

## INFORMATION FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

### BEGINNING THE PROCESS

Thanks to the strong athletic program at Friends, many of our students are interested in learning more about participating in athletics at the collegiate level. If you are interested in collegiate athletics, you may want to begin the conversation as early as the ninth or tenth grade, since some sports (lacrosse, for example) begin to recruit prospective athletes quite early in high school.

You may wish to **begin the conversation** with these questions:

1. Are you interested in playing varsity athletics at college?
2. Do you love the off-season work of training and practice? If you don't love the sport year-round, you are probably not committed enough to be a varsity college athlete.
3. Are you willing to dedicate yourself to the process of becoming a recruited student-athlete? Many students are interested in college athletics...but only if it drops on their doorstep.

Remember that this process takes time, work, organization, and dedication. **Put the process in perspective** – there are nearly 30,000 high schools in the United States – that means that there are 30,000 quarterbacks, and 30,000 goalies, and 30,000 MVPs in each sport. Full scholarships are exceptionally rare – students should only pursue collegiate athletics because they love to play!

College coaches are looking for **three important characteristics** in a student-athlete:

1. A student who can be admitted to the college/university
2. A student who can contribute to the team
3. A student who is interested in the college and the team for good and specific reasons, and who expresses that interest regularly

While many students assume that coaches are seeking athletic talent first and foremost, remind them that if you are not admissible to the college, the coach will move on to another player. **Courses and grades matter!** A strong student makes it easier for the coach to advocate for him/her in the admissions process.

If you are not interested in committing to full varsity athletics at the college level, know that colleges offer a wide range of athletic experiences, from gym classes to intramural sports to club sports, which frequently compete at a very high level.

Even if you are a stand-out athlete at WFS, remember that WFS is a small school in a small state; **be realistic** about your skill and talent level. If you are not one of the elite players on your WFS and/or club team, you are less likely to be a strong candidate for varsity collegiate athletics.

Student-athlete recruitment has **two crucial components** – academic profile (grades and test scores) and athletic talent. It is equally important to be realistic about grades and test scores. A solid C student at WFS will have a wide range of excellent college choices, be well-prepared for college, and will be a strong applicant for hundreds of colleges. However, unless you have been recognized nationally, it is highly unlikely that you will gain admission into the most elite

colleges in the country. Athletic talent helps a student to stand out in the admissions process, but it cannot overcome grades or test scores that are significantly out of the admissions profile for a college/university. Think of athletic talent as a “bonus point”, rather than a golden ticket for admission.

As you may know, most WFS students play Division III athletics at college. Division III sports resemble the schedule that students are familiar with at Friends; a busy season, some off-season training, and a schedule that allows students to effectively balance academics and athletics. While DI and DII colleges are permitted to give scholarship money, please also note that athletics becomes an absolute priority at these institutions. Students will be expected to fully dedicate themselves year-round to the team. Most weekends will be spent traveling (often quite a distance) and students will miss classes for tournaments and games. At the DI and DII level, students are expected to manage their academics around their athletic schedule.

## NEXT STEPS

If you are interested in pursuing college athletics, begin with these steps:

1. **Talk to current coaches.** While many college coaches recruit from club/travel teams, your high school coach is a great resource! S/he can give you a sense of whether or not a student could be a strong contributor at the college level and which division athletics are the best match. You should have a conversation with both the high school and the club/travel coach to get a sense of the best “match” for his/her playing ability.
2. **Get organized!** You will need to start an organizational system for the student-athlete recruitment process. Figure out what works best for you – file folders, spreadsheets, etc. and get a system in place.
3. **Begin to gather data.** You will need to share data with college coaches. If you do not already have it, gather your statistics, which differ for each sport. If you are a runner or a swimmer, all you need to share is your best times. If you are a member of a field or court sport, however, you will need to gather a full range of data, including assists, goals, errors, etc. Talk to your coaches about obtaining this data.
4. **Prepare a student-athlete resume.** A sample is shared below for your reference. It is a good idea to have this document ready as early as the ninth grade; you can simply update it each season.
5. **Get video.** Most college coaches (other than the swimmers and the runners!) would like to receive some video of you in action. Some parents have joined together to hire a videographer; others use their home video camera to collect footage. While coaches differ in their expectations, you should plan to have: video of a full game (coaches like to see athletes on and off the field); a highlights tape (great catches, hits, etc.); and a skills tape (video of you doing the “basics” for your sport, which might include shooting, or passing, or blocking). This does not have to be a Broadway production, including music or strobe lights – a simple presentation of your skills is appropriate.
6. **Identify some colleges that might be of interest to you.** Begin with a website like collegeboard.com, which has a wonderful college search tool. You can enter in a range of

