November 1, 2026

Dear Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame Committee,

I write you with my highest wholehearted recommendation for Kevin Wallace's induction into the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. Kevin Wallace's record stands for itself: 40 years, 371 wins, 4th most in Kentucky history, 6 state titles, multiple Coach of the Year awards, but his impact on my life and all of the players he has coached is innumerable.

I played football for Kevin Wallace at Warren East High School. Our teams in the early 90's were small in numbers, limited in size, and short in athleticism. Of his 371 wins, the teams I played on and captained in 1993 contributed a disproportionately low number. My teams didn't contribute a playoff run, and of course not one of his six state championships. Still, he coached those teams with a passion and zeal that taught us to love football and each other.

Beyond the field, I feel very strongly that his mentorship and decisions contributed immensely to the life I live and the successes I have had. His commitment to people and his value of relationships are among his greatest characteristics. I can't put my finger on a date or how old I was, but somewhere between my freshman year and senior year, I found myself in the Warren East football locker room alone between classes. Coach's office was open and on his desk was a thick stack of tickets. For some reason, I decided it wouldn't matter if I took one or two. I stole two of those tickets without a good reason; in fact, I gave them away not even knowing what they were for. Of course, a few days later I was called to his office and received the wrath I deserved. He told me I was wrong, ran me thoroughly and frequently that winter, and I existed outside his good graces for a majority of that offseason.

I have read of so many times of young men who have made similar mistakes and have had consequences that have utterly changed the course of their lives-from being kicked off a team, to expelled, to turned over to authorities. Kevin Wallace judged me, held me accountable, and coached me to become a man without the brand that would have limited my opportunities. In fact, he would become a champion for me in college recruitment, college applications, and even becoming a part of the 1993 Kentucky All-Star Football team. I would go on to play at Western Kentucky, obtain a graduate degree and PhD, and become a director in an anesthesia program at the University of Louisville. Periodically, I have called upon him for guidance for so many things that have nothing to do with football. I have no doubt that his decision that morning impacted the life I live today-and I am forever grateful.

When I learned about the director role I have today, the fact that Kevin Wallace was the coach at St. Xavier was a major factor in why my wife and I chose to come to Louisville from Lexington. The opportunity for my youngest son to be coached by and develop a relationship with Kevin Wallace was clearly God's grace.

In my role today, I often meet with doctoral students who encounter problems. I hope that my judgement is as sound as Kevin Wallace's. I hope that my decisions and my support will allow them to grow and succeed just as Coach's did for me so long ago. I can think of no one who is more deserving to be a member of the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,



Zohn Centimole, PhD, CRNA, FAANA
Assistant Director, Nurse Anesthesia Track
School of Nursing
University of Louisville