

The Student Athlete's Game Plan



*A Student Athletic Guide to
College Admissions*

Watkins Mill Athletic Department

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Introductory Letter

June 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians & Athletes:

This packet has been created for your convenience to help guide you through an important time in your life. Continuing your athletic career in college requires a tremendous amount of work. While “The Student Athlete’s Game Plan” can assist you through the college admission process, you are the generating force to assure that the necessary tasks get accomplished. Watkins Mill High School’s guidance counselors and coaches are here to help. The success of this process also depends upon realistic evaluation of your athlete’s ability, both in the classroom and in the sports arena.

Please use this information to help further your athlete’s opportunities beyond high school. There are many people to assist you along the way. Do not hesitate to ask for help. We all want our athletes to succeed.

Sincerely,

The Watkins Mill Athletic Department

The Process

RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE PROCESS

Student/Parent – School Counselor

- Meet with counselor
 1. Begin to compile a list of colleges.
 2. Check to see that you have met all academic obligations, as they apply to the NCAA regulations:
 - a. Core Course Requirements
 - b. File the NCAA Clearinghouse Form
 - c. NCAA Recruiting Rules

Student/Parent – Coach

- Meet with high school coach to evaluate talent and determine appropriate level
- Continue contact with college coach
- When appropriate, ask the high school coach to contact college coach

Student

- Develop athletic resume / profile
- Contact college coaches
- Inform counselor and coach of your list of colleges
- Visit colleges

The Game Plan

CHECKLISTS

- Academic Checklist
- Athletic Checklist

FRESHMEN/SOPHOMORE YEARS

- Establish a four-year academic plan to meet all core course requirements.
- Take a strong academic course load.
- Maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average out of 4.0 in core courses.
- Talk with your athletic director or coach about other opportunities to increase your exposure in your sport.
- Attend summer camps
 1. For exposure (select camps at colleges that you might want to attend)
 2. To improve skills
 3. To compare your current skill with others
- Videotape games
- Keep records of your athletic achievements, extracurricular activities, etc.
- View college athletic web sites. Most have a simple questionnaire you may fill out and e-mail to the coach.

JUNIOR YEAR

- Continue to take a strong academic course load.
- Make certain you are taking the required core academic courses.
- Register for and take the required standardized tests (i.e. SAT, ACT).
- Designate the NCAA to receive SAT & ACT scores when registering for test (NCAA- Code is #9999 on SAT & ACT registration form).
- Attend college nights and fairs and read literature sent to you by schools.
- Begin to visit college campuses.
- Submit NCAA Clearinghouse form in the spring of your junior year.
- Develop a list of prospective schools with the help of counselors and coaches. Consideration should be given to academic achievement and athletic ability.
- Request college applications as early as possible, preferably the summer after your junior year.
- Develop an athletic resume and continue to update records and lists of athletic and extracurricular activities.
- Familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations governing recruiting, eligibility and financial aid.
- Meet with your coach for a thorough evaluation of your athletic ability and, hopefully, you will receive a recommendation for an appropriate level of competition. Be realistic.

- Also, discuss with your coach his/her involvement in your recruitment process. Ask him/her to be proactive on your behalf by responding to questionnaires sent by recruiting coaches.
- Send a letter of introduction along with your athletic resume; to coaches of schools you are interested in attending.
- Continue to attend sports camps.
- Keep a file on each college/university that shows an interest in you.
- Continue to videotape games. Send video (or preferably DVD) to prospective coaches at the end of the junior year. **For spring sports, consider doing this earlier!**
- View college games to assess their level of play and compare it to your level.

