

December 16, 2015

Tate Bollingberg  
5844 Pinhurst Ct.  
Grand Forks, ND 58201

DEC 21 2015

North Dakota High School Activities Association  
PO Box 817  
Valley City, ND 58072

Dietrich Bus Services, Grand Forks

Dear: NDHSAA Board

I am writing to you because I would love to see students and coaches in the Grand Forks School District not have to be ranked by what event is most important. The high school teams and public schools are a higher priority than middle school teams. After coaching at the middle school level, I learned that these younger teams are disregarded. Dietrich Bus Service has been operating in Grand Forks since I was in elementary school. Growing up I never really thought about the services, but now that I'm in college and coaching middle school sports I've seen firsthand the issues. I also know I am not the only one who has issues with Dietrich.

This fall I coached boys' soccer and worked with Dietrich for a whole season. If the buses were supposed to be at the school at 4:00 p.m., they would not be there until 4:15 or 4:30 p.m. and games would be starting at 4:45 p.m. Our bus also broke down with a dead battery when we were at an away game. We tried calling Dietrich multiple times but no one picked up. We had to call the kids' parents, tried to jump start the bus, and after an hour and a half of waiting, the next Dietrich bus came to pick up the kids from the game that took place after our game. That driver was going to another school so our parents had to shuttle the kids back to the school. These parents and students should not have to shuttle and watch these students, they have lives and the kids have other activities and homework to do; it is not the coaches or parents job. The students are not division one athletes where sports come first, they will always be students first and waiting an extra hour and a half cuts into dinner with the family, studying, and other activities they might have had after this particular game. Before starting the season we were warned that Dietrich is understaffed, and they will most likely be late, and that no one is usually at the main station.

Dietrich is the only public transportation system that works directly with the public schools, this is a problem. With no competition, they control the market and can act however they want because they own the market. There may not be enough demand in Grand Forks for two school bus transporters, but it should be seriously considered. If another bus service opened in the Grand Forks market and starting transporting with the public schools, they could lower their

prices to start getting business and over time competition could balance the market share from monopoly to perfect competition. With the new market structure, they would work off each other to become a better business and we would not have a shortage of busses or employees.

I am currently a junior at UND earning a degree in Banking and Financial Economics. I have lived in Grand Forks my whole life and played sports since I was young. I played soccer and basketball in middle school, and varsity soccer, basketball, and track in high school. I am now a coach and have been on the player side of the bus system and now I am on the business/authoritative side. We, the players and authority figures would love to see a better effort put forth.

We need to see change. Whether that is hiring more people, getting more buses, or having another player join the market. With a dominating share of the market, Dietrich impacts a lot of people, and I am trying to push this business to be the best they can be. I am trying to make Grand Forks a better place to live; I love North Dakota and it is my home. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and I hope to hear back from you or see changes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Tate Bollingberg", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tate Bollingberg