criteria – which geographic region, large/small, urban/rural, which major, and which sport (by division) and it will generate a list of potential colleges. Again, try to be realistic – a B/C student is not likely to gain admission to Harvard, so try to find colleges that match your academic profile and personal interests. You will be playing a sport at college, but you will also be taking classes, living, and socializing in that environment – make sure that it’s a good match, and, most importantly, a place that you would thrive even if (for some reason) you were no longer a student-athlete.

7. **Think about standardized testing.** While the college office does not advocate early testing, it does help coaches to have some SAT/ACT scores in order to be able to effectively respond to athletes about the potential for admission at a college. Student-athletes should participate in a practice ACT or SAT in the ninth and tenth grade, and should discuss taking the SAT or ACT earlier than their peers, most likely in October or January of the junior year. If you take a practice test and your scores are within profile for an institution, that’s great. If your scores are significantly lower than the academic profile for an institution, you may want to discuss whether or not you would like to pursue test preparation through courses or tutoring.

8. **Get on the radar.** The first step to letting college coaches know that you’re out there is to fill out the student-athlete prospect form on each college’s website.

9. **Stay on the radar.** Once you are in a coach’s system, you need to maintain contact so s/he knows of your interest. This does not mean that you need to be his/her regular pen pal! Rather, a student should send an initial email (please see the sample email in the attached information) and follow up a few times a year. It is helpful to send the high school and club season schedule so a college coach (or his/her assistant) can see you play if possible. If you are playing any showcases or participating in skills camps, it is also helpful to let the college coach know about the event. Don’t forget to provide your position and jersey number so the coach knows who you are!

10. **Schedule some visits.** While there are strict rules governing visits for Division I and II colleges, students may choose to visit any college at any time to see if it is a fit for them. If time allows, visit some colleges while on vacation or when you have a free weekend. A junior or senior can participate in more extensive visits, including meeting with athletes, taking a campus tour, and possibly scheduling a college interview.

11. **Ask the college office.** We’re here to help. If you have questions or need guidance on some colleges, please contact counselor.

12. **Division I and II athletes** should register with the NCAA eligibility center.

While it is very helpful for a parent to serve as the “administrative assistant” for a student’s college athletic recruitment process, it is vital that the student take ownership of this process. College coaches want to meet students who represent themselves well, shake hands, make eye contact, and who are willing to take the initiative in the student-athlete process. **Parents should let their child take the lead!**

Please remember that this process can be intimidating, and at times, overwhelming, for a student-athlete. Our athletic and college offices stand at the ready to support you as you journey through the student-athletic recruitment process. **Be patient, be realistic, be open-minded,** and remember that the ultimate goal is to find a college that is a perfect fit for you, academically, athletically, and socially.

## NCAA

If you are considering participating in Division I, II, or III athletics in college, you should begin contacting coaches and exploring athletic opportunities early in your high school career.

If you are considering participating in Division I or II athletics at college, you should:

1. visit the NCAA website ([ncaa.org/playcollegesports](http://ncaa.org/playcollegesports)) and the Eligibility Center site ([eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org)) and register for initial eligibility by the end of the junior year.
2. Notify the WFS registrar that you have registered with the NCAA ([lsatterfield@wilmingtonfriends.org](mailto:lsatterfield@wilmingtonfriends.org))
3. send your official SAT or ACT scores to the Eligibility Center, identifying the Center with the code 9999.

## ATHLETIC DIVISIONS

If you are not sure in what division you could be competitive, it would be helpful to ask your coach(es) for guidance and for some suggestions of colleges that might be a match for your athletic and academic abilities. **Please note that colleges can be a different division in different sports.**

What is the difference between the divisions?

