

Dear Tom Welter,

I am writing on behalf of Conor Gaines for his eligibility for this 2015-16 wrestling season. Conor Gaines is a Senior who did not pass 5 classes last spring and is 1.25 credits short from meeting the OSAA standards of on track to graduate (17 credits). I am a firm believer that students need to be accountable to their grades and I want it to be known, there are no excuses for the lack of achievement. However, in this role as Athletic Director, I am doing best to only submit worthy students who I believe have a hardship in their lives. I try to view them as any unforeseen circumstance that is beyond the student's control. With that said, we address the student regarding their deficiency as well by letting them know that success in life is measured by the actions you display. Conor understands that he made bad decisions and that he did have some control over his efforts. He is also aware that there is a chance that he does not wrestle this season. I believe this hardship exists because Conor, a teenager, a high school student has been put in a situation where he has had to essentially raise himself.

After speaking with family members and Conor here is what I know.

- Conor lives with his Grandma who has custody
- Grandpa is not in the picture
- Mom and Dad are not in the picture and do not have legal guardianship
- Grandma is a long distance truck driver (Home 6-10 days per month)
- Conor has no real oversight or parental figure when he is at home
- Coach McNulty (Head Wrestling) is the closest thing to consistency in his life
- Grandma refuses to write a letter of support in fear that this situation Conor is in makes her look bad

After speaking with family, coaches, and Conor himself, I feel he has been dealt a tough hand in life. He has been asked to be adult and make every decision with no guidance on whether or not he is making the right choice. Or, having that parental force that most students have the luxury of having to guide them in the right direction. The inability to get that kind of guidance for a young adult who has plenty to learn about life, is at a disadvantage. At Eagle Point High School, we want to teach him this life lesson and hold him accountable to our stipulations and any that OSAA puts into effect.

Here is what I plan on doing if you grant this opportunity of eligibility.

- Goal is for him to graduate with his peers in June
- Conor is currently in credit retrieval classes and monitored closely by his counselors with a grad plan
- I will do weekly grade checks
- He must be passing ALL his classes at ALL times
- If he fails any classes at the progress period he will remain eligible
- If he fails any classes at semester 1 he will remain ineligible
- In addition, we will follow any additional requirements OSAA puts into effect

Thank You,

Matt York  
Athletic Director  
Eagle Point High School