



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

VIN GOPAL
Senator, 11th District
Majority Conference Leader

January 27th, 2019

Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt
120 SW 10th Avenue
2nd Floor
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Attorney General Schmidt,

My name is Senator Vin Gopal and I represent the 11th District in the New Jersey Legislature. On July 30th, 2018, Braeden Bradforth, left Neptune, New Jersey for Garden City, Kansas to attend Garden City Community College. Just two days later, on August 1st, Braeden passed away at the college. His death created a shock through the community I both govern and love. I write to you today, with a heavy heart, to respectfully request that you help this community and Braeden's family find both closure and justice.

Braeden saw the next phase of his life beginning at Garden City Community College, an institution passed through by a host of successful professional athletes- a fact that I am sure Garden City Community College takes great pride in. His time was cut short by what may have been carelessness and a callous disregard for safety by those were entrusted to care for him. After an unprecedented four-month delay Braeden's mother finally received the autopsy report for her child. The report attributed the cause of death to not be a blood clot as initially alleged, but exertional heat stroke. We since have learned that immediately before his death, Braeden was put through a grueling conditioning "test." Despite the fact that the conditioning "test" involved thirty-six (36) 50-yard dashes in a row, each in under eight (8) seconds, in the heat of August, the Garden City Community College coaching staff failed to have available the necessary medical equipment to deal with possible heat stroke. Exertional heat stroke should never be fatal. Had appropriate measures been taken to treat him, Braeden's death may have been entirely preventable.

We know some details surrounding Braeden's death, but truthfully, we do not know enough. That is why I write to you today. Garden City Community College has announced an "internal investigation," but is light on details. There is no knowledge as to who is conducting or



overseeing this investigation. We do not know what the focus of the investigation is or whose testimony will be included. We do not know when the investigation is expected to conclude and, frankly, we are not confident that the results of this investigation will be made public. We are further dismayed by the fact that neither the Garden City Police Department, the Garden City College Police, or any other law enforcement body has conducted any sort of investigation into Braeden's death.

My request is that you support Braeden's mother in her quest for answers and justice. I am calling on the Kansas Attorney General's Office to take up an independent investigation into the death of Braeden Bradforth and the professional practices of the Garden City Community College Athletics Department. This matter needs the force, authority, and expertise that only the Kansas Attorney General's Office can provide. Braeden's death was entirely preventable. Not only does Braeden and his family deserve justice, but every athlete attending Garden City Community College deserves to know that the school's leadership will put the health and safety of its students before all else. Please set the precedent for other institutions as well. Show them that you will not tolerate these inhumane behaviors towards athletes, nor will you let this fly under the radar as many other cases across the country have.

I hope to continue working with you in our quest for closure and justice for Braeden Bradforth, his family, and our community. If you wish you discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact me at (732) 695-3371 or email me at SenGopal@njleg.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vin Gopal", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Vin Gopal
Senator
11th District