Division I:

- 350 member institutions
- these colleges can fund up to 100% of the cost of attendance for a student-athlete
- students must register through the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse
- Some examples of DI colleges are Villanova, U. Pennsylvania, Penn State University, Drexel, St. Joseph's University, La Salle University, Temple University, Rutgers University, and Monmouth University

Division II:

- 310 member institutions
- these colleges can fund up to 100% of the cost of attendance for a student-athlete
- the amount of scholarships is roughly half of the number awarded in Division I
- students must register through the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse
- Some examples of DII colleges are East Stroudsburg University, West Chester University, Lock Haven University, Cheyney University, Kutztown University, and Philadelphia University

Division III:

- 438 member institutions
- these colleges do not award athletic scholarships, but they do offer scholarships, grants, loans, and work study monies based on a family's need and a student's academic profile

- Some examples of DIII colleges are Cabrini College, Swarthmore College, Bryn Mawr College, Dickinson College, Carnegie Mellon University, and Muhlenberg College
- At many DIII colleges, you don't have to be recruited to play; you can also consider being a walk-on
- Many WFS students may be able to participate at the DIII level

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE TIMELINE:**

### **9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- Go to class, do your homework, and develop good study habits. Your academic performance will be integral to college recruiting.
- Play your sport at the highest level available, both with your school team and a club team.
- Begin thinking about showcases, camps, and other opportunities to display your athletic ability to college coaches.
- When you have the opportunity, begin visiting college campuses and when possible, talk to coaches and/or team members.
- Film a few games for your recruitment video.
- If you know what colleges interest you most, you can communicate with a select group of coaches.
- Fill out prospective athlete forms on college websites

### **11<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- Fill out prospective athlete forms on college websites.
- Begin to actively communicate with coaches. (sample letter below). Be sure to include information about yourself and a copy of your team's schedule.
- Ask your high school coach to contact select college coaches on your behalf.
- Register for and take the ACT and/or SAT.
- Plan unofficial visits to college campuses during the spring and summer.
- Continue to play your sport at the highest level available, both with your school team and a club team.
- Attend camps and showcases to display your talent.
- Stay in regular communication with coaches at the colleges that most interest you.
- Film games for your recruitment video; make a video using HUDL or other sites.
- Continue visiting college campuses and when possible, talk to coaches and/or team members.
- Stay in contact with coaches; they need to know that you are truly interested in their college! You should plan to send an email every few months, highlighting your academic or athletic accomplishments.
- If you plan to participate in Division I or II athletics, sign up with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse ( [eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org)) before the end of junior year.
- Keep up the hard work academically!

Note: When a student-athlete has completed his/her junior year, college coaches can then make in-person, off-site contact.

### 12<sup>th</sup> grade:

- Apply to the colleges of your choice, where you will have the best opportunities for academic and athletic success.
- Ask coaches about early reads through the admissions office
- Continue to play your sport at the highest level available, both with your school team and with a club team.
- Coaches may ask you to apply early decision (which is a binding agreement); talk to your family and your college counselor to see if this is right for you
- Attend camps and showcases to display your talent.
- Take advantage of official visits if presented with the opportunity.
- Keep up the hard work academically!

### **QUESTIONS TO ASK COACHES AND TEAM MEMBERS**

- How often do freshmen play?
- What role do you see me playing on this team?
- How strong of a player would I be on your team?
- What are skills I need to work on as an athlete?
- How long is the coach's contract at the school?
- Do you redshirt freshmen?
- Do you redshirt injured players?
- How many other recruits are on your list this year?
- How many other players do you have on the team at my position?
- Would you want me to play my position or would you have me switch my position?
- How many players are in your program?
- How many returning starters do you have?
- Could you describe the off-season training program and commitments?
- Do all of the members of the team travel to away games?
- How many students are on scholarship? How many students are not on scholarship?
- What is your in-season practice and conditioning schedule? How about summer?
- How much support does this program receive from the college/university's athletic program?
- What is the time commitment for travel in-season?
- Can students "walk-on"?
- What kind of budgetary support does the program receive from the athletic department? How much would I be responsible for?
- What is a typical day for one of the players in-season and out-of-season?
- What are your goals for the program?
- What is your coaching philosophy?
- What accident/health insurance does the school offer athletes? What is the procedure if injured?
- Do you anticipate openings on the team in my position?

- How many seniors will be graduating this year?
- Do you feel that I could contribute to and participate on the team?
- Would you encourage me to apply to the college?
- What position would I play on your team?
- How would you best describe your coaching style?
- Do you have any input in the admissions process?
- Can I participate in more than one sport?
- Is an athletic trainer available for the athletic teams?
- What are the admissions requirements for an athlete?
- What is your recruiting timeline?
- How many players are your recruiting at my position?
- When would be the best time to visit your school?