SENIOR YEAR

- Continue to work hard in your academic courses.
- Take and/or retake the standardized tests as needed. Check with your counselor for national testing dates.
- Obtain college applications.
- Meet with your counselor to review application materials.
- Write a personal statement.
- Complete Financial Aid forms early – *Profile* form in the fall (only needed for select colleges), *FAFSA* as soon as possible, after January 1st (required for all colleges).
- Continue to visit the campuses of those schools in which you are interested. It is recommended that you either call or write for an appointment to meet with a coach, admissions officer, financial aid advisor and departmental chairperson.
- Apply to several colleges. Even if you are going to apply “early decision” to one college, there is never a guarantee of admittance.
- Continue to write, call or e-mail coaches expressing interest in their school and athletic programs.
- Update your athletic resume.
- Be prompt in your response regarding college questionnaires or other similar requests.

Students and parents must take the initiative and work on their own behalf. Please do not sit back and wait for someone to do it for you. Staying on top of all the information throughout the high school years makes it easier when the actual time comes to applying for college.

Marketing Strategies

- **Letter of interest and resume to college coach:**

There should be a letter drafted and sent by the student to the coach at each college of interest. The letter should include the athletic resume and a clearly labeled DVD of the athlete, if possible. Handwrite the envelope so they know the information is not coming from an agency.

- **Include and/or follow-up with game schedule:**

Send a separate mailing with a brief letter including the student's game schedule, followed by a telephone call to the coach to urge him/her to visit you during a scheduled game. Remember when you send a schedule to put your jersey number on it.

- **Sports Video/DVD:**

You should prepare a sport video/DVD. This video/DVD should be no longer than 3 minutes in duration. College coaches differ on what they look for in a video/DVD. Consider asking the college coach what he/she is looking for. The video/DVD may include a full game, part of game, highlights of the athlete and/or skill work (throwing, catching, passing, shooting, etc.). Please keep in mind that DVD's are becoming the media of choice for college coaches.

- **Letters of Recommendation:**

Letters of recommendation may be obtained from past and present coaches from school and club teams, an opposing coach, athletic director, counselor and teachers. The purpose of the letters is to attest to the player's character and conduct, as well as to the level of play. Coaches and teachers are used to these requests. Attach these letters to the resume and send them to the colleges where you are applying and believe you can play.

- **News Clippings:**

Athletes need to keep local and school newspaper clippings or other articles written about them and about the team. These articles should also be mailed along with the player's resume to the colleges of their choice.

- **Summer Sport Camps / Outside Team Participation, Tournaments and Competitions:**

Throughout all of the high school years, the student athlete interested in playing a sport in college needs to enroll in a related summer sport camp, a club program or local leagues. College coaches view this as a commitment to the sport and it enhances the student athlete's performance throughout their high school years.

- **High School Coach Contact with College Coach**

The student athlete and the parents should approach the high school coach to ask that he or she contact the coaches of colleges that you are interested in.

- **Scouting Agencies**

While these agencies are convenient for the family, many college coaches have said that they are overwhelmed with agencies sending them thousands of recruiting films so they disregard them. Handwrite the envelope to the coach so they know your film is not coming from an agency.

Sample Letter

June 7, 2011

USA University
University Blvd.
University, USA 06520

Dear (Coach's Name):

This letter is to let you know of my interest in playing interscholastic (*sport*). Athletics has been a major part of my life throughout high school, and I am looking forward to continuing my playing career in college. Your university has a fine reputation for both academic and athletic excellence. I am looking for a school that can challenge me intellectually and athletically, a school with a strong tradition both in the classroom and on the playing field.

Enclosed you will find a copy of my resume as I am interested in your university. Please send me information on your school's academic and athletic programs as well as an application for admission.

Thank you very much for your time, and I hope we will have a chance to meet sometime in the near future.

