

INFORMATION RELEASE

In June 2010, students and coaches of the Seneca Football team participated in a football camp at Pittsburg State University (PSU). While at the camp, a number of Seneca students participated in a series of hazing incidents involving younger players.

As soon as district officials became aware of the misconduct, law enforcement officials in Crawford County, Kansas, were notified. District administrators began an immediate investigation of the misconduct. Witnesses were interviewed; discussions were held with law enforcement officials, and an outside investigator was retained. Based upon this investigation, the students responsible were disciplined up to and including expulsion, depending on the student's specific involvement. Subsequently, criminal charges were filed against the students involved.

As part of the investigation, the actions of district coaches and their supervision was reviewed. There was no evidence that any Seneca coach had any advanced knowledge of the hazing, was aware of the hazing when it occurred, nor attempted in any way to cover up the players' misconduct. However, based on a number of considerations including on-site supervision, the Board of Education voted unanimously to place the head coach and the assistant coaches who were present at PSU on probation for a period of one year. Any violation of supervisory duties or violation of Board policy or practices will result in disciplinary action. The employment action taken against these coaches is commensurate with their collective responsibilities at PSU.

The Board has directed the administration, in consultation with legal counsel to develop procedures, implement coaches' code of conduct, and detailed supervision plan for all activities. These steps are being taken to ensure student safety and to minimize the possibility of a recurrence of this misconduct. When these procedures are completed they will be made available to students, parents, citizens and to the media.