



January 27, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this to petition the OSAA to grant a hardship eligibility for our student, Saruda Thaimuangphol. Saruda is an international student from Thailand that came to us at the request of *Education Travel and Culture*.

We were contacted by ETC at the end of November to consider allowing Saruda to be interviewed for enrollment at Westside. They briefed us on the unique character of her situation. She had unexpectedly been told by Sunset High School that they would no longer be offering her a place in their school J-1 program. This created a high level of concern on her part. She would be losing all the relationships she had formed with teachers and students, but also would be facing the real possibility of having to go outside of the State to find another similar placement. Of highest concern was that this would jeopardize her ability to stay with her host family that she had come to love. Because of this, the State Department was seeking to place her in a school in the Portland area, so she could continue to have the stability of some continuity with her host family.

That is where Westside came into the picture. It was deemed that we would be able to assist Saruda with greater personal attention in her academic pursuits. And our location seemed to accommodate the desire for her host family to continue to house and nurture Saruda through this traumatic process of transitioning from one school to another.

She began to attend our school on December 1, 2015 and has been doing well. Of course, in addition to helping her academically succeed; one of the key concerns is for her to be able to integrate socially into a brand new school. Athletic participation is one way we see her being able to enhance that process. There is a real advantage for her to connect with a wide range of students as a fellow teammate.

She has expressed a real interest in participating on the Track & Field team in the spring season. We think this would be a perfect way for her to neutralize the social disadvantage she has in entering the school midstream in the year. We would ask that you would consider allowing her this opportunity now, since as a J-1 student she has only this year to experience fully what she will take back to Thailand with her in the way of memories and impressions of America. Thank you for considering her needs in this.

Sincerely,

Donald M. Westerberg
International Student Program Director

preparing for purpose