

08/01/2015

To the OSAA,

I am writing in support of our decision to enroll Sara Klott at St. Mary's School in Medford Oregon, and to be able to play soccer in her sophomore year.

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 have one child and one chance to get this right. We are a family that follows rules almost to a fault. Sara won't even cross the street if the flashing sign says "don't walk" even if it is very clear there are no cars coming!!! Sara has always strived to be the best student, and she has played sports, since the age of 5. Sara has been on a traveling competitive soccer team for the past four years. **In the Rogue Valley she has only one choice for this opportunity.** When she makes a team, the club assigns a coach. She does not care who that coach may be, she just wants to play soccer, improve, and get a chance to play better teams outside of the valley. Whether it is in a classroom, on a sports team, or just being a friend, this child always gives her best.

I do not want to complain or say we suffered at the hands of public school system; every system has its good points and low points. However, Sara's freshman year at South was very disappointing and discouraging. Over all, just not a good fit for our child. Why? Because she is a student who cares about her education, she wants to learn. She is not that student that wants to get pushed through the system! From the start she had teachers in two of her core classes who were more of stumbling block for students, then teachers of knowledge and or growth. One of them stated on the first day of class "I do not like incoming freshman that is the first thing you should know about me". (I understand that teaching young adults is not easy, but really!) Another teacher in one of her Honors classes, in the first month, taught the wrong formulas for some homework! This made it impossible, for the students to complete the homework. Sara spent over 6 hours that weekend trying to get that homework to make sense! *YES, I am just trying to give you some examples of some of the issues and yes we did communicate with the teachers and her counselor regarding these matters, often.* The standard reply to us was "Sara is smart she will do fine in class, no need to worry." In one of her classes, every time she would go to after class to catch up, or get help with something, she would arrive only to find 35-40 other students there for the same thing! Often times she would call me and say "I don't even have a place to sit down". I know these things may seem small/trivial to you or others, but not to us. This kind of thing continued throughout the entire year. Sara will never get a "do over" for her freshman year. It was also the first time she doubted the system of teaching. This may not be a big deal to most, but this should matter, these kids are our future. IT MATTERS TO US.

In the end, we just did our best and told her to do her best. Early in 2015 she decided to shadow St Marys classes. After two shadow days, she was hooked and excited about the possibly of going to a school that loved teaching students and she saw such opportunity for growth. It just seemed to be a better fit for Sara. We sent our application in, and got accepted. We all got so excited about this new challenge, both for academic and sports. Sara was really looking forward to her new school. Then we were told about the OSAA rule, and we felt deflated, we had no idea about such a rule, or that it would apply to us? Now, we have had to worry about this BIG decision for months.... It is upsetting that the OSAA does not make a decision regarding the athlete,

and their future until Aug 24? What is a family to do in the meantime, just wait? We moved forward in good faith. We registered her for classes at St Mary's, we bought her books, and paid her first months tuition. At this point, how could she move back to South, it would break her! PLEASE OSAA, do not punish a student for just wanting a better education, teachers that engage, and who just wants to play her sport of soccer and be on her high school team. Education is number one to us, but she cannot give up soccer, it is part of who she is, it makes her a better student, it gives her confidence, it is part of her daily life, has been for the past 10 or more years. If you deny her this you could change a student's path forever. PLEASE, grant her this opportunity. Your decision affects no one but Sara. And all she wants to do is better her education and play sports (primarily soccer) while in high school.

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.

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.

Sincerely,

Terri Klott