Dear Parents, January 2, 2017

Due to the concerns of the cheer coaches over the numerous D’s and F’s last semester of our cheerleaders, we are implementing a new academic policy that will coincide with the current school policy.

Here is a refresher of the KSHSAA (state) rule on eligibility for all athletes:

1. Scholarship—The student shall have passed at least five new subjects (those not previously passed) of unit weight, or its equivalency, the previous quarter or the last quarter of attendance. *(See* ***Rule 14-1-1, Bona Fide Student*** *and* ***Rule 15-1-3, Enrollment/ Attendance****.)*

In other words, they must have passed 5 NEW subjects the previous quarter to be eligible to participate the following quarter. They must maintain passing 5 throughout the season or they are benched until they have raised their grades to where they are passing 5.

*District Policy*

The District policy mirrors the KSHSAA rule; athletes must be passing 5 classes, however the school has implemented the “Academics First” tutoring intervention, so when an athlete has an F they must attend the after or before school tutoring sessions (1 per week for each F) before they can participate in games/competitions. They may still attend practice during that time however. If they are failing more than 2 classes they will be considered ineligible per the state and district requirements and must sit out from games and competitions until they are back to passing 5.

The current policy did not seem to be effective as we had numerous (on average at least 18 girls every week all semester) cheerleaders with multiple below average and failing grades. This is unacceptable to the SMS Cheer coaches, as we believe academics should be the number one priority of our athletes. Therefore we have added some additional steps to the Academics First model and will implement this new plan beginning January 9th. That plan is attached to this email. The bottom portion must be signed by both the cheerleader and a parent and returned to a coach by Friday, January 6th. All cheerleaders must have these in by Friday. The girls will receive a hard copy at practice Wednesday, January 4th but you may also print a copy from this email. We will post it under the documents tab on our website as well.

As always, we are appreciative of the parental support you have given to our Cheer program. We coaches believe that the new academic interventions will be beneficial and help those girls who are struggling to balance cheer and academics to be more successful in the classroom.

Respectfully,

SMS Cheer Coaches