### **Regarding Campus Life:**

- Do athletes have separate housing or specialized housing?
- If athletes come to campus early for pre-season training, where do they live?
- Do athletes have special dining hours? Are dining hours extended if athletes have late practices or games?
- Do athletes have to live on campus?
- Is it possible to study abroad as a student athlete? If so, when? For a semester? Over the summer? For a shorter period of time?
- How easily can I involve myself in other extracurricular activities?
- Can I play another sport?
- How many hours a day will athletics and related responsibilities require?
- May I choose my major and attend classes required for my major even if it conflicts with practices?
- What percentage of scholarship athletes graduate in four years? Five years?
- Is free tutoring available for athletes? How do I arrange for this service?

### **Regarding Academics:**

- How do I pick my classes? Who helps me to pick classes?
- How often do students take summer classes to make up time from the academic year?
- Are there any majors that are easier or harder to choose as a student-athlete?
- Where do I go to get help if I have difficulty academically?
- Do professors understand if I have to miss class for a game or tournament?
- Does the coach keep tabs on the team members' academic performance?
- Does the team or the athletic department offering tutoring or study tables?
- Do players in my sports program tend to graduate in four years?
- How often will I miss class because of my sports commitment?
- What is the coach's perspective on academics?
- How successful are the other student-athletes in this program?
- What is the attitude on campus toward athletes? Do professors support student athletes?
- How many classes will I miss due to athletic commitments, travels, etc? Can I make up tests before or after absences?
- How many hours a day do most students devote to study at this college?
- Do most of your players graduate in four years?

- Does your program have a full-time academic advisor?
- Will my major interfere with the athletic schedule?
- Describe the typical day for a student athlete.

#### **Regarding Financial Aid:**

- How many scholarships does your program offer?
- If I am offered a scholarship, will the scholarship amount stay constant and/or be renewed?
- What costs does a scholarship to your college cover?
- Can I work while on campus?
- If an athlete gets hurt, what happens to his scholarship money?
- Is there any financial assistance for summer school?
- If the college doesn't provide merit/athletic scholarships, how does the financial aid office award financial aid? Would my family qualify for aid?
- Can my family get an early read on our financial aid package?
- Are need-based financial aid packages renewed each year?
- Are there any incidental costs associated with being a varsity team member?
- Do you expect team members to be involved with fundraising activities?
- If I am offered a full or partial scholarship, how can it be terminated?

#### **Regarding the Admissions Process:**

- Will you support me in the admissions process?
- Has the admissions office seen my application materials and given any sort of feedback?
- Are there things I can do to strengthen my application?
- How many other students is the coach supporting?
- Where do I fall on the coach's list?
- How often does the admissions office listen to the coach's suggestions?
- Will the coach support me in the admissions office if I have not made a firm commitment?

The bottom line: Ask yourself, “If I could not participate in athletics for some reason at this college, could I be happy here academically and socially?”

It is important to contact coaches early in your high school career and to stay in contact with them on a regular basis. To begin this communication, you may want to send out an initial email along with your athletic resume to coaches. Samples of an initial letter and an athletic resume are provided below.

#### **SAMPLE EMAIL TO A COACH**

- Develop an eye-catching subject line, like “linebacker, 6’2”, 220 pounds, 4.6 sec. 40-yard dash”

Dear Coach \_\_\_\_\_,

I am a (sophomore/junior/senior) at the Wilmington Friends School in DE. I am interested in participating on the \_\_\_\_\_ team at \_\_\_\_\_ College/University. My goal is to pursue a degree in (desired major).

I play \_\_\_\_\_ (position) for the \_\_\_\_\_ (team name) at Wilmington Friends. I also play club for \_\_\_\_\_. **SHARE A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR ATHLETIC CAREER - TIMES, PRs, CHAMPIONSHIPS**

I have attached my high school athletic schedule for this coming season. I hope that you or a member of your staff might have the opportunity to see me play this year. I have also attached my athletic resume for your information.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (phone number) or (email). I look forward to speaking with you soon!

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME

Link to your video

### **ATHLETIC RESUME**

It is also helpful to create an athletic resume to send to coaches.

