



January 13, 2017

Bowman Academy Removed from IHSAA State Tournaments; School's Membership Placed on Probation

The Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. announces that it is suspending immediately the eligibility of Bowman Leadership Academy from all IHSAA state tournament series events in all sports and is placing its membership on probationary status.

Bowman Leadership Academy, located in Gary and first admitted to the Association as a member school in 2006, is one of 410 voluntary members who subscribe to uphold the by-laws and policies of the Association.

This decision comes as a result of meetings conducted by the IHSAA Executive Staff with the Bowman Leadership Academy administration on Monday, January 9 and correspondence received since that meeting as well as discussion with members of the IHSAA Executive Committee. Numerous violations recently discovered, the repeated history of non-compliance by the boys basketball program and the previous lack of institutional control exhibited by the school over its entire athletic program have led to the following determinations:

1. The Bowman Leadership Academy's eligibility for all Indiana High School Athletic Association tournament series participation is suspended immediately.
2. The Bowman Leadership Academy membership with the IHSAA is now placed on probationary status for the remainder of the current calendar year and the entire 2017-18 school year. During this period, the school will not participate in any IHSAA tournament series events. Additionally, an IHSAA staff member shall be assigned to the school as a mentor. The school and the mentor shall meet seasonally to ensure compliance of all IHSAA by-laws, policies and procedures. Violations of any IHSAA by-laws, policies or procedures during the probationary period may result in expulsion from membership with the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc.
3. A student participated in a contest representing Bowman Leadership Academy while not enrolled in the school. This is a violation of Rule 12-1. The boys basketball contest between Bowman and Tindley of Indianapolis shall stand as a forfeit to Tindley. Bowman shall notify Tindley of this violation.
4. A student has expired his high school eligibility under the provisions of Rule 12-2. That student is ineligible at any IHSAA member school. The boys varsity basketball contests against Gary Roosevelt, Crown Point and Tindley shall be forfeited by Bowman Academy. Bowman Academy shall notify each school of this forfeiture.
5. A student is declared ineligible under Rule 17-7.4 due to the provision of false information regarding the transfer report. All eight boys varsity basketball contests where this student was a participant are hereby forfeited. Bowman Academy shall notify each school of these forfeitures.
6. A student is declared ineligible under Rule 18-1 (Minimum Course Enrollment and Grades for Participation). The student may attain eligibility on the certification date established by the school provided he meets the minimum provisions of Rule 18-1.
7. A student is declared ineligible until a transfer report has been filed and ruled upon by the IHSAA. All contests where the student was a participant shall be forfeited. Bowman Academy shall notify each school of these forfeitures.
8. A second student is declared ineligible until a transfer report has been filed and ruled upon by the IHSAA. All contests where the student was a participant shall be forfeited. Bowman Academy shall notify each school of these forfeitures.

9. A student is declared ineligible under the provisions of Rule 20-2 (Past Link). All contests where the student was a participant shall be forfeited. Bowman Academy shall notify each school of these forfeitures.
10. A student participated in more than five quarters during a single session vs. 21st Century Charter School – Gary. The varsity contest against 21st Century Charter School – Gary shall be forfeited. Bowman Leadership Academy shall notify the school of this forfeiture. All quarters participated in by the student shall count toward the maximum number of quarters allowable during the season.
11. Bowman Leadership Academy participated in a contest against Pickerington High School Central from Ohio. This contest was contested without a signed contract executed by the member school. This contest shall be forfeited and Bowman Academy shall notify Pickerington High School Central of this forfeiture.
12. Bowman Leadership Academy has violated the provisions of Rule 50-5 of the IHSAA by-laws by overscheduling contests for the boys basketball team. It is noted that the school has amended their current schedule to achieve compliance with the provisions of Rule 50. The 2017-18 boys basketball schedule at Bowman Academy shall be reduced by one contest to not exceed 21 games and no tournament or 19 games and one tournament.
13. Any interscholastic coach in any sport at Bowman Leadership Academy that has not met the requirements of Rule 7-1.4 is hereby suspended immediately. This is a health and safety issue for the student athletes as well as a liability consideration for the member school. Records reflecting successful completion of mandatory course work must be forwarded to the IHSAA prior to any coaching activity from this point forward.

The school may continue to field athletic teams and compete in regular season contests during this probationary period but will not be entered in any state tournament competition.

Principal Sarita Stevens, Athletic Director Arthur Haggard and Assistant Athletic Director Jerae Prothro-Guider are commended for their cooperation in this investigation and their sincerity in correcting these egregious and unfortunate circumstances in the future.

Principal Stevens commented in a letter to Commissioner Bobby Cox, “The current Thea Bowman Leadership Academy staff will remain transparent as evident in our self-imposed sanction letter and corrective actions plan that was submitted to your office on Tuesday, January 10th, 2017. We openly admitted to the violations and started at the moment of discovery, working aggressively to correct the problems and implement systems to avoid reoccurrences. We are determined to take Thea Bowman to a level of high integrity in all extra-curricular programs offered to our students. This starts with building an athletic program that is student-centered and held to all of the standards of IHSAA.”

Commissioner Cox commented, “Sarita Stevens is an educator of high character and standards. Ms. Stevens along with her administrative team are committed to correct these very unfortunate outcomes and take Bowman Academy to new levels. I am confident with her dedication and the assistance of the IHSAA staff, the athletic department will rise above these disappointments and thrive as a beacon of learning for their community.”

About the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. (IHSAA)

The IHSAA is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization that is self-supporting without the use of tax monies. Since its founding in 1903, the Association’s mission has been to provide wholesome, educational athletics for the secondary schools of Indiana. Its member high schools - public, institutional, parochial and private – pay no annual membership fee or incur entry fees to play in the Association’s tournaments. A state tournament series is conducted annually in 21 sports, 10 for girls, 10 for boys and one co-ed (unified track and field). A 19-person board of directors, elected by member school principals, governs the organization.