

Dear League,

My name is Massen Newton and I am in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and I attend Lakeridge. I have lived with my Aunt and Uncle since I was going into the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. They are very important to me. In my life there aren't many people I can depend on. I know my Aunt and uncle are the ones I can count on for everything. My uncle told me I could be a great football player. I didn't believe him at first. My uncle and cousin who I now call my brother worked with me every day until I got better and I got in shape. My first year that I lived here I got to travel to San Antonio, TX with the best football players in Oregon for my grade and we played in a big FBU tournament. This is when I knew my Uncle wouldn't lie to me. My aunt told me I was smart but I wasn't good at school before I came here. She asked my mom a lot of questions and finally she had the school do tests on me and now I love school. I have an IEP now. I can ask for help and most of all my Aunt taught me to speak up for myself in the classroom. Now I'm on track to graduate and attend a four year college.

What my dad did in August was just foul. He knew this was supposed to be my year. I went to visit my mom because my grandpa passed away earlier and at that time I didn't get to go to California. I was supposed to spend time with my mom and her family then comes back home and take care of business. When my mom answered the door and yelled Oh my god, I knew it was bad. She started reading the paper out loud and I kept asking what did that mean. My dad didn't want me to go back to Oregon but it's not like he wanted me to live with him. I wouldn't live with him. He's never been there for me and since he's been out all he's done is lie to me and my brother and break the promises he tells us.

I'm so mad, hurt but most of all embarrassed. Who says my dad did this? Why would my dad prevent me from following my dreams? He had his chance at life. My life is just starting. I'm not asking you to play football because I want special awards or I want my name called out every time I make a tackle. I'm asking you permission to play because if I don't play I don't have film. If I don't have film I can't send it to coaches who recruit this region. If I can't send my film out my chances of earning a scholarship anywhere get smaller and smaller. I need a scholarship to attend college. My mom can't afford anything. She still supports my 25 year old sister who has a baby with a guy who doesn't help her out. We all know my dad is about nothing. He can't pay for anything. My Aunt and Uncle will help me but they need us all kids to get scholarships they are fair but not rich. I need this so I can eat; I need this so I can go to college and have a future. That is why I am begging you. I promise I will be the best example on and off the field. I will study hard and I will play hard because in all honesty my future life depends on it. Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Massen Newton