

**LETTER MAILED ON JUNE 12, 2006 TO DR. SANDR HENNON,
AND COPIED TO MIKE KROL & ALL MEMBERS OF THE
LAUREL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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LAUREL SOCCER CLUB, INC.

P.O. Box 8926, New Castle, PA 16107

www.laurelsoccerclub.com

June 12, 2006

Dear Sandra Hennon,

I am writing this letter in response to your letter of May 25th. The parents of Laurel soccer players and I are very frustrated by your answer. We feel that the blanket "No" to all of the proposals options I made in my presentation to the board a few weeks earlier deserves an explanation. Please explain when and who had the discussion and gave consideration to my proposal. Mr.Krol advised me that no discussion or vote would take place at the meeting. I understood that to mean that a discussion would take place at the following school district work session, which I had planned to attend. I also offered to join in the discussion with the board or have a member of the board join a group of soccer parents to discuss the obstacles which may need to be addressed when launching a soccer program in the high school. No such contact was made, and I was shocked when I received the letter, which I am sure you feel closed the door on this subject. I am writing to assure you, that as far as the parents of Laurel soccer players are concerned, the door is not closed, I would also like to point out additional facts which I feel you, the administration and board should be aware of.

I am writing this as president of the Laurel Soccer Club and a parent of both a 9th & 10th grade student. They do play soccer, however are also involved in other school extra curricular programs and plan to continue those activities in the future. My 10th grade daughter in particular is quite a talented artist and intends to spend as much time as possible working on school musicals. They have both been on honor roll part of the year.

My first proposal regarding soccer involved a co-op agreement between Lincoln High School and our district and in particular focused on 7 girls. Please explain the negative impact granting this request was going to have on the existing athletic programs and co-curricular activities at Laurel High School. If these same 7 girls joined Girl Scouts, FFA, ballet school or any other numerous after school activities, the district wouldn't have any objections. The only reason the 7 girls need your permission is because of rules set out by WPIAL. These girls have been participating in this sport since the age of 4, and if their parents had decided not to move to this community, they wouldn't be fighting a battle to do something they love. Among the girls who would like to participate in the co-op program, are girls who have sat on the bench or been cut from athletic programs at Laurel. Why then do you deny them the opportunity to participate in a sport they love and that they would be welcome to participate in and have the chance to shine and be recognized as a leader?

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The second request was for the school to loan its' name to our existing club program. This again is a rule set out by WPIAL, where in order for these girls to play other schools, and not as part of a co-op team, the school would loan its' name and provide no financial support. The shortcomings of this arrangement would be that no matter how good the team was, it would not qualify for any championship play within the WPIAL system, nor would they earn a letter for the sport. The benefit derived would be to continue to expand on their skills development and also allow them a chance to be reviewed by college coaches for possible inclusion on a college level soccer team. Other schools in our part of the state have used this method to "test the waters" to be sure there was adequate interest in the sport to field a team. In addition it allowed the school to monitor what effect the inclusion of soccer had on their existing programs. If there was no noticeable effect, than the answer is made quite clear, allow the program to continue. If there is a fall off in another sport, than it would require some serious consideration as to whether that sport should in fact be allowed to continue including allowing soccer or drop the unpopular sport.

I delivered some charts and graphs with my original presentation; I have now included several others. The first is the current 2006 survey taken by Ms. Millers' 7th grade English classes. Please note that soccer has now elevated to the third most popular sport and if you would compare this to the previous three charts I handed out, baseball has dropped significantly. The second spreadsheet attached, details facts taken from the current WPIAL sports schedules for several schools in our immediate area. I have included their male / female enrollment figures as well as a checkmark to indicate the sports they allow their students to participate in. An additional fact regarding the subject of soccer having a negative impact on existing programs; all championship football schools in the WPIAL for the last 4 years have both soccer and football programs in their school, from A to AAAA. Our athletic director, Mr. Nogay as well as our football coaches should be the first ones on the bandwagon, wanting soccer in Laurel to aid in our chances of winning a title. We all know that many of our standout kickers on the Laurel football team have come from soccer roots and benefited from the training they received as a youth.

I am asking as the club president, Laurel parent and voting taxpayer from this community, please reconsider our request for a soccer program. Consider all of the benefits that will be derived from its' inclusion. Quotes from the Save Title IX website; "Playing sports makes women healthier. They're less likely to smoke, drink, use drugs and experience unwanted pregnancies. Studies also link sports participation to reduced incidences of breast cancer and osteoporosis later in life." "Participation in team sports prepares individuals for leadership opportunities in their vocation." I am sure that there are similar findings for male athletes as well. Remember soccer is the largest sport in the world, and children learn to kick the ball from the time they walk. It is a great cardiovascular activity for all shapes and sizes of children. I realize many of us, do not understand the rules and / or the game, but that should not prevent our youth from playing it and thus us learning it.

I am looking forward to hearing from you or the board.

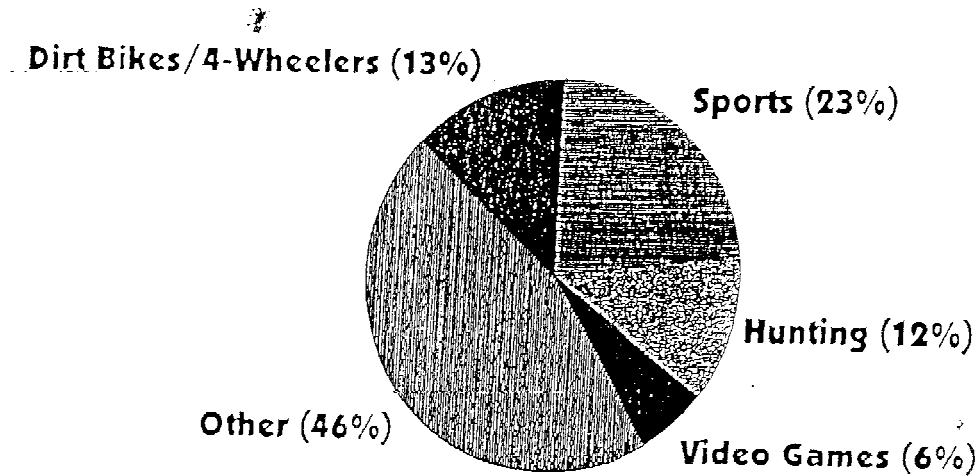
Sincerely,

Vincent Bejgrowicz
President – Laurel Soccer Club
H) 724-652-2443
C) 724-651-9080

Cc: Mr. Krol & all members of the current school board

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Favorite Activity/Hobby



2006

Favorite Sport

