

Dear Mr. Reymer,

I am compelled to write to you on behalf of the Varsity and Junior Varsity Cross Country and Distance Track teams to formally express our collective concerns regarding the leadership of Head Coach Russ Munyan. We greatly value our participation in Carson High School athletics and as dedicated student-athletes are committed to the success and reputation of the team.

However, we as a team feel as though the current coaching environment is hindering our ability to competitively and safely represent Carson High. One of the major concerns is the inconsistency of the training plan. As you likely know, cross country requires a structured build up of stamina and strength over the course of the off season, and during the season it requires specific mileage and speed work outs to prevent injuries and result in a peak during Regional and State Championships. With that knowledge, our current training plans are erratic, rushed, and lack clear physiological goals or purpose. This inconsistency has led to increased injuries, stagnant race times, along with burnout and frustration among the team. Building on these concerns, there has also been a consistent pattern of disregarding feedback collected from both athletes and parents regarding the structure and outcomes of the Cross Country season. Surveys and direct input have been provided with the intention of improving the program; however, these concerns have largely gone unacknowledged and unaddressed. This lack of responsiveness has contributed to a growing disconnect between the coaching staff and the athletes and families they represent, further reinforcing the feeling that the athlete well-being and program improvement are not being prioritized. Furthermore, there has been significant logistical inconsistencies, such as a lack of clear communication regarding practice locations and meet day logistics. A few primary meet day concerns consist of: zero advice or strategies given to athletes before races,

incorrect event placement, or alternatively not being put in events at all, and on top of this once events are completed there is a lack of professionalism in the coaching with unnecessarily harsh, negative criticism of athletes' performances. This inconsistency makes it difficult for the team to manage academic loads and recovery; both mentally and physically, negatively impacting students' grades and well-being. Moreover, there has been a considerable gap between the coaching staff's directives and the physical reality of our athletes. Efforts have been made to provide feedback regarding fatigue levels or workout intensity and are often disregarded leading to the team being ignored, undervalued, and lacking proper support. With regard to these concerns shared throughout the team, previous discussions have been held with the head coaches of track and field and these issues still persist. During one of the distance exclusive meets, the Dublin Distance Fiesta, significant problems were caused following Munyan's protocol. While at the meet multiple issues arose; from poor time management, faulty schedules, disorganization due to repeated unpreparedness, insufficient or lack of communication, and even arguments among the coaches and athletes. Munyan continuously proved to be unprepared and all over the place. While the Dublin Distance Fiesta was quickly approaching, Munyan failed to prepare an itinerary for the overnight meet and solely relied on the track parent volunteer, assistant cross country coach Tara Theilen. to provide one for the team instead. When we finally arrived at the meet, Munyan proceeded to disregard the planned itinerary and Coach Theilen's input. This would not have mattered, had the hotel rooms been properly booked ahead of schedule. Instead, during the meet there were multiple issues with hotel lodging, communication, and unpreparedness, as Munyan had failed to book the hotel rooms ahead of our arrival. This meant we had to head back to the track and miss meal times. After spending several hours resolving the room issues for the night, we later found out that Munyan once again failed to plan or

communicate and only booked the rooms for one night meaning another prolonged stay at the track in the heat while he contacted the hotel again. The results of this ineffective management and organization on Munyan's part led to arguments with Coach Theilen (who was advocating for athlete well-being), and left the athletes uncomfortable, tired, and confused. There were significant periods where athletes were discontent with Munyan due to being unaware of what the schedule was, when meals and breaks were, and unreasonable leave and arrival times. There were a large range of gaps from when athletes arrived and when they competed. Some had to leave the hotel at 6 AM when they competed 12 hours later at 6 PM and other gaps where athletes had 20 minutes to get from the hotel to the track; leaving an insufficient and unsafe amount of time for the athlete to warm up and prepare for their race immediately upon arriving at the track. Regarding the races, Munyan was continuously negative to athletes and coaches, making cruel comments to athletes directly criticizing their effort and result. Other times he completely missed athletes' entire races because he was chatting with other school's coaches. While these issues may seem limited to just the Dublin meet there have been other instances where problems arose. During practices at Carson High Munyan continues to completely disregard athletes' concerns. Munyan regularly develops practice strategies based on things irrelevant to our training and the sport, pushing back on teammates' major concerns with our health and development. Other problems surrounding the training plan is the distinction between JV and Varsity. Athletes who were running Varsity training for weeks were suddenly moved to a JV training plan stunting running growth, while JV runners on a JV plan were abruptly moved up to meet significantly higher varsity level intensity training, and mileage weeks. This change in training would be less disadvantageous if Munyan had attempted to even discuss the reasons regarding the shift or addressed if this shift would benefit the athletes affected. At a regular

