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Access Academy students, teachers, and parents gather outside the Portland Public Schools administration building in north Portland to protest a proposal that would split Access students across eight schools.

Gifted School Protests Closure

Academy faces breakup after KairosPDX saved

BY DANNY PETERSON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Students, teachers, and parents of Access Academy gathered outside the administration building for

Portland Public Schools Monday to call for keeping their diverse school intact and rejecting a new proposal to split Access's students across eight schools.

The latest plan avoids the potential displacement of KairosPDX, now home to a public charter school serving mostly African American students at the former Humboldt Elementary on North

Gantenbein Avenue in the heart of the African American community.

Last month, Portland Public Schools proposed moving Access to Humboldt thereby forcing KairosPDX to find another home. But the proposal fell through after much criticism from the black community and public officials, who decried

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Esteemed Couple Win Payouts

Unfair job termination and profiling cases settled

BY DANNY PETERSON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Two esteemed members of the African American community, Erius Johnson Jr. and Nkenge Harmon Johnson, who are married, both settled separate lawsuits against the State of Oregon, it was announced last week.

Erius Johnson Jr., who was the top civil rights lawyer for the Oregon Department of Justice until Friday, ended his racial profiling case against the state for \$205,000, but he also resigns his employment with the state as part of the terms of the settlement.

Nkenge Harmon Johnson, the president and chief executive officer of the Urban League of Portland, ended her lawsuit claiming unfair termination for being a whistleblower in the office of former Gov. John Kitzhaber. She was awarded \$70,000 to settle her case, according



Erius Johnson Jr.

to terms of the settlement.

In 2015, Erius Johnson Jr. found out that he was surveilled online by one of his colleagues, James Williams, who used a tool called "Digital Stakeout" to search for terms like "Black Lives Matter" on social media. Johnson had been using a Black Lives Matter hashtag and made references to rap group Public Enemy on Twitter. Williams prepared a memo, at the request of his supervisors, detailing the social media activity.

The surveillance and memo may have constituted racial profil-



Nkenge Harmon Johnson

ing and violated laws against gathering information on a person's political outlook without evidence of a crime being committed, Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum determined.

As former Gov. Kitzhaber's ex-communications director, Nkenge Harmon Johnson was dismissed three days after she questioned then-First Lady Cylvia Hayes' involvement in Kitzhaber's re-election campaign and policy issues at a 2014 staff meeting. Harmon Johnson said the firing was unjust.