



## **PORLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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### **Madison High School**

September 31, 2015

I am writing this letter supporting an OSAA hardship for Ericson Samina. Ericson was one of our most challenging and influential gang members last year. He was activity recruiting our students and pulling the strings on several major issues that took place in our building during the 2014-15 school year. He was attending school only because he was on probation, he would attend class and do no work, he would out in the halls constantly recruiting and engaging in gang behavior. As you can see from his transcript he passed one academic skills class in a year and a half of school. He was getting further involved in gang activity outside of school as well. Things started to change once Coach Johnson was hired. Ericson and coach Johnson started to build a relationship right from the start. Ericson began to talk about playing football and if it would even be a possibility because of his grades. In late May Ericson was shot three times while at a party, he was not the intended target per the police, while hanging with known gang members. One of his first calls was to Coach Johnson letting him know that he would not be able to make the first spring practice. On Monday at school we began to see a very different Ericson was as participating in his classes, turning in work, and leading his "followers" in a very different direction. He passes three classes one being a core class, English. He would have passed his writing lab but had to be moved before the shooting to another class because of gang issue his crew was having with another student and his crew. The move put him further behind unfortunately. Once he healed he was back out at practice and attended our spring football camp. It should be noted that Ericson attended along with a teammate that was from another crew that had issues all year until Coach Johnson was hired. The two have not had an issue; they have actually become leaders in our school helping to guide other students in the right direction. Example was the first day of registration: Ericson was in line to take his school photo and one of his buddies went to cut in line. He grabbed his friend and quietly told him not to cut it was not okay to do that, he had no idea I was watching. This might seem like a small act but for where he was a year ago to now is a huge improvement. This is a kid that was on his way to being dead or incarcerated. Coach Johnson and football are giving this young man a chance, he has a long way to go but with football he will have a shot. We are only two days into school and he is already asking about getting support for this Math class so he can make sure he maintains a passing grade.

It should also be noted that he did try and sign up for summer school in PPS, Mt. Hood, Clackamas and even an online program. He contacted me over 20 times trying to find options but it was too late for PPS & Clackamas and the other options had transportation issue, or cost issues. He is already registered for night school and will be attending night school next semester as well.

Sincerely,

Adam Skyles  
Vice Principal  
Madison High School