

Firebird Student-Athletes,

I hope this finds you and your families healthy and safe. As we continue to navigate the uncharted waters we are currently facing, I wanted to reach out and share pertinent information to you as we transition back to school as related to athletics.

### Eligibility in the Fall

Despite the circumstances across the state, the KSHSAA will not alter the eligibility rules for the Fall semester. For our underclassmen, it is imperative that you continue your enrollment in a minimum of five classes for the remainder of the school year in order to be deemed eligible next Fall. Furthermore, you have to pass five of their current classes in order to be deemed eligible next Fall. Why is this important? If you are currently failing a 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter course and do not participate in the continuous online learning opportunities, you will fail 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter and therefore fail Second Semester. Please understand that if you participate in the continuous online learning, your grade cannot go backwards; however, if you do not participate, your current 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter/Second Semester grade stands.

Firebirds, you are student-athletes. Note what comes first – STUDENT. Do not allow the circumstances to alter your focus on the importance of your coursework. If you want to compete for Free State next year, commit yourself to your coursework the next seven weeks. If you want to compete at the collegiate level, commit yourself to your coursework the next seven weeks. The grades you earn, count – there will be no exceptions, there will be no grace. Use this time as an opportunity to most importantly continue to learn and push yourself academically, and as a chance to improve your overall GPA.

### Establish a Routine

I cannot stress this to you enough - establish a Monday through Friday routine and do not allow yourself to cheat the times you have allocated for the important things. Write it down, assigning specific times to the following (in no particular order):

- Mental Health | Deep Breathing, Meditation, Prayer – Find Focus and Inner Peace
- School | Actively Participate in Every Online Class Period
  - If you haven't already done so, reach out to each of your teachers individually – communication and advocating for yourself will be very important during the next seven weeks.
- Physical Activity | Do Not Become Sedentary
  - If you need ideas for sport-specific workouts, contact your coach as they have ideas for at-home workouts.
- Time with Family and Friends | Engage in Face-to-Face Conversation via Technology, Stay Connected (From a Distance)

### Free State Athletic Fields

Our campus is completely off-limits to students; therefore, you may not access our fields, batting cages, etc. To try and limit this from occurring, the district has locked our main gate into the outdoor athletic complex.

Firebirds, you all have heard the saying, “Champions are made in the off-season.” Now is your chance to live this adage out as we are all currently in the off-season. Challenge yourself. Push yourself. Educate yourself. While I know many of you may think you understand the “Mamba Mentality,” I challenge you to spend some time over the next few days researching it (regardless of the sport you play) – read about it, watch videos, etc. – and allow the principles to permeate within yourself. And then ask yourself – what changes do I need to make in order to embody the “Mamba Mentality?” What can I do to grow and improve and challenge myself during this off-season? How can I transform myself into being the best student, the best athlete, and the best leader? Once you have taken the time to reflect upon yourself, think about your teammates and how you can push them to be the best version of themselves. The challenges we are currently facing will either make or break us next season – this time can be an opportunity for everyone to take responsibility for what they bring to the table and push yourself mentally and physically – don't cheat your teammates – and lean in to one another and work towards a common goal OR you can sit and do nothing while your opponents are working their tails off right now to get better. What are you going to choose, Firebirds?

We are all adjusting to the current circumstances – it has not been an easy transition for you, for your coaches, for myself – if you need anything during this time, reach out and connect with someone. Do not allow this time of uncertainty to define you, Firebirds – use this time to fire you up and refocus on being the best son/daughter, brother/sister, student, athlete, and friend every day.

I miss you all; please take care of yourself and loved ones. - Miss Faunce