

January 24, 2009

Maine Principals Association  
50 Industrial Drive  
P.O. box 2468  
Augusta, ME 04338-2468

Dear MPA Committee,

My name is Fiona Hendry and I am writing to share with you my thoughts and experience as you prepare to vote on the proposal to withdraw from New England competition.

Having the chance to participate in the New England Cross-Country championships this fall at Derryfield Park in Manchester, New Hampshire was by far the highlight of my freshman cross-country running season. I was proud and excited by the honor of representing not only my school, but my home state in such a prominent way. It provided me with an exceptional opportunity. Not only was I able to measure my abilities against the very best runners from Maine, but throughout New England. At the same time the outlook it provided, allowed me to view every competitor participating with respect and camaraderie, as we all had worked and earned the right to run there. We were each among the best from our respective states.

As a student in middle school, I watched as my older sister, tried to "make" New England's each cross-country and track season. She did so only in her junior year, and it was viewed as the pinnacle of a successful season. And so it remains. It is a goal, something to work hard for, dream about and reach towards.

I urge you to vote against the proposal to withdraw from New England competition. The cost in dollars to participate is small, but the cost to the morale and the tremendous loss of OPPORTUNITY for every Maine High School athlete is immeasurable.

Sincerely,

Fiona Hendry  
Freshman  
Cheverus High School  
Portland, ME