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Tenafly school board member hit with ethics charge

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2014
BY DEENA YELLIN
STAFF WRITER
THE RECORD
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TENAFLY – School board member Sam A. Bruno has announced that he is the target of a state ethics complaint, but neither he, the district nor the state will not say what it is about.

However, two board members said the complaint stems from Bruno's release of confidential information about a racial slur allegedly uttered by a St. Joseph Regional High School soccer player against a **Tenafly** High player in October.

Bruno, who announced at a Tuesday board meeting that he was notified of the complaint in a letter from the state Education Department, said the complaint alleges violations of a state law that makes school board members responsible for preserving confidentiality in certain matters.

A board member who asked not to be identified said the complainant is a current or former board member who was angry at Bruno for leaking information to a Record reporter about the investigation of the alleged slur.

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The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association suspended the player who allegedly made the slur for two games.

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Bruno, who declined to release the letter or name the complainant, said he was shocked and disappointed by the complaint.

"Hopefully, this filing will not serve as a distraction or drain of the district's precious human or capital resources, which rather should benefit the students, staff and educational mission," he said.

Officials of the state's School Ethics Commission said they are not permitted to release information about a pending complaint until public action is taken.

[Tenafly](#) Superintendent Lynn Trager declined to comment, saying it's not a district issue but concerns only the board.

Mark Aronson, a school board member, said Bruno's alleged airing of the information "has created a frosty environment between Bruno and the other board members."

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And who isn't surprised that the Board would rather keep this quiet - although it seems the actual aspersions in question were cast not by a Tenafly student but by a student from another school. Or is it the state that has its knickers in a twist?

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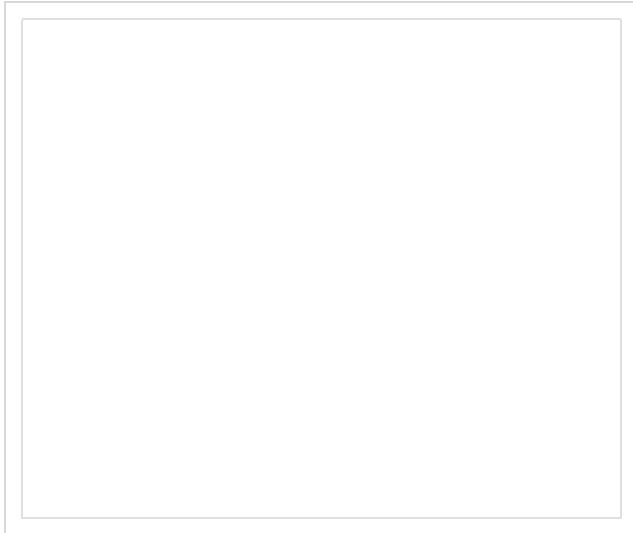
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