transfer schools was a choice and was not compelled to transfer for any reason. The Panel finds this was a choice by his family and did not rise to the level of a hardship.

**ORDER**

The Panel finds by a vote of 7-0 that the decision of the IHSAA Review Committee, upholding the decision of the Commissioner is UPHELD. The Petitioner has limited eligibility under Rule 19-6.2 at Leo until October 21, 2014, and then on October 22, 2014 he would be fully eligible to participate in athletics at Leo, provided he is academically eligible and meets all other eligibility rules.

DATE: 10/9/14

  
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George Frampton, Ed.D., Chairperson  
Case Review Panel

**APPEAL RIGHT**

Any party aggrieved by the decision of the Case Review Panel has forty-five days from receipt of this written decision to seek judicial review in a civil court with jurisdiction, as provided by Ind. Code § 20-26-14-7.