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## School district presents case against OSAA

By **DEREK WILEY**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Salem-Keizer won't have to wait much longer to find out if five of its high school athletic teams will compete in a league with three Bend schools beginning this fall.

After listening to eight hours of testimony from the Salem-Keizer school district and the Oregon School Activities Association on Monday, Jan. 29, justice Michael Gillette said he would produce a written decision in 10 days to two weeks.

"I will try to do it as quickly as I possibly can," said Gillette, a retired

Oregon supreme court judge. "I've written over a thousand published legal opinions and this is not simple... I haven't the foggiest idea. I will end up writing an opinion that comes out each way and then reading them both and find out which one makes the most sense to me."

OSAA decided on Oct. 16 that McNary, South Salem, Sprague, West Salem and McKay would be placed in a league with Bend, Mountain View and Summit. Salem-Keizer then appealed the decision in November.

The school district went first at the appeal hearing, arguing that the OSAA

did not stick to their criteria of safety, minimizing loss of instructional time, cost and school enrollment data, but instead placed McNary and four Salem schools with Bend because of "competitive balance."

"We win or die on this case whether they followed the criteria," said Paul Dakopolos, the school district's lawyer, in his closing argument.

In his opening statement, Dakopolos said, "seeking competitive balance is impossible in Oregon."

Alan Bushong, executive director of CCTV and a witness for the school district, noted Jesuit's 63 state champi-

onships over the last 11 years.

"Maybe it's noble, but it's not happening," Bushong said of competitive balance. "You can't do it."

Peter Weber, OSAA executive director, argued competitive balance fell under the criteria of school enrollment data. He noted that Oregon moved from a four to six-class system in 2006 due to competitive balance and that it wasn't based on state championships but how teams do during the regular season.

"Being successful varies by school and community," Weber said.

Frank Coburn, girls basketball

coach and parent at McKay, argued that OSAA's public meetings to look at classification were inconvenient, during the work day in Wilsonville. He also felt the OSAA wasn't being transparent with its information, adding he couldn't find it on their Website. Coburn gave testimony at the Oct. 14 meeting but said, "It felt like the room and board was full of people who had already made a decision."

Answering questions from OSAA attorney Jonathan Radmacher, Weber testified that the Classification and Districting Committee's first draft was

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McNary junior Boston Smith scored eight points in a 56-47 loss to top-ranked Sprague on Friday, Jan. 26. KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

## McNary loses top five battle

By **DEREK WILEY**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

McNary stuck to the game plan of holding Sprague to just three 3-pointers and making reigning Greater Valley Conference Player of the Year Tegan Quitoriano earn every point.

But that wasn't enough as the Celtics fell 56-47 on Friday, Jan. 26.

"I thought for the most part, our defense was really, really good tonight and the kids executed the game plan," McNary head coach Ryan Kirch said. "If we make a few shots, it's a different story."

The Celtics trailed by five at halftime and then eight when Sprague junior Jailen Hammer knocked down a 3-pointer to open the third quarter. However, McNary answered with an 8-0 run to tie the game at 30-30 with 2:58 remaining.

Riccardo Gardelli, who led the Celtics with 14 points and seven rebounds, gave McNary a 35-34 lead to begin the fourth quarter. But Sprague answered with a 13-0 run to take control of the game.

"They made some tough, contested shots and we just didn't shoot well and that's a credit to them," Kirch said. "They guard well and I thought there were times where we forced it a little bit and we didn't move the ball as well as we would have liked and we didn't draw as many fouls as a result."

The Celtics didn't score again until an Alfredo Villarreal three-point play with 1:41 remaining to get McNary within 47-38. But all the Celtics could do from there is foul and the Olympians went 5-for-8 from the free throw line to finish the game.

"They're No. 2 in the state for a reason," Kirch said. "They're pretty darn good. Give them a lot of credit."

Sprague climbed to No. 1 in the OSAA power rankings with the win. McNary remained at No. 5.

Gardelli scored 11 points in the first quarter but the Celtics went to the second period down 15-13.

Quitoriano appeared to pick up his third foul on a

charge with 5:30 remaining in the second but the call was overturned to a defensive foul on McNary. Quitoriano wasn't called for a third foul until 3:11 remaining in the game.

"Coach (Steve) Masten did a good job of protecting him a little bit with the zone," Kirch said.

The Celtics led 22-20 but Sprague finished the first half on a 7-0 run over the final 4 minutes.

Chandler Cavell, McNary's leading scorer this season, finished with only five points, which included a 3-pointer with only 28 seconds left to play.

"Hammer does a really nice job, he's physical with him," Kirch said. "We had a tough time inside, they sagged off of the high post. He had some good looks. He just missed some shots."

Cavell also had six rebounds and five assists. Lucas Garvey and Boston Smith each finished with eight points. Andrew Jones added six points and four rebounds.

## Celtics to fight for district crowns

By **DEREK WILEY**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Missing most of last season with an injury, Enrique Vincent was able to sneak up on other wrestlers to win the district title.

As the No. 1 seed this year, Vincent is determined to make sure the same thing doesn't happen to him.

"I have a pretty good feeling about it but that can always happen," Vincent said. "There can always be people I don't even know that can sneak up."

Vincent will enter the district tournament at McKay on Feb. 2-3 undefeated at 126 pounds in league duals this season. He expects Ethan Tyler of West Albany and Luke Merzenich of Sprague to be his toughest competition.

At 160 pounds, Brayden Ebbs will also enter the district tournament undefeated, but did miss two duals, Forrest Grove and Sprague, with a concussion.

"I've had a few big wins and I feel very confident going into my district tournament and I intend to win it," Ebbs said.

His toughest match came



McNary seniors Blake Norton (220), left, and Brayden Ebbs (160) will lead the Celtics into the district tournament at McKay High School on Friday and Saturday. File

in a 6-4 win over David Rubio of McKay.

"It wasn't my best match that I wrestled but I was fresh off a concussion and just getting back in my groove pretty much," Ebbs said. "Two weeks off takes some conditioning off you. I've been focusing a lot more on my conditioning and getting in better shape so I can be in that third round and

not have to worry about being in a close match."

McNary freshman Grady Burrows hasn't lost at 106 pounds but didn't wrestle in the Celtics final four duals against North Salem, McKay, West Salem and West Albany.

Logan Basham of North Salem and Bollong Joklur of Sprague are the other wrestlers to watch at 106.

McNary senior Blake Norton went 7-1 at 220 pounds with his only loss coming to Jacob Luna of Sprague.

As a team, the Celtics finished third in the Greater Valley Conference this season at 5-3, behind West Albany and Sprague.

McNary placed seventh at the district meet last year, finishing only three points out of

third.

Head coach Jason Ebbs projects this year's tournament to be just as tight.

"Our league has a lot of parity and everybody's got their strengths and weaknesses," Ebbs said.

McNary is expected to fill 23 of 28 spots at the district meet.

Wrestling begins Friday at

11:55 a.m. and then resumes Saturday at 10 a.m.

Third/fourth and fifth/sixth place matches will start at approximately 3:30 p.m., followed by championship finals at 4:30.

The top four from each weight class advance to the state tournament on Feb. 16-17 at Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Portland.



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