**Pxu Coyote**  
**505 E. Van Buren**  
**Phoenix, AZ 85004**  
**602-576-1234 (h) 02-576-2345 (c)6**  
**wfsathlete@comcast.net**  
**Women's Volleyball Candidate**

### **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

Phoenix Union High School, class of 2023  
507 E. Van Buren St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
GPA: 4.0/IB Diploma Candidate

Fall Courses: IB HL English, IB HL Spanish, IB HL Math, Biology 2, IB Art Studio, IB Theory of Knowledge

Standardized Testing: SAT (3/20): EBRW: 750 MATH: 750

ACT (4/20): composite score 33

Academic Interest: Psychology/Education

## **ATHLETE INFORMATION**

Height: 5' 9"

Weight: 150 lbs

Position: Outside Hitter

Jersey Number: #13

High School Coach: Coach Name, email, phone number

Club Coach: Coach Name, email, phone number

## Athletic Highlights

Team Captain 2019

League Champions 2019, 2020

All-State Team 2019

STATISTICS/PRs/SPECIAL SKILLS

## **QUALITIES OF ATHLETES**

**Discipline.** This is a hallmark of the athletic experience. Organizing one's time, adhering to guidelines, exacting maximum effort on a regular basis, concentrating one's energies, and screening out competing priorities are all necessary for competence in athletics. The systematic application of one's energies toward a desired goal is highly valued in any work situation, especially in those that require independent effort.

**Confidence.** Athletes are continually in situations where they must "pump themselves up" and believe in themselves to perform effectively under pressure. The ability to approach tough performance situations expecting to do well is crucial. Practice in maintaining self-confidence and control, especially under tense circumstances, carries over to the readiness to take on job-related challenges.

**Teamwork.** Athletes become familiar with the experience of working toward group goals. Working with a coach is similar to working with a department manager. Team play teaches the athlete what it means to be a role player and that it is sometimes necessary to submerge one's ego and personal goals into the goals of the organization, and that leadership can take the form of motivating people to work together toward a common goal.

**Taking Criticism.** Athletes are accustomed to taking criticism, because their performance on the field is watched closely and any weak points seldom escape comment. Athletes typically develop into good listeners when constructive criticism is offered, because they recognize its value in helping them advance toward overall goals.

**Competitiveness.** The competitive spirit is the lifeblood of the athletic experience, and most athletes thrive on it. They gain experience in the rigors of winning and losing, and they relish the

opportunity to try again, test their abilities, and risk their self esteem against tough opposition. This translates into a strong asset in most jobs.

**Time Management.** Athletes balance a full-time academic workload, full-time commitment to athletics, travel to other schools for games, time-out for fatigue, and possibly part-time employment or other off-campus commitments. Consider different activities you have juggled during college, and be prepared to discuss.

**Goal-Oriented.** Athletes cultivate the ability to concentrate their energies and attention over an extended period of time and block out distractions while they proceed toward their goal. Can you provide a specific example?

**Dealing with Setbacks.** Sports offer continued opportunities to test oneself, succeed or not, and then come back for more. No one who competes in a sport can avoid the experience of “failure”, sooner or later. Among the most valuable lessons of athletics are how to win or lose with class, and how to move forward after either.

## **RECRUITING TERMS (primarily used in DI and DII)**

**Contact:** A contact happens any time a college coach says more than “Hello” during a face-to-face meeting with you or your parents off the college’s campus.

**Official commitment:** When you officially commit to attend a Division I or II college, you sign a National Letter of Intent, agreeing to attend that school for one academic year.

**Official visit:** During an official visit, the college can pay for transportation to and from the college for you (and up to two family members in Division I Basketball and FBS Football), lodging and meals (Division I allows for up to three meals per day) for you and up to four family members, as well as reasonable entertainment expenses, including five tickets to a Division I or Division II home sports event. Before a Division I or II college may invite you on an official visit, you will have to provide the college with a copy of your high school transcript and register for a Certification account with the NCAA Eligibility Center. In Division I, it is not permissible to make an official visit during a recruiting shutdown period or a dead period.

**Unofficial visit:** Any visit by you and your parents to a college campus paid for by you or your parents. The only expense you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a Division I home athletics contest or five complimentary admissions to a Division II home athletics contest. You may make as many unofficial visits as you like after the first permissible date in each sport. The only time you cannot talk with a coach during an unofficial visit is during a dead period. In Division I, it is not permissible to make an official visit during a recruiting shutdown period or a dead period. In Division III, you may receive one on-campus meal as well as admission to a home athletics event for you and those accompanying you.

**Verbal commitment:** A verbal commitment happens when you verbally agree to play sports for a college before you sign or are eligible to sign a National Letter of Intent. The commitment is not binding on you or the school.

**Walk-on:** Someone who is not typically recruited by a school to participate in sports and does not receive a scholarship from the school, but who becomes a member of one of the school's athletics teams.