Sincerely,

Mary or Joe Rine

Enclosure

Sample Resumes

(Sample A)

Athletic Profile

Student Name

Student Address

Student Phone

School Varsity Soccer – 3 Years – Grades 10, 11, 12

- Position – Sweeper
- Coach (_____)
- Made Playoffs and Montgomery County Semi-Finals (*year*)

School Varsity Basketball – 3 Years

- Position – Forward
- Coach (_____)
- Honors – Two Years in a Row / (years) Awarded
- All County MVP
- Highest Scorer in Montgomery County 2011 Season
- MVP 2010 Holiday Tournament

School Varsity Lacrosse – Grade 11

- Position – Mid-Fielder
- Coach (_____)

Summer Developmental Group – Basketball

- Wizards Camp, Five Star All American – Eastern Invitational

Other Athletic Achievements

- Travel Soccer Team – Sweeper – 11 years
 - Co-captain of team past 5 years
 - Three time team champion and runner up of Montgomery Junior Soccer League Division II
 - Winner of Maryland 's Cup – 2009
- Baseball Team - 2010

(Sample B)

	(Name)
	(Address)
	(Phone)
High School:	Watkins Mill High School
Date of Birth:	05/22/95
Year of Graduation:	2013
Height:	6' 1"
Weight:	175 lbs.
Counselor:	Name
Athletic Director:	Name
Soccer Coach:	Name
Lacrosse Coach:	Name
Basketball Coach:	Name
Director of Guidance:	Name

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Average:	3.76
SAT's:	1480
	Verbal: 720
	Math: 760
	Writing 710
SAT Achievement Tests:	Math IC: 770
	Writing: 690
	Physics: 760
Achievements:	National Honor Society
	Rensselaer Medalist-Excellence Math/Science
	Engineering Medal/George Washington University
	American Chemical Society's Award for Excellence in Chemistry
	National Merit Commended Student
	Watkins Mill High School Principal's Award

EXAMPLES OF LEADERSHIP

Student Government:	President – Grade 12
	Treasurer – Grades 10 & 11
Student Council, Class of '13:	President – Grades 9 & 10

(Sample C)

ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

(Name)

(Address)

(Phone)

Soccer:

Varsity – One-Year

Position: Fullback

Cross Country:

Varsity – Two Years

Basketball:

Maryland State Scholar Athlete Team

Varsity – Three Years

Jr. Varsity – One Year

Position: Forward

Lacrosse:

All County Scholar Athlete Award

Varsity – Two Years

Jr. Varsity – Two Years

Position: Mid-Field

SCHOOL AND NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Student Government:

Four Years

President – Grade 12

Treasurer – Grades 10 & 11

Student Council, Class of '08:

Four Years

President – Grades 9 & 10

National Honor Society:

Grade 12

National Honor Society in Foreign Language: Grade 12

Model Congress:

Freshmen Year

Key Club – Community Service:

Four Years

Total Hours: 320

Club Organized Events:

Cancer Benefit

Blood drive

Community Service/Outside of School:

Volunteer, Stony Brook Hospital

Academic Tutor:

Grade 12, Chemistry

Community Service:

Merit Award

Awards and Recognition:

Student of the Month

The Role of School Personnel in the College Application Process

High School athletes should call upon coaches and other members of the Athletic Department to work with them and their counselor in the process of applying to colleges.

The coach and counselor working together with the student athlete and his/her parents are an effective team in guiding those students interested in playing collegiate sports.

Typically, the process is best begun early and involves the following steps:

- Student expresses interest in collegiate athletics to his/her coach and counselor.
- Student athlete should set up a meeting with the coach to discuss his/her potential to play sports at the collegiate level.
- The coach will, based upon the student's ability and performance, recommend the appropriate level of play, and will review the student athlete's athletic resume.
- The coach and student athlete will share this information with student's counselor in order to help in the process of identifying appropriate colleges.
- Coaches may provide further support for the student athlete in the application process by writing letters of recommendation and by contacting college coaches when appropriate.

It is important for students and their parents to take the initiative and responsibility of pursuing the student's desire to play college sports. While the counselor and coach will provide assistance in the form of evaluations, resumes and letter of recommendation, the student and parents remain the driving force in this process by initiating meetings, developing a resume, contacting colleges, and meeting application deadlines.

