



David Dude, Ph.D.
Superintendent

Vision

City Schools of Decatur will be one of the top ten community school districts in the nation.

January 31, 2017

Gary Phillips
Executive Director
Georgia High School Association
PO Box 271
151 S. Bethel Street
Thomaston, GA 30286

Dear Mr. Phillips,

Thank you for speaking with me this afternoon regarding our swimming coach's failure to meet the deadline for submitting state qualifying times. I appreciate and understand the difficult position this puts you and the GHSA organization in.

We expect our student-athletes to be accountable to the rules, and it is appropriate to expect the same of those who coach them. Unfortunately, as I shared when we spoke, I cannot agree with punishing students for the failure of adults. The students have no control over the timely submission of these data. Consequently, I will be taking appropriate employment action to address the adult behaviors that allowed this problem to occur. As I also shared, I hope GHSA will consider alternatives such as levying a personal fine against the offending coach, prohibiting the individual from coaching a GHSA-sanctioned sport for a given time period, or some other appropriate punishment focused on the adult(s) rather than the kids. I appreciate that the GHSA Executive Committee will likely be discussing such a change in the near future.

If there is any opportunity for an exception for our student swimmers this year, and those of the other two teams who failed to meet the submission deadline, especially the seniors, I hope you will reconsider.

Sincerely,

David Dude

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Chair

C. Garrett Goebel
Vice Chair

Bernadette J. Seals
Board Member

Lewis Jones
Board Member

Tasha White
Board Member