

OSAA appeal denied

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 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 the OSAA did not give the district sufficient notice that SKPS would be placed with three Bend schools (Mountain View, Summit and Bend). The district also stated the Classification and

sued 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."



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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 regard to lack of notice, Gillette noted that the CDC is-



McNary seniors Daniel Zwemke, from left, Ricardo Gardelli, Chandler Cavell, Andrew Jones and Lucas Garvey played significant roles in the Celtics winning the league championships

Celts clinch league crown on senior night

The singing started with 1:33 left to play.

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

With 54 seconds remaining, 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 varsity boys basketball squad officially clinched the Greater Valley Conference title with a 73-56 win over McMinnville on 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 18 points while going 5-for-8 from beyond the arc. "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."

That friendship was put on display before the game when junior post Boston Smith, came off the bench so that senior Daniel Zwemke could start on senior night — the final home game of the regular season.

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

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

"This is the best night of my life," Gardelli said. "We played like a real team, like a family. I've never been on a team where they take me (in) like a member of the family and I've been here just six months and to me it's just like a second family. I feel blessed. I'm from the middle of nowhere and I'm winning a league championship. League championship, I can't stop saying that."

"I'm always trying to get better and this game is showing off the work that I did. I don't know how many rebounds I (got). I don't know how many points I (got) but I know that we're a beautiful team. We all play together. Everybody was on fire tonight."

Wolverines win all-city

Cheryl Barrie, cross country coach at Whiteaker Middle School, knew she had something special the first time she saw sixth grader Vince Estrada run.

"At the 1000 meter mark, I saw him cruising down the hill in first place and thought he was running at an unsustainable pace and the next thing I know he is crossing the finish line in first place," Barrie said.

Estrada finished the 2K at Bush Pasture Park on Sept. 27 in 8 minutes and 12 seconds.

It was his first race, ever. "My mom was a competitive runner in high school as well as my uncles," Estrada said. "I feel like it runs through my blood and I wanted to continue the family tradition."

Estrada's teammates, Brayden Kaehler, Caden Carter, Aidan Hedberg and Derek Jones, were close behind finishing second, fourth, fifth and ninth, to post a team score of 19 points.

A perfect score is 15 points. Throughout the season, Whiteaker's sixth grade boys only got faster. Estrada won all four meets he entered and on Thursday, Oct. 25, the Wolverines took first at the Salem-Keizer All-City Cross Country Meet at Bush Park.

Estrada won the 2K race in 7:47. Carter (8:12), Hedberg (8:18), Jones (8:25) and Kaehler (8:34) placed fifth, seventh, 10th and 15th out of 95 runners.

"I was so nervous that day for a couple of reasons, one was the possibility of slipping on a wet downhill course and second was letting myself, family,

and school down," Estrada said.

Barrie also added: "Coach (Bradley) Kilgroe and I loved working with this group of hard working boys and girls," Barrie said. "We are already excited for next year as Aspynn

returns coupled with our sixth grade girls and boys will make for an exciting year. "We are both lucky to teach and coach in our Keizer community with such great support from parents and our Whiteaker administra-



Vince Estrada, from left, Caden Carter, Aidan Hedberg, Brayden Kaehler and Derek Jones helped the Whiteaker sixth grade boys cross country team win the all-city meet

puzzle answers

8	6	1	5	9	2	4	7	3
4	5	7	8	1	3	9	2	6
2	9	3	4	6	7	1	8	5
3	8	5	7	4	9	2	6	1
9	7	2	6	5	1	8	3	4
6	1	4	2	3	8	5	9	7
5	2	8	1	7	6	3	4	9
1	3	6	9	8	4	7	5	2
7	4	9	3	2	5	6	1	8

B	R	E	D	B	A	S	E	S	A	L	D	A		
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