



Escalation: Student Safety and Program Concerns - Myers Park Softball

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To: Robert Folk <robert.folk@cms.k12.nc.us>

Cc: Poore, Brian <brian.poore@cms.k12.nc.us>

Hi Principal Folk,

Thank you again for the time and attention you've given to this situation. I do believe you are sincere in wanting to help Anna, and I appreciate the effort you and AD Poore have put into working through this with us.

That said, it's been hard to see meaningful improvement at the school level. We've now had multiple conversations, but we haven't seen meaningful change in what is happening day to day, and that gap appears to be at the coaching level.

I want to go back to when Anna said she never wanted to play softball again, which is what led me to get involved. In my initial conversation with Coach Vinny, the primary example he chose to share was that Anna once walked past him without giving "pounds." More recently, she has been told she "doesn't say hi," despite acknowledging him with a nod and thumbs up.

At the same time, Anna is not being used in games.

It's hard to reconcile how minor and subjective interactions like these are leading to that outcome, especially given the impact it's having on her.

There are also decisions being made that raise concerns about both player safety and team performance. A pitcher missed practice due to back issues and then pitched in a game the next day. A sophomore who had not pitched previously was put into a game situation mid-season and faced six batters, hitting one, walking three, and allowing two runs, which I understand is the most Garinger has scored all season. Anna was not asked to warm up at all.

Given Anna's prior experience, it's hard to understand how these decisions align with player development, player safety, or a focus on winning.

I do appreciate the effort that has gone into working through these and establishing clear agreements. The challenge has been that those agreements are not being carried through in practice or during games at the coaching level, which is where the breakdown seems to be occurring.

1. An agreement was made to allow Anna to call her own pitches temporarily to rebuild trust. That did not occur as discussed.
2. It was agreed, with AD Poore present, that if Anna threw the pitches that were called, the outcome would be the responsibility of the coaching staff. We later received communication placing that outcome back on Anna.
3. It was agreed that a trusted adult would be present for one-on-one performance discussions. That has not been consistently followed.

For the upcoming discussion, I'd like to focus on getting alignment between what's being discussed and what's actually happening in practice and games, and ensuring a consistent and supportive environment for Anna moving forward.

I appreciate your continued attention to this.

Thanks,

Morgan

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