**Freshmen and Sophomore Years Checklist**

**The Student Athlete**

Use the following checklist to remind yourself each year of the tasks you should perform to help you find the best fit college that meets both your academic and athletic needs.

Check these items:

\_\_\_\_\_ Take challenging academic courses and consistently strive for good grades

\_\_\_\_\_ Participate on high school athletic teams to increase ability

\_\_\_\_\_ Keep a record of athletic achievements

\_\_\_\_\_ Participate in an off-season conditioning program

\_\_\_\_\_ Establish and maintain a good rapport with the coaching staff

\_\_\_\_\_ Attend summer camps for your sport

\_\_\_\_\_ Sophomore spring athletes should work with their counselor and coach to develop a letter of interest to send to college coaches

**Junior Year Checklist**

**The Student Athlete**

Use the following checklist to remind yourself through the year of the tasks you should perform to help you find the best fit college that meets both your academic and athletic needs.

Check these items:

\_\_\_\_\_ Strive for strong academic performance

\_\_\_\_\_ Plan to take the PSAT in October

\_\_\_\_\_Register and take the SAT in January and May of your Junior year

\_\_\_\_\_Register and take the ACT plus Writing in April and June of your Junior year

\_\_\_\_\_Register and take 2-3 SAT Subject Tests in June of your Junior year

\_\_\_\_\_ Set up a meeting with your coach to define his/her role or involvement in the recruitment process. At this time, ask for a realistic athletic evaluation - can you play at the collegiate level, and at which Division; I, II, or III?

\_\_\_\_\_ Take a career inventory in Naviance to find potential career areas of interest

\_\_\_\_\_ Set up a meeting with your College Counselor early in your Junior year. Develop a list of colleges to be researched that will ensure an athletic and academic match. Be prepared to answer questions concerning academic interest, size and location of college, and the type of environment desired. During the meeting, review your transcript to ensure you are in compliance with the 16 core course rule. Also, be sure to identify schools that meet your academic and career needs in the event that athletic participation does not occur

\_\_\_\_\_ Based on the list of colleges, obtain coaches names, addresses, and telephone numbers via the individual colleges websites.

\_\_\_\_\_ Send a personalized email/letter of interest to college coaches with your athletic resume. Be sure to include some specific details that you know about the school in your letter. Follow up with a phone call.

\_\_\_\_\_Provide your local coach with a list of schools that you are interested in from the athletic perspective

\_\_\_\_\_ Continually update your athletic resume

\_\_\_\_\_ Produce a skills video with the assistance of your coach. This video should include: the scores of the contests, your jersey number, your attitude on the sideline and in the dugout, as well as highlights and situations where you fought hard but lost.

\_\_\_\_\_ Organize a filing system with all of the responses you have received from college coaches

\_\_\_\_\_ Participate in summer programs, (tournaments, events, local games and summer leagues) as college coaches often attend these programs

\_\_\_\_\_ Meet with the various college representatives when they visit

\_\_\_\_\_ Visit a variety of college campuses which should include a prearranged meeting with the coach: use Fall Break and Spring Break

**Senior Year Checklist**

**The Student Athlete**

Use the following checklist to remind yourself through the year of the tasks you should perform to help you find the best fit college that meets both your academic and athletic needs.

Check these items:

\_\_\_\_\_ Review and complete all items listed under the Junior year check list

\_\_\_\_\_ Visit the NCAA website, www.ncaa.org. Read the NCAA Guide for the College Bound Athlete and be familiar with the NCAA rules and regulations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strive for strong academic performance

\_\_\_\_\_ Early in the year, complete and submit the NCAA Eligibility Center form online

\_\_\_\_\_ Send ACT/SAT scores directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center

\_\_\_\_\_ Retake the ACT/SAT in the September/October if necessary either for NCAA eligibility or to improve your chances of receiving an academic scholarship

\_\_\_\_\_ Discuss colleges of interest with your College Counselor and coach

\_\_\_\_\_ Apply to at least one school that will meet your needs even if you don't participate in athletics

\_\_\_\_\_ Double check with your College Counselor to ensure compliance with the NCAA core course requirements

\_\_\_\_\_ If possible, continue to make campus visits (Fall Break) which include meetings with coaches and team members

\_\_\_\_\_ Send an updated letter of interest to coaches with your athletic resume and the season schedule. Offer to send your athletic highlight videotape

\_\_\_\_\_ Respond immediately to colleges showing an interest in you

\_\_\_\_\_ Make sure as you are applying to colleges on line that you are aware of and meet application deadlines

\_\_\_\_\_ Complete Financial Aid forms early in January and mail/fax/email to the universities

\_\_\_\_\_ Wait to commit to paid college athletic visit invitations until you are certain of your top five schools

\_\_\_\_\_ Send your final transcript to the college you choose and to the NCAA Eligibility Center

**Naviance: College Research**

Student Athletes should begin to access Naviance as soon as possible. See your College Counselor for your username and password and help using the college and career tool.

