



Pacific High School

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Krista Nieraeth
Principal / Athletic Director

Kari Engdahl
Office Manager

November 20, 2015

Mr. Tom Welter, OSAA Executive Director
25200 SW Parkway Ave Suite 1
Wilsonville, Oregon 97070

Dear Mr. Welter:

Please consider this a letter of support for Austin Brown to play basketball for a 5th year at Pacific High School. This hardship is being submitted on his behalf because I believe that his circumstances qualify for your consideration. We ask that Austin be allowed to play one more year of basketball for Pacific, despite the fact that he earned a modified diploma in June 2015. He is currently enrolled for a 5th year because of disabilities that make him eligible to be on an IEP, which allows him to attend school for services until he is 21 years of age.

Austin has down – syndrome and a hearing impairment, both of which require Austin to have a one – on – one aide during the school day, with multiple specialist visits during the school year. Even though Austin has earned a modified diploma, his parents chose to have him return to Pacific for a 5th year so he can continue to work on academic skills, as well as social and job skills. It is the IEP team's hope that Austin will be learning and practicing skills that will allow him to be successful in pursuit of a job in our community and to live a happy and fulfilling life.

Anyone will tell you that Austin's first love is basketball. During his time at Pacific, Austin has participated on the basketball team, mostly dressing down for JV home games and participating in the last 2 minutes or so of the game, depending on the score. When Austin goes into the game both sides of the crowd go wild. His teammates and coaches embrace Austin's presence on the team, because of his love of basketball and his joy of being a part of the team. Basketball gives him a way to connect with his able – bodied peers, enriching his experience as a student at Pacific High School.

Hardships are made for students like Austin. He did not choose to have a disability; instead, the choice for Austin was to love basketball, which he does wholeheartedly. The smile on his face every time he gets to play is priceless. I guarantee if you ever get the opportunity to see Austin's face when he goes into a game, you will never forget the absolute joy and love of the game written across it.

Thank you for your consideration for a hardship for Austin Brown. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at knieraeth@2cj.com or (541) 348 – 2293.

Sincerely,

Krista Nieraeth, M.Ed.
Principal/AD