

January 15, 2016

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RE: Levi Morris' Athletic Eligibility

Dear Ami:

The OSAA Eligibility Appeals Board (EAB) met Monday, January 11, 2016 to review the eligibility request waiver of OSAA Rule 8.6 *Transfer Without Change of Joint Residence* for Levi Morris, whose athletic eligibility had been denied by the District Athletic Committee of the 1A The Valley 10 League. The hearing was conducted at the OSAA office in Wilsonville.

The Appeals Board reviewed all of the written information that had been submitted on behalf of the student. In addition to the original information received by the District Athletic Committee, the EAB received 2 letters from Madison H S. During the hearing, the Board listened to comments and testimony by Jason Housley, Athletic Director, Columbia Christian H S; Jeff and Diane Morris, the student's parents; and Levi Morris, the student. Following the dialogue and questions, the Eligibility Appeals Board convened into executive session.

From the written documentation submitted and the oral testimony provided at the hearing, the Eligibility Appeals Board concluded the following:

Findings of Fact:

1. Levi is an adopted African-American son of a white family and grew up in Dufur, Oregon. He attended Dufur H S his freshman (2013-14) and sophomore (2014-15) school years. The family moved to Portland in June 2015 and enrolled Levi at Madison H S for its racial diversity.
2. Basketball is very important to Levi as an outlet and was his "place to belong" at Dufur H S. He hoped it would be "a valuable part of something" at Madison H S, also. He played summer and fall basketball in Portland and met people but never felt part of a group socially or made a connection with any of the players.
3. Levi's experience at Madison H S seems to have been negative from the start. He never felt physically or emotionally safe. He felt exposed to drug use on a daily basis. He and his family were not prepared for the transition into a large city school from rural Oregon. Levi started seeing a therapist to help with the adjustment but 2 days after basketball practice started Levi decided to quit.
4. Levi asked his parents to be able to attend a smaller school. Columbia Christian H S is nearby and directly across the street from where his brother attends Multnomah University. Mr. and Mrs. Morris visited the school and met with the administration prior to Levi's visitation. Levi withdrew from Madison H S on December 17, 2015 and enrolled at Columbia Christian H S on

December 18, 2015. He says the staff and students have made him feel accepted and safe. He is "excited about this new chance at a smaller, safer, kinder school."

4. Columbia Christian HS submitted an Eligibility Request to the 1A-The Valley 10 League District Athletic Committee the first week of January 2016. The DAC denied the eligibility request on January 6, 2016 and Columbia Christian H S requested an appeal on January 6, 2016.

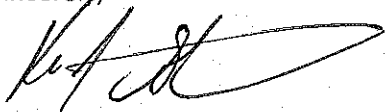
Conclusions:

The EAB may grant an exception to the transfer rule "when in its opinion there are circumstances beyond the control of each of the student and the student's parent(s), or other circumstances whereby enforcement of the rule would work an undue hardship upon the student." After reviewing the facts and testimony presented, the EAB concluded that the decision to transfer Levi from Madison H S to Columbia Christian H S was not made for athletic reasons, but was necessary for his wellbeing. He is now where he belongs in a supportive, positive environment where the teachers and students respect him.

Therefore, the Eligibility Appeals Board voted (5-0) to grant Levi athletic eligibility. Levi Morris is eligible to participate in OSAA activities effective January 11, 2016.

It is our sincere hope that this waiver will be of benefit to the student.

Sincerely,



Kyle Stanfield  
Assistant Executive Director

KS/ar

cc: Jason Housley, Athletic Director, Columbia Christian H S  
Jeff and Diane Morris, Parents  
Richard Wheeler, Athletic Director, Southwest Christian School, 1A The Valley 10  
League, DAC Chairperson