

**From:** Dawood Khan [redacted]

**Date:** 26 June 2019 at 9:42:01 AM GMT+5

**To:** [redacted]

**Subject:** Lahore American School

Dear Mr. [redacted],

I am Dawood Khan. Until last August, I was a senior in Lahore American School. My class's graduation ceremony was held around two weeks ago, but I was not standing with them.

Near the end of eleventh grade, the administration of my school started imposing numerous restrictions upon me. I have a degenerative eye condition called Retinitis Pigmentosa which has severely impaired my vision. However, I can move around any given area without problems, and with proper lighting I can read as well as any other student. There normally aren't any problems within the classroom, as I use magnifiers and telescopes as necessary. Around spring of 2018, the administration of LAS began to demand various tests, providing evasive reasons. These included psychological tests, extra visual tests, and even my family's medical records. Some of them are not available in Pakistan, but my family had to bear the costs regardless. None of these assessments were ever demanded from any other students.

My parents would constantly have meetings with LAS. I only attended one such meeting. It was clear then even to me that those discussions consisted only of sophistry that barely disguised outright hostility. However, my parents and I had decided that since I was only there for one more year, we would agree to the terms, however unjustified. Among other things, these conditions stopped me from taking any of the classes for which I was approved, replacing them with subjects such as "Keyboard and Composition" while leaving me short of two. Once the school year began, the administration further changed and restricted my courses. This decision wasn't made because of academic performance, as despite low vision, I had scored in the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile for the SAT, attended summer schools at Harvard and Yale and worked as an intern for a barrister in London. I have never been held back by my disability, but the school's administration insisted on a contract. Their most outlandish demand, however, was for an assistant to be employed by my parents to regulate my school activities. During the summer before my senior year, we hired an aide for that purpose and sent the signed contract to the administration. However, they never signed or returned it. On the first day of school, I was stopped at the school gates and told that I couldn't be on school grounds until the assistant was approved; I had to return home before classes had even started. This continued for some time afterwards. This wasn't a case of any disciplinary problem. I had never received so much as a detention throughout high school. However, I was forced to miss all introductory classes for two days. On my first proper day of school, I was talking with my classmates during lunch. Our aide was eating her lunch a few yards away and I was well within her field of view. but when the principal of LAS saw this, he stated that she must be sitting next to me at all times, even as I stood in the middle of an open area filled with other teachers and students. From then on, I was essentially isolated from my classmates by such inhumane restrictions. I was also stopped at the school gate every day afterwards. The school had begun to mandate a new policy targeted at and

effective for me alone, stating that I must use a white cane at all times on campus. I was also required to put my hand on the assistant's shoulder any time I was standing or moving.

As a slight digression, at one point the school had asked us to sign a liability waiver, and my father stated that we would sign it only if it excluded from its scope negligence on the part of the school. A specific example of such negligence quoted by my father was if a teacher told me to run in the sunlight even after being informed of my migraines. On my second-last day of school, the athletic coordinator did exactly that: I was told to run on a treadmill outdoors in temperatures over 105 F<sup>O</sup> and extreme humidity while the other students swam in the pool. When I reached home that day, as expected, I was assailed by a severe migraine that lasted hours. By then, we had received a court injunction that stated that I should be allowed to attend school unobstructed, and that my choice of classes should not be arbitrarily restricted. And so, the next day I obtained all the necessary signatures from teachers whose classes I was to attend, filled out the course change form, and asked for the course work I had missed. In the last ten minutes of my last class of the day, the vice principal took me aside to a corner of the library (outside of the view of any CC cameras) and accused me of flaunting a court order in front of teachers, when I had done nothing of the sort. She told me that I was not like other children, and that the same rules didn't apply to me because I am "disabled." I was then given an ultimatum: either I would comply with the school's demands, using the white cane and putting my hand on the aide's shoulder, or I would not graduate. After ten years in LAS, I was driven out in my final year for a disease I was born with.

Although I have a disability, I can still function perfectly fine. I do archery from standard ranges with no extra apparatus. The school never had any problem with me until the administration learned that I could be classified as legally blind. At that moment, all these acts of discrimination were committed in quick succession. However, I still believe that I can progress regardless of such classifications. After all, there would be no greater loss than to let this event define me. Once again, I must thank you for hearing me out, Mr. [redacted]. I am sending this email with three documents which independently establish my position.

Sincerely,

-Dawood Khan