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## Salem Keizer appeal denied

By DEREK WILEY  
*Of the Keizertimes*

McNary High School will officially be competing in a league with Bend beginning next fall.

Salem-Keizer School District's appeal against the OSAA's decision to place five of its high schools, in a conference with Bend, Mountain View and Summit was dismissed by hearings officer Michael Gillette, who stated there was "no legal basis on which I can sustain the district's appeal."

The school district received the opinion on Thursday, Feb. 22, more than three weeks after Salem-Keizer argued its case at a hearing on Jan. 29.

"Understandably, we are disheartened by this ruling," said Superintendent Christy Perry. "We know this will impact our students and our staff, as well as their families. We have already begun assessing ways to reduce the impact to our budgets, but we know our student athletes are going to have to make some difficult decisions about participation because of the impact to their time in our classrooms."

In its appeal, Salem-Keizer said OSAA did not give the district sufficient notice that SKPS would be placed in a district that included Bend-La Pine. The district also stated the Classification and Districting Committee failed to consider the safety of students, fans and school personnel; the impact to student instructional time; and the additional expenses imposed on the schools as a result of redistricting.

In regards to lack of notice, Gillette noted that the CDC issued two draft classification and districting proposals in October of 2016, a six class proposal and a five class proposal. Both placed Bend high schools in the same district as Salem-Keizer. Moving forward, further drafts continued to assign most Salem-Keizer schools in a league with Bend. A later suggestion from the Salem-Keizer athletic directors even supported a proposed five class model that would combine the three Bend and five Salem-Keizer schools.

"I find that the district had plenty of notice," Gillette wrote in his opinion. "Whether with respect to a five or six tiered classification system, Salem-Keizer was aware virtually from the outset of the CDC's work that there were those who believed that a joint league of Salem-Keizer and Bend-La Pine schools was appropriate."

Gillette also noted that nearly half of the proposals by the committee over its year-long process placed the two school districts in a league together and that two different proposals from the district itself to the CDC appeared to accept the idea.

"It may be that, as the process neared its end, Salem-Keizer believed that it was no longer in danger of being placed in such a league, but there was no guarantee of that," Gillette wrote.

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KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley  
McNary senior Paige Downer scored five points in her final game at Oregon City on Tuesday, Feb. 27.

## Lady Celts one and done at Oregon City

By DEREK WILEY  
*Of the Keizertimes*

OREGON CITY—McNary got Oregon City out of its full-court press early but the Lady Celts couldn't make enough shots to pull off the upset, falling to the Pioneers 51-41 on Tuesday, Feb. 27 in the first round of the 6A girls basketball state playoffs.

"We knew that one of the keys to winning was beating their press," McNary senior Kailey Doust said.

"We watched film on it and they destroyed teams with the press. They got their hands everywhere. They jump the ball a lot and get a lot of turnovers out of it."

In a game that featured 10 guards on the floor for much of it, the Lady Celts kept up

with Oregon City's fast and aggressive play in the first half.

After the Pioneers went on a 8-0 run at the end of the first period, McNary senior Paige Downer knocked down a jump shot at the top of the key and then a 3-pointer from the corner to get the Lady Celts within 14-13 with 6:27 remaining in the first half.

When Oregon City immediately answered with a three-point play, Abbie Hawley made a 3 and Sabella Alfaro hit two free throws to tie the game at 18-18 with 2:55 remaining.

Alfaro, who led the Lady Celts with 11 points, including eight in the first half, tied the game again at 20-20 on a layup with 1:53 left to play.

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# Cutting down the net

## Celtics wrap up league title on senior night

By DEREK WILEY  
*Of the Keizertimes*

The singing started with 1:33 left to play.

It came from the McNary student section—"We are the champions."

With 54 seconds remaining, Celtics head coach Ryan Kirch called a timeout so seniors Riccardo Gardelli, Andrew Jones, Lucas Garvey and Chandler Cavell could each leave the court, one at a time, to cheers from the stands and hugs from the bench.

The countdown was then on, 10, nine, eight... until the final buzzer sounded and McNary students stormed the court to celebrate a Greater Valley Conference championship.

The Celtics sealed the GVC title with a 73-56 win over McMinnville on Wednesday, Feb. 21.

After the game, coaches passed out championship t-shirts. On the back was a picture of the team and under it the words "GVC League Champs, 5th to 1st."

Before the season, McNary was picked by the league's coaches to finish fifth in the GVC and the Celtics certainly hadn't forgotten.

"That put a chip on our shoulder," said Garvey, who had 20 points while going 5-for-8 from 3 against McMinnville. "We took it to heart and we played really good this season."

A ladder was then placed under the basket and each player cut down the net, one string at a time, beginning with the seniors and ending with Kirch.

"It just solidifies what I hope our program is recognized for, being competitive, being tough and most importantly playing together as a group," Kirch said of the league championship. "These guys are all really good friends and you can tell by the way they play. They just love playing with each other and for each other and it's contagious. You can see it on the floor."

No better example of that on this night was junior Boston Smith, who came off the bench, so senior Daniel Zwemke could start on senior night.

"I asked Boston if he was comfortable with Dan starting and he couldn't have been happier," Kirch said. "It



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley  
ABOVE: McNary seniors Daniel Zwemke, from left, Riccardo Gardelli, Chandler Cavell, Andrew Jones and Lucas Garvey were honored before their final regular season home game against McMinnville. BELOW: Head coach Ryan Kirch, left, and Jones cut down the net after winning the Greater Valley Conference championship.



was about the team. It's hard to find that anymore in high school athletics. These guys just love playing together and

they love McNary and the city of Keizer is unique in that we just have one high school here and this is the high school of

Keizer. Kids grow up wanting to play for McNary and experience all of that."

Gardelli, an exchange stu-

dent from Italy, had 18 points, 16 rebounds and five assists in the victory.

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