

## Peter Weber

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**From:** Jeremy Williams <Jeremy.Williams@camasvalley.k12.or.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 22, 2015 2:07 PM  
**To:** Debbie Arts  
**Cc:** James Ellis; Ronald Dunn; Rob Parker  
**Subject:** Denial of hardship

Debbie:

As indicated in my phone call to you this morning, the Skyline League Hardship Committee has voted **against** all 7 student hardship applications. This was a complex issue, and the committee's decision was not arrived at lightly. The denial of hardship was based on the following principals:

\*According to rule 8.6.8, the committee was unable to find a hardship in evidence. Rule 8.6.8 states "*The District Committee may in individual cases, at its discretion, waive or modify the eligibility rules regarding transfer, ... when in its opinion there are circumstances beyond the control of EACH of the student AND the student's parent(s), or other circumstances whereby enforcement of the rule would work an undue hardship upon the student.*"

In each case, the factor's that sent the students to SVS, were NOT beyond parent control. What consistently came through in the parent letters was that the decision to attend SVS has made a substantial difference in their children's lives, but the fact that their child may have substance abuse issues or emotional issues is not, in and of itself, a hardship.

\*Additionally, under rule 8.6.8, Question 3, "*Historically, guardianships have frequently been used to attempt to avoid the Fundamental Rule of the OSAA that a student only attend school in the district in which the student's parents reside. Consequently, the appointment of a legal guardian alone is not recognized as an exception to the fundamental rule...Under no circumstances will the appointment of a guardian be tolerated as a device to circumvent the eligibility rules of OSAA.*" Even though the parents of the students in question signed waivers giving guardianship to Mr. Thommen, that in itself is not enough to meet residency requirements

\*The committee was also concerned about the incompleteness of the hardship requests, specifically letters from previous schools. This lack of completeness usually leads to a rejection of hardship application.

\*A mild concern from the committee is the *appearance* of what could be perceived as undue influence (rule 8.7). This is in specific regard to Mr. Thommen's employment at SVS and his guardianship of the students in question combined with his status as an assistant coach at Yoncalla High. Whether or not undue influence is being applied, the fact that Mr. Thommen works for both SVS and YHS could be viewed in a negative light (in regards to SVS students participating in YHS football).

From the beginning, this has been a complicated and messy situation for all parties involved. In the opinion of the committee, this is an issue brought on by OSAA's misunderstanding of the nature of the SVS/Yoncalla partnership and we feel that it should be dealt with at the OSAA level.

If there are any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to let me know and I will do my best to answer them.

Sincerely

Jeremy P Williams  
VP/AD Camas Valley School  
(541) 445 2131 x208  
Jeremy.williams@camasvalley.k12.or.us