

Hon. Michael J. Baumgartner
Ogemaw County Circuit Court
806 W. Houghton Avenue
West Branch, Michigan 48661

May 8, 2013

Dear Honorable Judge Baumgartner,

I am Harriett H. Coe I was Band Director, Teacher and Girls Basketball Coach at Rose City Middle School for 35 years and am a member of the community for 40 years.

I am writing to request leniency at the sentencing for Neal Erickson. I have known Neal professionally and personally throughout the 17 years he taught at RCMS.

I realize and accept the fact that Neal has made an egregious mistake and ruined his career of teaching. However, Neal is, was, and always will be a good, kind, responsible, hardworking person. He has been a great addition to the community and especially to RCMS. We worked together on many projects. We shared responsibility for RCMS Bands, marching in the Rose City July 4th parade and performing for the Rose City VFW Memorial Day Service. We have played Taps at military funerals. We worked together putting on Christmas Concerts, Spring Concerts, and other band performances. Whenever I needed assistance Neal readily agreed to work with me. His help was invaluable.

Neal worked with me at sporting events at the school I was the girls basketball coach and he voluntarily ran the concession stand to help earn monies for our 6th Grade Camp fund. He is respected by the students and parents of our school and had no problems with crowd control. During the boys basketball season he also volunteered at the concession stand and crowd control. This included bi-monthly trips to Saginaw for supplies done on our time and our gas money. Neal gave freely of his time for the betterment of the school and community.

Neal assisted me with our 6th Grade Camp, volunteering for any and all fund raisers, spending many hours helping in the preparation of the week-long camp, and giving up an entire week every year for 16 years to enhance the students lives. During school sanctioned activities there was never any inappropriate conduct between Neal and any student.

Neal has plead guilty for his one criminal offense but he is not a predator. This was an isolated incident. He understands the severity of his action and is sincere in his desire to make amends. He has been candid and conveyed his action to his family, friends, and coworkers. Neal can and will be a contributing citizen of our community. Because of his guilty plea and acceptance of his action, I pray upon your understanding to consider the lower end of the sentencing guidelines.

I have faith that the right course of action will be considered by the justice system

Thank you for considering this request for leniency.

Sincerely,

Harriett H. Coe

Harriett H. Coe
RCMS Teacher, Retired

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