

HCC settles lawsuit over recruitment of athletes

(AP) — A small community college in northeast Kansas has settled a lawsuit accusing it of directing coaches to recruit more white athletes and subjecting Black students to excessive scrutiny such as background checks before offering them scholarships.

Terms of the settlement were not immediately made public. A brief stipulation of dismissal was filed Monday by the American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas.

When contacted for comment, the parties responded with identical statements saying only that they “have resolved the litigation.”

The ACLU had alleged in the lawsuit filed in March that Highland Community College instituted a plan [to reduce the number of Black students](#).

The ACLU contended the college’s strategy included expelling black students for minor or bogus infractions and singling them out for dorm room and vehicle searches, discriminatory surveillance and harassment.

In its response to the lawsuit, the college contended its recruiting is not determined by students’ race or ethnicity and denied it ever instructed coaches to exclude out-of-state athletes from recruitment.

Highland Community College has more than 3,200 students, 87% of whom are white. During the 2019 season, 104 of the 111 football players were Black. The 2020 football recruiting class includes “a significantly lower number” of Black athletes, the lawsuit alleges.

The lawsuit, on behalf of four former and current students, named Eric Ingmire, vice president for student services, and Bryan Dorrel, the college’s athletic director, as defendants.

It alleges Dorrel told coaches to recruit “more local kids” and “less Southern kids.”