Freshmen, Sophomores, and Juniors should start using Naviance on a regular basis to begin serious consideration of their college options. The counselors can help you learn how to use all the features if you need help. There are some features that will not be activated until you are a Senior, and we will be providing information on how to use Naviance during the applications phase in the spring, closer to when you will use those features. In the meantime, here are the suggested activities for Juniors:

**The ‘About Me’ Section**

1. Log on to the system at [**student.naviance.com/ciceropa**](http://connection.naviance.com/asg)

Bookmark or make this link a favorite on your computer.

1. Click on the ‘**about me**’ tab, then the ‘**profile**’ link. Check your personal information. If any information is wrong, please let your counselor know immediately.
2. If you would like to re-set your password, click on ‘**account**’ under the ‘**about me**’ tab.
3. Find the ‘**my assessments’** link under ‘**about me**’ and complete it. It will tell you something about yourself and suggest possible careers. The results can also help counselors assist you in your college search.
4. Start to complete the ‘**resume**’ section to build your resume. You will need the information to apply to colleges, scholarships, jobs, summer programs and more, so get started now! The counselors and teachers who will write your recommendations will find this information useful when they help you with your college applications.

**Questions To Ask As You Consider Colleges**

• When does the head coach’s contract end? How long does the coach intend to stay?

The answer could be helpful. Do not make assumptions about how long a coach will be at a school. If the coach leaves, does this change your mind about the school/program?

• Is summer school available: If I need to take courses in summer school, will it be paid for by the college?

You may need to take summer school to meet academic and/or graduation requirements.

• Exactly how much will the athletics scholarship be? What will and will not be covered?

It is important to understand what college expenses your family is responsible for so you can arrange to pay those. Educational expenses can be paid with student loans, but it takes time to apply for these. Find out early so you meet your financial obligations.

• Under what circumstances would my scholarship be reduced or canceled?

Coaches should be able to give you some idea of how players are evaluated from year to year and how these decisions are made. The institution may have a policy governing the renewal of aid to athletes. Ask if such a policy exists and be familiar with it.

• Are there academic criteria tied to maintaining the scholarship?

Some institutions add academic requirements to athletic scholarships (e.g., minimum grade point average).

• What scholarship money is available if I suffer a career-ending injury?

Not every institution continues to provide an athletic scholarship to a student-athlete who can no longer compete because of a career-ending injury.

• Will my scholarship be maintained if there is a change in coaches?

A coach may not be able to answer this, but the Athletic Director may.

**What High School Student-Athletes Can Do On Their Own In the Recruiting Process**

• Initiate an unlimited number of telephone calls to college coaches

If the answering machine picks up, please leave the following information: student’s name, phone number, address, and year in school. A college coach is prohibited from contacting a student by telephone (regardless if they are returning a message) until July 1st following the student’s Junior year. Once the student reaches that point, the coach is permitted to place only one phone call per week to the student. Athletes are not limited in contacting the coach.

• Write letters to college coaches indicating interest in their school and athletic program.

Prospects may write to a college coach at any time during their high school career. If contact is initiated prior to September 1st of the student’s Junior year, the college coach may only respond by sending a questionnaire and a letter explaining that NCAA legislation prohibits them from sending further correspondence until September 1st of the prospect’s Junior year. After September 1st of the Junior year, a coach is permitted to send only those recruiting materials which are listed in the NCAA manual (i.e., general correspondence, a recruiting brochure or a media guide, questionnaires, summer camp brochures, admissions brochures, NCAA educational materials).

• Make an unlimited number of unofficial visits to an unlimited number of colleges.

An unofficial visit is when a student visits a college entirely at his/her own expense, including food, lodging, transportation or entertainment. While on an unofficial visit, the student may meet with any or all of the following: coaching staff, players, academic personnel, admissions personnel.

**Student Athlete College Visits**

***REFER TO THE NCAA GUIDE FOR ATHLETES TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL AND LEGAL VISIT.***

The following are some things to consider surrounding your campus visit.

• Bring an unofficial copy of your high school transcript with you on your visit.

Bring your copy of your highest SAT/ACT score with you.

• Make arrangements/appointments in advance

Know when and where to meet with the coach, admissions counselor, chairperson of the academic area of interest, the financial aid office

Exchange phone numbers in case a mix up occurs

Obtain names of all the contacts you will be making

Ask what you will need to bring with you

Ask which meals and what housing will be included, if any

• Arrange to see the facilities of the academic department you are interested in as well as the dorms

• Clarify the application and admission procedures

• Try to see the campus on a regular school day while they are in session

Attend a class if possible

Attend a practice if possible

• Be sure to visit with players and get the perspective on first-year experiences from current freshmen and sophomore players

Whether these are recruiting trips paid for by the college athletic department or visits arranged at your own expense, it is critical that you make at least one trip to the campus. Don’t be intimidated – ask lots of questions, but make sure they are good questions – not questions that can be answered from reading the view books. Do your homework! Read as much as you can about the school before the visit and interview. Think about the visit/interview beforehand – do you know why you are interested in this particular college? Think ahead about what questions the interviewer might ask you. Each interview will be different, but most are designed to bring out qualities such as dedication, motivation, and enthusiasm. Talk with the coach even if you are not being recruited. Attend a practice or a contest if possible.