practice Munyan got into another dispute with two highly experienced athletes discounting their input, intentionally interrupting them during conversation, and even sidelining one of the athletes in retaliation to a disagreement with him about the training plan. The result of this argument was an intervention with the main track coaches, the two athletes, and Munyan. Following this intervention, the main coaches, Britt and Hagar, had to tell Munyan to stop interrupting the athletes and let them speak. After the meeting with the two athletes a team wide discussion was held to address any issues, this only slightly helped as there are major problems evidently still present. One matter of contention we discussed was the training plan and Munyan's solution was to use AI to structure workouts, which are still far off from the athletes' abilities as it lacks any personalization to each specific athlete. Correspondingly, there are more significant concerns regarding the absence of individualized plans. Throughout the season the same training structure has and is being applied across all groups, including both boys and girls teams as well as Varsity and JV levels. Athletes across these distinct groups are completing identical mileage, intensity levels, and weekly workout plans despite clear differences in experience, development and physiological needs. This uniform approach does not reflect appropriate training principles for distance running and increases the risk of injury, overtraining, and stagnation in performance. The avoidance of individualization and differentiation between male and female athletes demonstrates a lack of appropriate planning and undermines the development of athletes at all levels. Munyan's distorted training plans have resulted in increased injuries and discomfort within the team. The result of Munyan's operational inconsistency has caused many of the 2025-2026 freshmen to switch from long distance events to sprinting events, and even sparked conversations of sport changes/quitting of the upcoming fall Cross Country season. A majority of distance upper classmen from JV and Varsity ultimately dropped out of Track and Field entirely,

including the cross country team captains who had participated in previous track seasons in response to Munyan being the coach. Such athletes are doing this in an attempt to completely avoid his coaching and presence within athletics. On multiple occasions, complaints with Munyan have brought forth discussions among team members of quitting the sport and abstaining from further participation in any sports involving him in upcoming years. Among the remaining athletes, morale is persistently low with a major shift in discussions from previous seasons, while complaints following coaching, training, and meets are common, this shift is drastic in comparison to previous seasons where improvement was focused on, personal growth and goals were reasonable, and recovery from training along with academic loads were not consistent concerns for the whole team. Another issue is the absence of focus on distance runners where he is supposedly specialized in leading. Instead his focus is on jumping/sprinting athletes, relays, and other track coaches even outside the Carson program. This lack of focus has brought extreme disconnect with training schedules, participation, communication, and proper recovery. Munyan is aware of the team's isolation from him, making immature comments and stating "someone is turning the athletes against him" disregarding the thought of his unprofessionalism within his coaching. His personal neglect of responsibility for issues he directly caused has developed the team's avoidance and his reliance on others to be responsible for the tasks of his job has made him unreliable for athletes to seek guidance. Furthermore, there have been clear instances demonstrating a lack of advocacy for athletes during competition. At a recent home meet, an athlete from our team placed first in their event on the opening day. According to the meet's rules, this placement qualified the athlete to compete in the same event the following day, with heat placement adjusted based on time. Despite witnessing the race and the athlete's qualifying performance, Munyan failed to inform the athlete of this opportunity or take any

action to ensure their participation in the subsequent race. This lack of awareness and advocacy denied the athlete a deserved competitive opportunity and reflects a broader issue of inattention during critical moments. In addition, there are ongoing concerns regarding athlete placement and decision-making for meet entries. At the same meet, rules allowed up to four athletes per team to compete in a single event; however, only two Carson athletes were entered in the varsity section of an event in which we had additional capable runners. This underutilization limited team representation and competitive potential. On another note, prior to the meet, an athlete with stronger personal records and season results was placed behind other athletes and assigned to a JV race. This decision was justified by Munyan with reasoning that performance at elevation would give athletes an advantage stating, "This could be their last meet to make Varsity times," disregarding the other athletes' attempts. The athlete in question conclusively out performed at least one of those placed ahead of them in multiple events, further highlighting inconsistencies and a lack of objective, performance based decision making. There are many other deep seated issues resulting from Munyan but these were just a few examples that have affected the whole team in some way. We would also like to note that Assistant coach Tara Theilen has demonstrated a superior understanding of distance running mechanics and team management. Her approach has provided the stability and expertise the team currently relies on and each of us turn to her for guidance. We believe the program needs a leadership approach that prioritizes evidence based training and open communication where both coaches and athletes are respected as individuals and as a team. We politely request a formal meeting with you to discuss how we can move toward a more productive and healthy environment regarding the upcoming Cross country season.

Thank you for your commitment to our overall well-being and success as student athletes.

Sincerely,



In the interest of student-athlete safety and to prevent any potential for professional or personal retaliation, we have attached a list of supporting signatures on the following page. We provide these names to demonstrate the consensus of the team, but we request that you maintain this list as a confidential administrative document. We specifically ask that this list not be shared with unnecessary coaching staff or Munyan regarding the people mentioned below.

CC:

Principal Dan Carstens

Vice Principal Rodney Wade

