

September 3, 2015

To whom it may concern,

We Matthew and Arlinda Painter, parents of Malinda Painter are seeking to appeal our daughter's eligibility for the 2015-2016 competition cheer season at Churchill High School. Malinda is a transfer student from Willamette High School, and we are asking for your approval of eligibility to compete with the Churchill Cheer team due to the hardships she faced while at Willamette.

Malinda participated in the cheer program at Willamette High School for 2 years. Her freshman year she was selected for the JV cheer team, making the Varsity team her sophomore year. During these 2 years of cheer we as parents witnessed Malinda facing some serious struggles with the program. She faced embarrassment, lack of support from the school staff, lack of involvement in the school, and lack of communication.

Some examples of these hardships are as follows:

- 1.) While attending class one afternoon Malinda's teacher stood in the front of the room and began saying how much she hates cheerleaders, and that real athletes don't wear big bows in their hair while playing sports. Malinda was embarrassed and hurt; her teacher knew that Malinda and several other students in attendance were all on the cheer team.
- 2.) Malinda was told by one of her friends on the Willamette volleyball team that her coach had asked his team members not be friends with the cheerleaders or have any association with them.
- 3.) During half time at a Varsity boys basketball game the Vice President of the Bethel Booster Club ridiculed the Varsity Coach mid court. She asked "Who ordered the cheer uniforms, they look trashy? The only reason the parents allow these kids to wear these uniforms is that the parents are paying for their kids to be known as cheerleaders". Being that this was half time at a home varsity game the bleachers surrounding the coach were full. Cheerleaders, students and parents all witnessed this confrontation. It brought further embarrassment to the team, as well as the feeling that yet another organization did not support their program. The Bethel Booster Club is who helps support all Bethel School District programs, so this was a big frustration.
- 4.) Unhappy with the cheer program, the parents of the JV and Varsity cheer team called the school and requested a meeting between the parents, the Vice Principle, the Athletic Director, and the coaches. Unfortunately the Varsity coach chose not to attend due to team practice, but the JV coach was in attendance. After much discussion, a list of "to do's" was formed for both the coaches and the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director began working on them, but we were asked by the Varsity coach to not follow up anything left on the "to do" list. She stated that she did not want to ruin her relationship with the Athletic Director.
- 5.) Communication with the Coach was a constant struggle. Malinda would contact her coach through phone calls, texts, and emails, but would never receive a response back on her concerns. We as parents would contact the coach after Malinda received no response, but still would not receive communication back.

As parents we have tried to teach Malinda, to work hard, respect your coaches, and if changes are needed to go after them in the proper way. This is why we made the decision to transfer Malinda to Churchill High School. With dance friends and church friends attending Churchill, it was a natural choice to select this school for a fresh start. Malinda has been participating with the Varsity Churchill cheer team since May of this year and is constantly telling us how thankful she is to be part of such a positive program. She feels supported by her coaches and is excited to finally be part of such a close team. I ask you to please consider the hardships that Malinda has faced the last 2 years at Willamette High School and allow her to be eligible to compete with her new Churchill team this season.

Thank you,


Matt and Arlinda Painter