

**ISLLC Standard #5:**

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

**Title:****Football Favorite****Key Questions:**

- How far does an administrator go to keep community leaders and school faculty happy?
- What ways can an administrator ensure that ethical decisions are made with regards to the discipline of students?

**Discussion:**

At Allsports High School in a suburb of the city of Atlanta, the athletic department has an impeccable record when it comes to playing baseball. The academics are pretty good, but the community and school faculty are quite proud of 5 state titles earned by the Allsports High School baseball team. In particular, during the last three seasons, the team has boasted the ability of their new pitcher, Fast-ball Freddy Franklin. The town's mayor is particularly pleased with Freddy's performance because his daughter, Freddy's mother, is an English teacher at the high school. Ms. Franklin is a good teacher who has received little recognition for the fact that her students consistently score very high on standardized tests and make very high marks on the advanced placement exam. Freddy's perfect pitching record has not only made him quite popular with the girls and school teachers, but has also drawn attention to Ms. Franklin and earned her the title of department chair for the current and next school year.

Freddy has been having a difficult time in his Algebra II class during the past semester. He has attended tutoring and after-school study sessions to keep his grades up since he is required to maintain a "C" average in order to play on the school's baseball team. Despite all of his hard work, Freddy is really stressed out over his upcoming exam and a known cheat in his class, Chester, has offered to give him the answers to the previous year's exam to help him ace his test. Despite his also perfect discipline record, Freddy takes Chester's answers and uses them to cheat on the exam. Freddy's teacher discovers the answers wadded up near his desk just after he finishes his exam in record time and turns Freddy in to the school principal, Mr. Morris, for disciplining.

Mr. Morris' first response was to have a stern talk with Freddy and make him understand that he had jeopardized his place on the Baseball team and then keep the situation quiet after scaring him a little. After he had spoken to Freddy and sent him back to class, Freddy's Algebra II teacher came to the office and wanted to find out the punishment given to his student. When he found out that Freddy was not punished according to the school's discipline code, Freddy's teacher inquired as to whether or not Mr. Morris' decision was ethical. The teacher attempted to appeal to Mr. Morris and explain that baseball isn't the only good thing going for Allsports High School. When Mr. Morris didn't appear to be caving, the algebra teacher reminded Mr. Morris of the Educator's Code of Ethics and the danger his career would be in if the situation were reported to the professional standards commission.

The following day the town's mayor and Ms. Franklin had visited to let their feelings on the subject be known; Ms. Franklin explained that she would happily take her son AND her high test scores to another high school if her son was not allowed to complete the season. Although he was terrified at the thought of losing one of his best teachers and his star baseball player, Mr. Morris decided to suspend Freddy from the school's baseball team.

#### **Answers:**

- While partners in education and community leaders are important, a school administrator has a professional obligation to act ethically and see that all students are treated equally according to the educator's code of ethics and ISLLC standard #5.
- Having a clear school and/or district discipline that is referred to regularly in faculty, staff and administration meetings would serve as a reminder to those who may be tempted to make decisions that are not ethical in nature.

#### **Case Study/Administrator Evaluation:**

This administrator in this situation is at a developing level of proficiency with regards to ISLLC standard #5. Although in the end he made the ethical and fair decision, it took a teacher threatening his livelihood to convince him to make the correct decision. After this experience I would hope that the administrator would show a greater level of proficiency the next time he is faced with a similar situation.