



# Northeastern State RiverHawks

## “The Game Plan for Success”

### **Academic and Behavioral Standards**

#### **Play 1**

Develop and maintain outstanding programs which have CHAMPIONSHIP results in the classroom and in life. NORTHEASTERN STATE has a strong history of placing the student-athlete first on its list of priorities. This first, and primary strategic goal, focuses on attaining excellence in all programs and is facilitated by the successful recruitment of high achieving student-athletes. The measurable standard will be a graduation rate of 75 percent and/or ASR of 85 percent annually.

### **Athletic Performance**

#### **Play 2**

Develop and maintain outstanding intercollegiate athletic programs that produce championship results measured by either excellence or achievement. We must continually ask if the current state of affairs, with respect to competition, is where NORTHEASTERN STATE would like to be. The old adage says, “You are who you play” and another says, “Perception is reality.” Therefore, our teams will be strategic in scheduling quality opponents from respected Conferences. These associations will help increase the brand awareness.

### **Facilities**

#### **Play 3**

Improve the Athletic Department infrastructure and capital improvement priority on campus. Realization that The Game Plan for Success requires a championship working environment and support from the entire University community and the City of Tahlequah. These projects must be prioritized based on regional and national economic conditions.

### **Fund-Raising**

#### **Play 4**

Increase substantially the revenues available and plan the most effective utilization of these resources for NORTHEASTERN STATE athletics. This will require significant cultivation efforts including cross department partnerships with University Relations. The Athletics Association will need to be actively managed, a corporate sponsorship program engaged and creative individual asks for planned giving and gifts-in-kind. Fund- raising efforts must show a “Vision” and the message for any asks must be actively coordinated.

### **Personnel**

#### **Play 5**

Increase the effectiveness of all staff, coaches, and support personnel within the University to ensure that the purpose and mission statement of The Game Plan for Success can be accomplished. These steps must include expectations and evaluations on a periodic basis.

## **Public Relations/Marketing**

### **Play 6**

Increase the emphasis on internal and external communications and marketing to develop a strong base of support within the University, in the community, in Oklahoma, and across the nation. The department shall refer to itself as Northeastern State locally and Northeastern State (OK) nationally. The University must shift away from thinking in terms of alphabet soup like NSU or NE State. Similarly, the RiverHawk brand must become unified and strong. When successful, it will decrease any customer confusion. The preferred mark of the athletics teams will be the “RiverHawk head logo” and shall be displayed prominently on athletic uniforms and at venues. Teams shall be consistent in their uniform color schemes.

## **Game Day Atmosphere**

### **Play 7**

Capitalize on the very fact that the Athletics Department has a virtual monopoly on NCAA competition within a 50-mile region. As such, the department must put on an entertaining, engaging and worthwhile product. At every occasion, staff members must maintain the highest levels of customer relations. Game programming must be actively planned to maximize fan energy, fan interaction and enjoyment.

## **Culture Change**

### **Play 8**

Enhance the value for our product. The Athletics Department must capitalize on the very fact that it has a virtual monopoly of NCAA competition within a 50-mile region. A brand cannot be built where the brand has no value. The number of complimentary admissions will be reduced. Athletic teams, where facilities allow, will charge admission for home contests. Once a value is established for viewing the athletics teams, this same value will optimize strategic fund-raising projects.

## **Student-Athlete Involvement**

### **Play 9**

We Are One! Student-Athletes will be engaged across the broad spectrum of the University and within the City of Tahlequah by participating in community service, campus events and activities. Engagement will increase retention rates, create better self-esteem and team chemistry. Our student-athletes will fully support their teammates, fellow student-athletes in other sports, as well as traditional and non-traditional students. These bonds of fellowship will last a lifetime.

### **Northeastern State University Department of Athletics Mission Statement**

*The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics is an integral part of Northeastern State University's overall educational mission and positively reflects the interests and values of the institution's students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends. The Department fosters an environment that encourages degree completion, good citizenship, character and personal growth to help support student-athletes who will become positive role models and productive members of society. The Department is committed to fiscal responsibility, gender equity, diversity, and proper sports conduct among all of its coaches, administrative staff, and student-athletes, and to maintaining high ethical standards and compliance with all NCAA, conference, federal, state and institutional rules and regulations. The athletics program is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of its student-athletes, achieving athletic success within NCAA intercollegiate competition, serving as a positive representative of the University, and instilling a sense of pride and loyalty among its constituents.*