

To whomever this letter may concern,

My name is Sarah Phillips and I'm 17 years old. I have written this letter to appeal an OSAA requirement. On July, 4th, 2015 I moved from Washington to Oregon with intentions of a head start after high school. I'm the fifth child in a family of 12 kids. All of my older siblings have moved out of the house before the age of 18. So I am simply following my examples. When I moved, I established an Oregon insurance, a bank account, and a job. But when I asked the Neah-Kah-Nie High School if I could play Volleyball, I was denied. I had been refused because I did not move to Oregon with a parent.

I cannot begin to describe how much this decision hurts. Ever since I was little I knew I would always play sports. I was always outside either playing tag, soccer, basketball, adventuring, fishing, swimming, roller blading, ice skating, or riding my bike. I always did these activities as leisure. But when my dad was arrested in 2007, the bank foreclosed our house and I was forced to move. After this I began using sports as an outlet. Whenever I was upset, or stressed I would practice in some sport. Even if that was me hitting a few volleyballs to get down my swing, messing around with a basketball, going for a run, or even just some random workout. I would work until I was so sore I couldn't think about anything else. In other words, I unconsciously made working out and playing sports my personal outlet for stress and anger. I've always used the competitive spirit of sports as a stress reliever and strived to do my best. Most teens my age either smoke marijuana, drink, or worse. I am simply asking to play a sport for three months out of nine.

Along with using sports as a de-stresser I have also used sports to push myself through the academic part of high school. In order to play sports a student must obtain a certain GPA. My GPA has been a 3.8-9 my entire high school career due to sports. I am a physical person, sitting in a desk for 7 hours a day, just to bring home more work isn't exactly what I would call goals. But playing sports has given me a drive to write that important paper, or finish the 50 repetitive math equations, or even do that research on cavemen. Last year I went to state in both volleyball and basketball and have state certificates congratulating me on my grades. I didn't need my mom for any of that. I did it by myself. My mom has never had to worry about me as a student

and knows that she'll never have to. If I'm unable to participate in a sport my senior year, I don't think I'll be able to finish. I'm at the point where school isn't even worth it and I might just go for my GED. I was ready to graduate my sophomore year, now that I'm a senior, I'm beyond done. At least with athletics I have something to look forward to.

Apart from loving the game and the outlets I've made athletics out to be, it's so much more than just that. I know how much sports have helped me keep my sanity while growing up. It's been a goal of mine to help other kids recognize positive outlets as a career past college and high school. Teaching younger kids that there's so much more than just drugs, drinking, and even causing self-harm is something I have a want for, almost as much as sports. It's incredibly important to me that I pursue this career type. But how can I when I can't even participate in athletics myself?

Another reason I am appealing the decision is because I have always been told to get ahead in life; to think about my future. But there have been more obstacles with independence then there were when I lived under the sanctity of my mother's care. I am 17 years old. In less than a year I will be 100% on my own, with no aid from my mother, and starting a college career. But right now I can't even play a sport independently. When I moved to Oregon I did it with the intention to push myself ahead so the transition from minor to adult wouldn't be as difficult. And so far it hasn't gotten any easier. here's an example: On September 2nd I tried to set up a bank account, everything went fine until the **next day** when the women working said I couldn't open a bank account because they didn't realize I was 17. They said I seemed "extremely mature for my age". So even though I proved to them I was fully capable of having an account, they denied me because I didn't have my mother sitting next to me. Now I'm trying to do something as simple as a sport and I'm being told I can't do that either for the same reason. It's extremely frustrating and disappointing.

I love sports, I have good grades, I have plans to expand my knowledge of fitness and athletics to a college level, and I'm trying to achieve an adult status. These are the reasons I hope my situation will be reconsidered. No, I am not being forced to live here and no, I do not live

with my parents. But please do not allow that to take away my senior year of sports. Thank you for considering everything I've had to say.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Phillips". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath it.

Sarah Phillips