While it is, of course, very important to make a good impression on those you meet at the school, remember that you are there to discover whether this is the right school for you!

Dress appropriately and neatly.

Be on time.

Most importantly – BE YOURSELF!

Keep a journal and jot down your thoughts and impressions immediately afterwards. Take pictures

When you return home, write a thank you note to everyone you met with.

**Questions To Ask During A Visit**

Before you decide to make your first visit, it is a good idea to think carefully about the kind of information you are going to need to eventually make a decision. Once you do, you’ll be able to ask the right kinds of questions. The following are some good questions to get you started.

**ASK OF THE RECRUITER/COACH:**

1. What is your general coaching philosophy? What is your philosophy of offense? Defense? Are you considering any changes?

2. What position do you want me to play? How many others are you recruiting for the same position? Where do I fall in that group of prospects?

3. How many seniors are you graduating this year and in what position(s)?

4. Is there a junior varsity program?

5. Have you made it to post-season play, and if so how have you done?

6. At this point, where do you see me fitting into your program?

7. How do academics fit into your coaching philosophy?

8. What type of academic services are available for the general student body and what services are available for student-athletes? (i.e., tutoring, writing labs)

9. What is the graduation rate for student-athletes at your school, and what is the graduation rate for your program? How many graduate in four years? How many in five years?

10. What is the attitude on campus toward athletes? Professor‟s attitudes?

11. Approximately how many days of class does your team miss during the year due to practice and competition schedules? How is the missed class time handled? What happens if class time conflicts with practice time?

12. How many hours a day will athletics and other responsibilities keep me from my studies?

13. What happens to my scholarship if I‟m injured or ineligible?

14. What type of medical coverage is available for student-athletes?

15. Are all injuries handled by a team insurance policy?

16. If injured, can I use my family doctor? Who determines my fitness to play after an injury?

17. Will I be red-shirted?

18. If I need a fifth year, will you finance it?

19. Do you offer athletic grants-in-aid? If yes, do you offer full grants-in-aid (tuition, room, board, books and fees) or do you offer partial grants-in-aid?

20. How many athletic grants-in-aid do you have available for the upcoming year (or how much grant money do you have available for the upcoming year)?

21. I know that athletic grants-in-aid are not guaranteed for a four-year period and that they are renewed on a yearly basis. If I receive a grant-in-aid, will it most likely be renewed each year provided I remain a part of the team? What is your policy on renewing aid? What is the institution‟s policy on renewing aid?

22. If I receive an athletic grant-in-aid and I am injured in the first practice or game, what happens to that grant for the remainder of that year and for the following years?

23. If you do not offer athletic grants-in-aid, what type of financial aid is available to student-athletes? Is it only need based aid, or are there merit scholarships available?

24. What is expected of players during the off-season?

25. What type of strength and conditioning programs are conducted and are they done year round?

26. Are your student-athletes required to live on campus? If so, do they live with fellow student-athletes or with someone from the general student population?

27. Do you provide all necessary uniforms and equipment, or are the student-athletes responsible to pay for or provide uniforms and equipment?

**ASK OF PLAYERS AT THE SCHOOL:**

1. What does your typical daily schedule look like? In-season? Off-season?

2. Approximately how many hours a night do you study?

3. What generally are the attitudes of professors in different fields of study?

4. How do you like the living arrangements?

5. Do you have an academic advisor who helps you register for courses?

6. Are there tutors available to help if I have academic problems?

7. How do the coaches deal with failure?

8. How are the athletes treated by the coaching staff?

9. If you have a problem with a coach, who do you talk to about that?

**ASK OF NON-ATHLETES AT THE SCHOOL:**

1. What do you think of the quality of the education you are receiving at this school?

2. If you had it to do all over again, would you choose to attend this school? Why or why not?

3. What is the general opinion of athletes on this campus?

4. What are the ‘hot’ issues on campus?

**ASK OF SCHOOL OFFICIALS/ADMISSIONS OFFICERS:**

1. What is the 4 year, 5 year, and 6 year graduation rate for student-athletes?

2. About how long does it take a (sport) player to earn a degree at this school?

3. How does the school assist me with job opportunities when I graduate?

**Questions To Ask After the Visit**

You will have to ask yourself several important questions after you have visited a school in order to decide if it is the right school for you. These questions will get you thinking in the right direction.

1. Would I attend this school if I had no intention of playing (sport)?

2. Do the coaches and players seem to genuinely care about each other?

3. Will I be successful academically at this school? Athletically? How do I measure up to everyone else?

4. Were the coaches interested in academics? Did they ask me about my educational and career interests?

5. Will I fit in with the rest of the student body at this particular school? Will I fit in with the rest of the team members?

6. Did any of the recruiters/coaches have bad things to say about the other schools that are recruiting me?

7. Did any of the recruiters/coaches promise me a starting position?

8. Were the coaches and players I met honest, available to me and others, friendly and genuinely interested in me?

9. How will I feel if one or more of the coaches leaves the school? Will I still be happy with the school? The (sport) program?

10. Does the school satisfy all the criteria that I identified earlier with my parents and counselor?