

Denton Teen Shooting for Future in Hockey

iUniversity Prep, virtual school run by Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, helps student become “star” on the ice

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Denton – As a defenseman for the Dallas Stars Elite Hockey Club Under 16 AAA team, Kimball Johnson is living the dream of most high school-age hockey players. “The club offers the highest level of competition for players my age,” said Kimball. The privilege of wearing a silver star on his chest and the number 71 on his back, means he drives about an hour, roundtrip, from Denton to the Dr Pepper StarCenter in Valley Ranch for practice six days a week. The 16-year-old hopes to earn a hockey scholarship to a Division 1 school, and knows he’ll have to work hard off the ice to make that happen. “Any time I talk to a college scout, they always ask me about my grades,” he said.

Kimball is a junior at iUniversity Prep, a public tuition-free online school operated by Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, and credits the virtual school for helping him hit his athletic and academic goals. “We travel for tournaments about twice a month. We leave on a Thursday and return Sunday or Monday. That would be a lot of time missed at traditional school, but now I just try to get ahead before I leave town,” he explained. His parents enrolled him in iUniversity Prep half way through his freshman year. “We liked the flexibility and that the curriculum is challenging,” said Sharon Johnson, Kimball’s mother.

Kimball’s talent on the ice is rare, but school administrators say his academic needs are common among elite student athletes. “Families with high performing athletes choose iUniversity Prep for our ability to accommodate their schedules and our academic rigor,” said Kaye Rogers, Ph.D., Grapevine-Colleyville ISD Director of Virtual Education. iUniversity Prep is only one of four schools in the state offering elementary, middle and high school education. Approximately 400 students are enrolled in iUniversity Prep, and administrators anticipate enrollment to increase throughout the school year. “Our continued growth stems from the value iUniversity Prep brings families who desire a rigorous choice and want a college prep education from a recognized school district,” said Rogers.

iUniversity Prep students can attend class, take tests and complete work from any location as long as they have access to a mobile device and an Internet connection. High school Enrollment for fall 2015 is still open. Those interested can call 855-779-7357 or visit www.iuniversityprep.org.

About iUniversity Prep

iUniversity Prep opened in August 2013. The academy is a tuition-free, state-accredited online public school operated by Grapevine-Colleyville ISD and is one of only four public virtual education solutions in the state offering elementary, middle and high school programs. It provides rigorous academics under the guidance of engaging instructors all within a collaborative school community. iUniversity Prep offers an inspiring, flexible learning environment that encourages and prepares students to be college and career ready by supporting learning through technology, fostering citizenship, and teaching the importance of mutual respect in a virtual environment. Visit iuniversityprep.org for more details.