

March 23rd, 2022

Dear Commissioner Tackett and the KHSAA Board of Control:

Thank you for the opportunity to write on behalf of W.E.B. DuBois Academy. As you know, this year the Kentucky Highschool Athletic Association (KHSAA) temporarily afforded the 9th grade students the opportunity to participate in high school athletics although they are enrolled in an A5 alternative education program. This letter is to request another year of participation, including in varsity athletics for both 9th and 10th grade students. This request would include all KHSAA sanctioned sports.

W.E.B. DuBois Academy is an alternative education program as defined in KRS 160.380, and serves the entire District. Through this A5 program, JCPS seeks to provide an “enhanced learning experience” for the students that are enrolled, which is one of the purposes for an A5 school set forth in statute. Students and their families apply to attend the W.E.B. DuBois Academy because of the special learning opportunity it provides to its young men.

The mission of the W.E.B. DuBois Academy is to engage, eliminate barriers, and empower each young man to achieve excellence. It began as a middle school program, and is growing to serve high school students as well. The W.E.B. DuBois Academy educates young men with a rigorous and engaging Afrocentric and multicultural curriculum, with a focus on academic achievement, social emotional growth, and leadership. Students demonstrate growth by becoming more adept mathematicians, readers, writers, and speakers, while also becoming better role models, listeners, and leaders in their homes and communities.

As members of the KHSAA Board of Control you understand the critical importance of interscholastic athletics in fulfilling the educational mission of schools. Middle and high school athletics and the W.E.B. DuBois Academy each foster essential qualities that help young people grow and thrive - teamwork, discipline, pursuit of excellence, loyalty, perseverance, fellowship and leadership. We consider interscholastic athletics to be a key educational component of the success of the W.E.B. DuBois Academy. Additionally, in 704 KAR 19:002, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) recognizes that access to

extracurricular activities and athletics is an essential component of successful alternative education programs.

We ask that you assist us in eliminating barriers for these students to ensure that they have an opportunity to participate and excel in interscholastic athletics, including at the state level. If the KHSAA is unable to grant a waiver and/or grant a pilot program for these students, we very much would like to schedule a meeting with you and KDE representatives to discuss the possibility of a formal regulatory waiver request to the KBE as well as permanent relief via amendments to the KHSAA bylaws permitting participation of A5 programs that meet certain, established criteria. Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. April Brooks
Executive Director of Athletics and Activities

Cc: Robert Moore, Chief of Schools
Kevin C. Brown, General Counsel