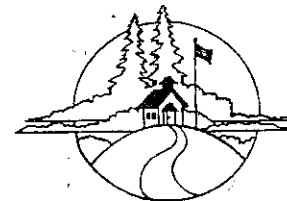


Before I moved in with Mike, for about the last 3 years my mom was always very mean to me and made me really bad about myself. My dad is in prison now, he physically abused me and my brothers so we lived with our mom. Around my 2nd year in high school my grades started dropping and I was drinking with my friends a lot. Since then I feel like my mom hates me, she always yelled at me and was never happy with me. She made me feel terrible about myself and I was really depressed for a long time and felt like a failure, I had no motivation and didn't really have anyone who supported me or encouraged me. Eventually I just couldn't live there anymore and I moved in with Mike. Since then I have gained a lot of self-confidence and I feel like I have more of a purpose in life, I've been keeping up with my school work and going to cheer practice. I think that doing cheer will give me self-confidence and motivation to do my school work. It will also give me a lot of opportunities and hopefully help me get a scholarship.

# VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 47J



*"Discovering Endless Possibilities..."*

10-13-15

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Dylan Shay and his athletic eligibility. I have been a teacher at Vernonia Schools since 2006. I currently serve as Dean of Students but until this year had been assigned as the career education teacher and the independent study teacher; which includes the summer school program. I mention this as I have taught Dylan in all three courses.

Dylan is a talented and interesting young man that has never had a spark for school until this summer. He has had the opportunity to move to a supportive environment that provides him the stability needed to concentrate on his studies. I have never before seen Dylan so motivated to complete school and earn his high school diploma.

Beyond the positive living arrangements, Dylan has found a positive outlet for his talents; cheer. We are in a unique position to provide Dylan with the opportunities to graduate high school, participate in a sport that will offer him further discipline, and give him the chance at a successful life; the real goal of school.

I have been working with Dylan, his guardian, and school staff to get Dylan to the point of being on track to graduate. He has a long road ahead of him but I believe if the motivation he has demonstrated keeps up, he will be make it. The choices life threw at Dylan were not his but this opportunity to excel through athletics is; given the chance.

Please consider this letter of support when reviewing Dylan's eligibility. Feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Wilcoxen".

Rachel Wilcoxen

[rwilcoxen@vernonia.k12.or.us](mailto:rwilcoxen@vernonia.k12.or.us)

503.429.1333 x1383

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## VERNONIA MIDDLE SCHOOL

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## VERNONIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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