NCAA and the Clearinghouse

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) governs three divisions of college athletics and requires that students interested in playing on either Division I or Division II teams file forms for certification of athletic eligibility. The form and the **NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete**, a publication that explains the rules and regulations that govern recruiting, eligibility, and financial aid, can be found at the NCAA website at www.ncaa.org.

Students who want to participate in Division I or Division II sports should start the certification process by the end of their junior year. The procedure is as follows:

- Each spring the Guidance Department will send a completed “List of Approved Courses”, formerly the 48-H form, to the Clearinghouse. This form lists each ESM course offering that meets the NCAA core course guidelines.
- If you wish to participate in Division I or Division II sports, you must submit your SAT and/or ACT scores directly to the Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse code is 9999.
- You must fill out a “Domestic Student Release Form” (SRF) in September of your senior year. The form gives Watkins Mill High School and any other high school you may have attended, the authority to release your transcript, and eventually, proof of graduation. It also gives the Clearinghouse permission to release all academic and testing information to the colleges that request it. The preferred method of registering is online at: www.eligibilitycenter.org
 - Fill out and make three copies. Mail one copy to NCAA Clearinghouse.
 - Give two copies to the registrar who will, upon receipt, send it to NCAA Clearinghouse with transcript.
 - IT IS THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO COMPLETE THIS FORM!

What's the Difference between Divisions I, II and III?

Division I

Division I member institutions have to sponsor at least seven sports for men and seven for women (or six for men and eight for women) with two team sports for each gender. Each playing season has to be represented by each gender, as well. There are contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria. For sports other than football and basketball, Division I schools must play 100% of the minimum number of contests against Division I opponents – anything over the minimum number of games has to be 50% Division I. Men's and women's basketball teams have to play all but two games against Division I teams, for men, they must play 1/3 of all their contests in the home arena. Schools that have football are classified as Division I-A or I-AA. Division I-A football schools are usually fairly elaborate programs. Division I-A teams have to meet minimum attendance requirements:

- 17,000 people in attendance per home game
- 20,000 average of all football games in the last four years, or
- 30,000 permanent seats in their stadium and average 17,000 per home game, or
- 20,000 average of all football games in the last four years, or
- Be in a member conference in which at least six conference members sponsor football or more than half of football schools meet attendance criterion.

Division I-AA teams do not need to meet minimum attendance requirements. Division I schools must meet minimum financial aid awards for their athletic program, and there are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that a Division I school cannot exceed.

Division II

Division II institutions have to sponsor at least four sports for men and four for women, with two team sports for each gender, and playing season represented by each gender. There are contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria – football and men's and women's basketball teams must play at least 50% of their games against Division II or Division I-A or Division I-AA opponents. For sports other than football or basketball there are no scheduling requirements. There are no attendance requirements for football, or arena game requirements for basketball. There are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that a Division II school must not exceed. Division II teams usually feature a number of local or in-state student athletes. Many Division II student-athletes pay for school through a combination of scholarship money, grants, student loans and employment earnings. Division II athletic programs are financed in the institution's budget like other academic departments on campus. Traditional rivalries with regional institutions dominate schedules of many Division II athletic programs.

Division III

Division III institutions have to sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women, with two team sports for each gender. There are few contest and participant minimums for each sport. Division III athletics features student-athletes who receive no financial aid related to their athletic ability and athletic departments are staffed and funded like any other department in the university. Division III athletic departments place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators. The student-athlete's experience is of paramount concern. Division III athletics encourages participation by maximizing the number and variety of athletic opportunities available to students, placing primary emphasis on regional in-season and conference competition.

