Parent & Athlete Timeline

This is a time line and checklist that a high school athlete can use during the college recruiting process.

Junior Year (11th grade)

SEPTEMBER 1 - Written contact by college coaches is permitted.

During your Junior year:

□ Meet with your high school guidance counselor and notify them of your intentions to play college sports. It is important that you meet the requirements for core academic courses. If you are lacking in any courses, be sure to schedule them during your junior or senior year.

□ Request a copy of the NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete from your guidance counselor or view a copy at www.ncaa.org.

□ Familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations governing recruiting, eligibility and financial aid. It is important to consider the differences between NCAA Division I, NCAA Division IAA, NCAA Division II, NCAA Division III, and NAIA schools.

□ Send out letters to coaches at colleges that you may be interested in. Click here for a sample letter.

□ Ask your high school coach to write recommendation letters to the coaches at the colleges that you are most interested in. Include a copy of your sport's schedule if available.

□ Register for the ACT / SAT standardized tests. Request that your ACT/SAT test scores be sent to the NCAA Clearinghouse--when registering for the test, students should select the NCAA Clearinghouse (code 9999) as a score recipient. It is very important to take the ACT or SAT at least once before your senior year. Also, you should take these tests as many times as possible since most colleges rely heavily on test scores when determining financial aid packages.

□ Prepare for the ACT/SAT to improve your test scores. Methods include prep courses, practice tests, or computer programs.

□ Prepare a videotape of game highlights or your athletic skills to be sent out when requested by college coaches.

□ Develop a sports resume` of athletic and academic achievements and honors. Keep an accurate record of extracurricular activities and community service. Click here for a sample athlete

resume and letter.

□ Develop a list of prospective schools with the help of guidance counselors, coaches, and your athletic director. Consideration should be given to academic achievement and athletic ability. Request literature and applications for the colleges you are interested in attending.

□ Attend financial aid seminars and request financial aid information from each of the colleges that yopu are interested in.

□ Plan visits to as many schools as possible during the spring and summer. All of these visits are "unofficial"--this means that the college can not pay for any part of the visit.

**** Note** – if you are a spring sport athlete, your junior year may be the only opportunity for a college coach to evaluate you. Invite them to your games, or make a video of your performances.

Summer after your Junior Year:

□ After completing grade 11, students who plan to participate in college sports at a NCAA Division I or II college should register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. Your high school guidance counselor should have these forms or the clearinghouse registration form is available online at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. The student should not register before the end of their junior year, because the clearinghouse cannot process a student's certification until it has received a transcript that shows at least six semesters. Be sure to have your guidance counselor send transcripts.

□ Send out letters of introduction along with your resume` to the coaches of the schools you are interested in attending. Provide them with information about your season, including stats.

□ You can contact college coaches by phone at any time, but, prior to June 15th after your Junior year they cannot call you.

AFTER July 15th - Phone contact from college coaches is now permitted.

Senior Year (12th grade)

PLEASE NOTE: Most schools will try to sign their top recruits during the November early signing period or they will have them sign an institutional letter of intent, which is basically a verbal comittment. They will NOT wait to get committments from kids during the April signing period. If you are waiting till January to start the recruiting process, you are putting yourself at a severe disadvantage.

August

□ Review core academic requirements & your class schedule with your guidance counselor.

□ After the student registers for the NCAA Clearinghouse, have the guidance counselor send the student's transcript to the clearinghouse. The transcript may be sent by regular mail or overnight delivery. The clearinghouse will not accept faxed transcripts or transcripts sent by the athlete.

□ Update your athletic and academic resume`.

□ Send out your resume', video, and fall softball schedule to the college coaches and encourage them to come and watch you play.

□ Meet with your coaches and athletic director about their involvement in the recruiting process. Talk about opportunities to increase your exposure. Also, ask them to write letters of recommendation.

□ Begin a file on each school that shows an interest in you.

□ Register to re-take the ACT/SAT as needed. This is an opportunity to increase your test scores and improve your chances for financial aid.

September - October

□ Narrow the list of schools to which you will apply (3 to 5 schools).

□ Develop a personal statement to be sent with your applications. Schools usually want to know about your goals and ambitions.

□ Send completed applications and fees to the schools you have chosen. Pay close attention to deadlines.

□ Plan campus visits at the schools you have chosen. Be sure to make appointments with the coaches, the admissions office, and the financial aid office. Prepare for your visit with a list of prepared questions. Be prepared for any questions the college may have for you.

November

□ Early signing period -- dates vary slightly from year to year -- Check on the NCAA website.

January

□ Complete and send Financial Aid Forms and Family Financial Statements (FAFSA) as early as possible after January 1st. Many schools offer financial aid on a first-come, first-served basis, and since it normally takes 4-6 weeks to process forms, it is important to apply as early in January as possible. Many schools have an early estimator that can speed up the process--be sure to ask about this.

February – May

□ Compare the financial aid packages from the schools you have applied to and begin to make your final decision.

□ Plan a second visit to the potential schools of your choice to help you make your final decision. An overnight visit with potential teammates may assist you in your decision.

□ The signing period for the National Letter of Intent typically occurs during the first week of April. Check the NCAA website for more information if you plan to attend and receive athletic scholarships from an NCAA Division I or II school.

May – June

□ After graduation, have your guidance counselor send your final transcript to the NCAA Clearinghouse and your final college of choice.

Base your college decision on the following:

• The area you want to study (major)

• How far away from home are you willing to go?

• The coaching staff

• Financial aid package

• The athletic program and where you fit in

Take care of these items:

• Send a letter to the coach expressing your interest and requesting info.

• If you haven't taken the ACT or SAT, get signed up ASAP, and study for it! Take it as many times as possible!

In your letter to the coach:

• Introduce yourself

o Where you go to school, your grade
o What positions you play
o Stats
o Academics – SAT/ACT score, GPA
o Any athletic/academic honors
o Phone numbers of coaches/references

• Ask them to send information on their school and their program

• Invite them to come see you play if possible.

Click here for a sample athlete resume and letter.