

February 22, 2016

Dear Mr. Welter and the OSAA,

I am writing this appeal to you in regards to a St. Helens High School student, Alexys Finch, who wishes to play softball this year. It was just brought to our attention that to be eligible, within the OSAA guidelines, that she has to have 4.5 credits, prior to her Sophomore year, to be on track to graduate, rather than the previous 4 credits.

First, looking at her transcripts from last year as a Freshman, you will find that Alexys failed three classes per semester, for a total of six failed classes during the 2014-15 school year. She was also absent 25 days from school last year and her GPA at the end of her Freshman year was a 1.14. Unfortunately, due to her situation last year, these facts are probably normal in students that are experiencing neglect, lack of parental supervision, family upheaval/dysfunction, among other issues. Playing softball, or any other sport or school activity never crossed her mind, last year, due to her living and school situations.

Just days before this school year started, Alexys contacted me about the possibility of living with my family. Her older sister had lived with us for a time, before joining the United States Army, where she is currently employed. Due to a situation in her family living conditions (eviction) her and her younger sister were homeless and have been residing with us since.

After the first semester of the 2015-16 school year, Alexys has a 2.67 GPA, passing all seven of her classes with a C or higher. She has been attending school regularly, missing only one half day of school due to illness. She is attending a study hall twice per week at the high school, in addition to conditioning three days per week for the school softball program. Alexys will have made up all of her required classes, that she failed last year, by the end of this semester, with the exception of one class. That one class, she is currently registered to complete online and has one year to complete the course. However, Alexys and I, have put a deadline for that class to be completed by the end of August 2016. With that accomplishment, she will have 11.5 credits to start out her Junior year and would be back on track to graduate. Just comparing last year's school statistics to this year's, Alexys has made a drastic improvement. In addition, her behavior and attitude have improved and several of the teachers commented on her recent report card to that effect.

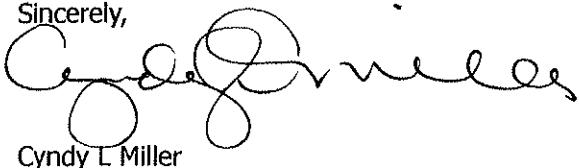
By allowing her to play softball this season, it would give her another "connection" to the school and encourage her to continue in the positive path that she has started this year. By being an athlete, she knows that the higher standards of school attendance, grade checks and other requirements will have to be maintained in order for her to participate in the softball program. She is eager to join the team, and has developed several friendships with the girls during the conditioning workouts.

In her spare time, when she is not at school, study hall or conditioning workouts, she attends church and uses her skills learned from her high school Building Construction class to build chicken coops and rabbit hutches to sell online. She currently has orders for three hutches.

In comparison to last year, this student has made tremendous progress in becoming, not only a better student, but a better overall citizen. I certainly believe that given that opportunity to participate in athletics, will not only be an emotional boost, but will be an encouragement to continue down her latest path in life.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this appeal for Alexys.

Sincerely,



Cyndy L. Miller