Academic Requirements for Divisions I & II

<i>Division I Core GPA and Test Score Sliding Scale</i>						
Core GPA	SAT (V&M)	ACT		Core GPA	SAT (V&M)	ACT
3.550 & above	400	37		2.775	710	58
3.525	410	38		2.750	720	59
3.500	420	39		2.725	730	59
3.475	430	40		2.700	730	60
3.450	440	41		2.675	740-750	61
3.425	450	41		2.650	760	62
3.400	460	42		2.625	770	63
3.375	470	42		2.600	780	64
3.350	480	43		2.575	790	65
3.325	490	44		2.550	800	66
3.300	500	44		2.525	810	67
3.275	510	45		2.500	820	68
3.250	520	46		2.475	830	69
3.225	530	46		2.450	840-850	70
3.200	540	47		2.425	860	70
3.175	550	47		2.400	860	71
3.150	560	48		2.375	870	72
3.125	570	49		2.350	880	73
3.100	580	49		2.325	890	74
3.075	590	50		2.300	900	75
3.050	600	50		2.275	910	76
3.025	610	51		2.250	920	77
3.000	620	52		2.225	930	78
2.975	630	52		2.200	940	79
2.950	640	53		2.175	950	80
2.925	650	53		2.150	960	80
2.900	660	54		2.125	960	81
2.875	670	55		2.100	970	82
2.850	680	56		2.075	980	83
2.825	690	56		2.050	990	84
2.800	700	57		2.025	1000	85
				2.000	1010	86

**Division II has no sliding scale. The minimum core GPA is 2.000. The minimum SAT score is 820 (verbal and math sections only) and the minimum ACT sum is 68.*

<u>DIVISION I</u> 2008 and after 16 Core Courses:	<u>DIVISION II</u> 2005 and after 14 Core Courses:
4 years of English	3 years of English
3 years of Mathematics (<i>Algebra I or higher</i>)	2 years of Mathematics (<i>Algebra I or higher</i>)
2 years of Natural/Physical Science (<i>1 year of lab if offered by high school</i>)	2 years of Natural/Physical Science (<i>1 year of lab if offered by high school</i>)
1 year of additional English, Mathematics or Natural/Physical Science	2 years of additional English, Mathematics or Natural/Physical Science
2 years of Social Science	2 years of Social Science
4 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or non-doctrinal religion/philosophy)	3 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or non-doctrinal religion/philosophy)

PLEASE NOTE: Beginning August 1, 2013, students planning to attend an NCAA Division II institution will be required to complete 16 core courses.

Recruiting

- Recruiters can call and/or visit the house, as long as you and your parents are prepared.
- If these calls/visits are inconvenient, refer them to the coach for screening.
- Parents need to be mindful that the calls and/or visits are not distracting to the student-athlete's academic and athletic performance.
- If possible, students should limit their choices so they do not waste their time as well as the recruiters.
- There are many rules and regulations which need to be adhered to by universities and colleges. While it is the responsibility of their athletic personnel to adhere to these rules, it is a good idea to become familiar with the rules for your own knowledge. **NOT FOLLOWING CERTAIN RULES CAN MAKE YOU AS WELL AS YOUR HIGH SCHOOL TEAM INELIGIBLE FOR THE SEASON.** Go to the website www.ncaa.org
- During an athlete's senior year, he/she may only have **five** expense-paid visits to a college/university. Expense-paid visits are considered "Official" and only one can be made per school. Again, please check the above website for all of the details.

If you have any questions about NCAA eligibility, please call the Guidance Department (301)840-3970 or the Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse directly at their toll free number (877)262-1492. You may also call the NCAA at (317)917-6222.

There is a 24 hour voice response system available to check the status of your file at the clearinghouse - (877)861-3003.

Resources

Financial Aid

Fast Web-Scholarship and Financial Aid Search

www.fastweb.com

Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Financial Aid

www.studentaid.ed.gov

Scholarship Database

www.scholarships.com

Academic Review

The Princeton Review College Board

www.review.com

www.collegeboard.com

Test Prep Review ACT

www.tcaprep.com

www.act.org

KAPLAN

www.kaplan.com

College Athletics

www.collegestudentathletes.com

www.ncaa.org

References

NCAA – A Guide for College Bound Student Athletes and Their Parents

The Game Plan – College Planning for the Student Athlete – *Plainedge Schools*

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Princeton

The Student Athlete's Game Plan – Miller Place High School