



**Springfield
High School**
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June 9, 2015

Re: Luke Wilson

Dear District Hardship Committee:

I am writing this letter in full support of incoming 11th grader Luke Wilson's application to attend Churchill High School and participate in athletics effective immediately. I have known Luke since his middle school years but it was not until he became a student at Springfield High School that I got to witness first-hand what a well-rounded and gifted student-athlete he is.

When I heard this past April that Luke wished to transfer to a different school, I met with him. By the time our meeting ended, I was convinced that his story was so compelling that I offered to be part of a support system for him whether he chose to stay or transfer due to his struggles socially and emotionally. He had been suffering quietly since he enrolled as a freshman.

What is unique about this situation is its complexity. After I met with Luke a couple more times, it became apparent to me that he was a target of frequent covert verbal harassment charged with either racial slurs or hostile language questioning his sexuality. He tried to ignore it but it got a point that he became emotionally fragile and it began to adversely affect his grades. To protect himself, he withdrew so much from his peers that he felt isolated. In light of these events, Luke would benefit from a fresh start in an environment where he already has a support system.

For the sake of Luke's wellbeing, I urge District Hardship Committee to grant Luke a waiver to participate in athletics immediately so can be fully integrated into activities with which he identifies. This will help him stay focused and engaged in school.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

José da Silva
Principal