



TIMELINES

Whenever possible, we encourage you to begin early...as early as the 7th or 8th grade! Time is the one thing that you cannot regain once it is gone.

For those athletes who are in their final high school year, do not despair! we can help you identify and prepare for the critical steps that you must take.

NOTE: Athletes who have begun the process late or those who have not received the type of scholarship offer they desire may opt to adjust their timeline and choose to take their first year of college locally. This allows the athlete time to mature and develop into the type of student athlete that the schools of their dreams require. Students could also use this time to upgrade their GPA, redo the SAT's etc.

Ideally, the process of acquiring a college scholarship unfolds as follows...

GRADE 7/8

Athlete and family begins the process of designing their PLAN to ACHIEVE their ULTIMATE GOAL! This allows the family to work together toward the common goal and to identify the actions required and the resources needed to support the process. Beginning the process at this stage allows the athlete and family "time to breathe" and to progress at an even and manageable pace...all of which add to the joy of the process!

By developing the PLAN to ACHIEVE the ULTIMATE GOAL at this early stage, athletes and families will gain an important understanding of what is entailed in achieving their dream of acquiring a college scholarship. This PLAN will serve as a blueprint of future action and will ultimately lead to success!

NOTE: The added benefit of beginning the process at this stage is that it helps keep young adolescents focused on their goal so they develop positive school and lifestyle habits. (Remember those personal, social and family goals!) Student athletes who demonstrate good work habits and positive lifestyle decisions are far more successful in achieving their dreams. (And staying out of trouble during their middle school or junior years!)

The bottom line is that the skill development required of the prospective student athlete requires extraordinary commitment and desire. The student athlete will be well served by making a passionate, emotional connection to their ULTIMATE GOAL and each of the above-mentioned sub-goals.

Grade 8- 10

During this time period, the student athlete often shows remarkable growth and development. This is a time of PREPARATION where the athlete and his family seek out the best coaching and training available. Connections are made with key professionals who will also serve as excellent references on your athletic resume. The athlete has sufficient time to develop the skills, movement patterns and techniques that college coaches look for. College coaches will begin to pay attention to you at tournaments, showcases and other events

because you are taking the necessary steps to develop into the type of college student athlete they desire. By the end of Grade 10 you would like to be on the "radar screens" of several colleges. This will make your future promotional efforts more efficient and effective.

This period of time is when the athlete's PLAN becomes more refined, detailed and catered to the needs of the college recruiter. The athlete has time to design his or her sub-goals (academics, skill development, fitness and conditioning, social, promotion etc.) so that the increased demand of each of them is synchronized around the ULTIMATE GOAL.

During this time period it will become abundantly clear that everything will take more time, more money and more effort! Student athletes and their families who have PLANNED and prepared well will reap the benefits of their organization during this time.

As student/athletes enter their final phase of high school (grade 11 and 12) they will have hopefully instilled within themselves a burning desire to achieve their goal as well as the skills and habits that will lead them there!

Grades 11 and 12

Your Grade 11 or junior year is perhaps the most crucial! Ideally, by the time you enter your sport season in your Grade 11 year, there will already be a number of colleges that have you on their radars! This is the time to intensify your efforts and prove to them that you are an excellent academic and athletic investment that deserves a healthy scholarship!

Ideally, during your Grade 12 year, you will be invited on official college recruiting visits to prospective schools. These usually occur in the fall (depending on your sport) and you are permitted to attend a maximum of 5 paid NCAA college visits. I.e. This is one of the reasons that your plan to achieve your ultimate goal focuses so much on designing your academic sub-goal to work with your promotional activities! When you are invited on these recruiting trips you will not miss classes in difficult courses because you have designed your fall course load to be "lighter!"

Let's explain why your Grade 11 year is perhaps the most crucial. Colleges and universities are bound by rules of recruitment that place limitations on when and how much they can speak with you. At the same time, the college coaches feel pressure to "sign" next year's team at the earliest possible time. NCAA universities have an "Early Signing Period" most often in the fall of your grade 12 year! College coaches who are serious about signing you will contact you at the earliest possible time (usually, July 1 before you enter your Grade 12 year!) That means that college coaches will have already made many of their decisions regarding scholarships during your Grade 11 year... before you even enter Grade 12!!! If you are intending on going to a 4-year university, then your goal is to sign a national letter of intent during the early signing period. If you are fortunate enough to achieve an early signing then the remainder of your Grade 12 year can be addressed at a much more relaxed, comfortable pace!

It is very important for student athletes intending on pursuing a scholarship at a 4 year school to write the SAT test well in advance of the early signing period. We recommend writing the SAT once during your Grade 11 year and then again early in your Grade 12 year. Prospective schools will utilize the best of your scores.

As well, student athletes who have followed the plan to achieve the ultimate goal will find that their academic course load during grade 11 and 12 is more manageable because they have designed it to provide them with much needed flexibility. This is the time when the plan and the synchronization of the sub-goals really comes in to help you!

While most 4-year universities employ an early signing period, the same is not always true for junior colleges. Generally, the recruiting procedures and guidelines for junior colleges are not as restrictive or time sensitive as 4-year schools.

If you do not "sign early" in your Grade 12 year, do not despair. In reality, only a small percentage of student athletes sign early. If this is the case, then you need to intensify your promotional efforts (see C. Promoting) among your Target Schools. (See Target Schools) At the same time, you need to consider visiting colleges on your own. Scouting Solutions recommends that families schedule vacations to areas where you would like to go to college so that you can visit colleges during your vacation.

During the Grade 12 year, student athletes need to realistically consider the options that they have available to them. This will help you refine your college search to schools that you have a good chance of receiving a scholarship from. Make no mistake about it...circumstances for colleges and recruiters change quickly and drastically! For this reason it is important to maintain contact with as many schools on your target list as possible for as long as possible. Ex: Each June, Major League Baseball drafts many college baseball players who have already accepted large college scholarships. If the player decides to sign professionally rather than going to college, then the college may suddenly have additional scholarship money available for you!!