

August 1, 2015

To the OSAA Executive Director,

I am writing in support of our decision to enroll Sara Klott at St. Mary's School in Medford Oregon.

As her parents, we take the obligation of giving Sara the best opportunity to succeed in her goal of getting the best high school education very seriously. We also believe in preparing her for her ultimate goal of attending college. It is true we have many good high schools in Southern Oregon, but St. Mary's has a long and storied past reputation of being the best at preparing their students for the rigors of college life.

We first considered Sara attending St. Mary's in the seventh grade, but Sara, like many kids of that age, wished to stay with her elementary school friends and remain in public school. And, so she did. She has done well at both McLoughlin Middle School, and in her freshman year at South Medford High School, however, she is now old enough to understand the value of being prepared for her next step, which is college. Sara would like to be a writer, and she is looking to be challenged, and given the tools to succeed as she pursues that field of study. Something was missing at South, and her zeal for learning was not being fed. After looking back into St Mary's and shadowing in the classroom, Sara saw the enthusiasm and mutual respect that she is looking for in her seeking of knowledge. Sara saw how the students and the teachers were hands on, encouraging, and most of all engaged with the students. Something she really felt was missing at South. (We did try and address this during the school year, nothing was ever accomplished)! A decision was made that Sara would seek acceptance into St. Mary's School.

After being accepted, we learned of an interesting athletic eligibility issue that we were not aware of. Sara participates in soccer and basketball, having played on the junior varsity teams as a freshman at South Medford. Soccer is especially a major part of Sara's healthy make-up of student and athlete. She also plays club soccer, and played for the Rogue Valley Timbers in the Winter 2014-2015 season. Her coach was Dave Potter, who is also the head coach of St. Mary's Varsity Girls soccer team. I have known Dave for many years now, and find him to be one of the most well respected coaches, and a man of outstanding character. We understand the rule states that an athlete must sit out a season if they transfer to a school, if they were coached on a club team by that coach, and then transfer to that school. This caught our family by surprise. We thought we had gone through the process of finding a private school with an academic fit for Sara, and yes, the added bonus of getting to play for a respected coach and a soccer program that is still competitive. Sitting out a fall season of soccer seems like a stiff penalty for someone who had no other local opportunities to play competitive winter soccer. (Unlike metropolitan areas that have multiple clubs within driving distance..... but again...we had no reason to even be aware of the eligibility rule). Soccer is something Sara loves to play. Playing soccer is part of who she is.

Funny thing is, Dave was the last to know of our enrolling Sara at St Mary's and he was the one who told us of the rule.

If the rule is in place to ensure players are not recruited by coaches to other schools...then I can assure you this was not the case. Academics were the deciding factor, and with soccer being a part of Sara's make-up, it would be a shame to penalize her by excluding her from a sport she loves, and take away an activity that nurtures her self- confidence, and will help her assimilate into a new school.

In closing, I simply hope that you will consider what is in the best interest of the student/ athlete and allow Sara Klott to be eligible to play soccer at St Mary's in the Fall of 2015.

Please feel free to contact us directly with any other questions.

Sincerely,

Arnie & Terri Klott

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