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To: Dave Williams &lt;dave.williams@bend.k12.or.us&gt;;

Here is my letter:

Life is all about balance. Life is bound to get hard at times and we need music, a club, or activity to turn to to help balance things out and keep yourself from going insane. My name is Selena and I am in need of balance!

My whole life I have been an athlete. From softball to volleyball to track, sports are my passion. Unfortunately I have hit a road block in pursuing those passions. I was diagnosed with scoliosis this past year, resulting in having to stop volleyball and softball to prevent making it worse. I love being athletic and use sports to help balance my life so this year I decided I would give cross country a shot. Unfortunately for me, I did not perform well enough academically to be able to do so. I only passed four classes opposed to five.

Many kids fail do to lack of effort but for me, that is not the case. I failed due to attendance issues. Second semester of this past school year I have been in and out of school going to doctors appointments or due to pain. I have been having intense back pain to the point where my whole body would lock up and I couldn't move. At first, doctors thought it was do to lack of iron and the scoliosis so I changed my diet and took some pain killers. Nothing changed and the pain was still effecting me. I went to a spine specialist and she told me scoliosis should not be causing me any pain and there is something else causing it. Since then I have been seeing doctors a lot more than I would like to. Who knew finding an answer could be so hard? One of the orthopedics I have seen told me to enroll in a sport or some sort of exercise year around to build some more muscle in my back. So far doctors have been telling me I do not have enough muscle to hold my spine aline thus causing me pain. I have been running with Bend High Cross Country over the summer and definitely feel a difference in pain level and have been having less problems since doing so. Not only has pain been less of an issue but I have been provided a sense of comfort from cross country as I go through this medical battle.

My medical issue has not been the only factor in attendance. My mother also has some medical issues of her own that played a role. She was in a car accident as has been taking sleeping pills. With these pills she is required to get a certain number of hours of sleep prior to driving. That factored in to me being late to school and sometimes just being unable to get to school. This has affected me and my siblings greatly. Luckily we have worked around this issue and will be on track this school year.

Thank you so much for your time and taking me into consideration. I need cross country more than it needs me. There are a ton of runners out this fall so it wouldn't matter too much if I wasn't running but this is very important to me on a personal level. It would be an honor to run with the team this year as it is a wonderful team full of amazing people and it provides me comfort, hope, and the exercise I need to become stronger and get over these medical issues. I really hope to be cleared for the season. Doctor appointments and other necessary changes have been made to help me perform to the best of my ability this school year and catch up from all I missed last school year. I will be more focused and I know I will be more successful. I would just like to thank you again so much for your time and consideration. I hope to hear back from you soon!

Sincerely,  
Selena McNeil