PLANNING GUIDE
FOR THE COLLEGE-BOUND
STUDENT ATHLETE

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Dear Student:

This packet was originally created by Ted Turkington, an athletic advisor at St. Ignatius College Prep in San Francisco, and credit should go to him for creating this resource. This version has been updated and modified for students at Urban School.

Urban School has been fortunate to have numerous graduates go on to play at the collegiate level. Most have played at the NCAA Division III level, with some at the NCAA Division I level. I've always felt that a graduate who is able to continue their athletic career in college shows that Urban has prepared them both academically and athletically. Our athletic alumni are a source of pride for our entire school community.

This document has been created for your convenience to help guide you through an important time in your life. Continuing your academic and athletic career in college requires a tremendous amount of work. While The Planning Guide for the Student Athlete can assist you through the college recruiting and admission process, you are the generating force to ensure that the necessary tasks are accomplished. The college counselors, coaches and teachers here at Urban are here to help.

The success of this process also depends upon realistic evaluations of your ability, both in the classroom and in the sports arena. Please use this information to help further your athletic opportunities beyond high school. There are many people to assist you along the way. Do not hesitate to ask for help.

Sincerely,

Joe Skiffer
Director of Athletics
Urban School of San Francisco
jskiffer@urbanschool.org

IN THE BEGINNING

Each year thousands of student athletes and parents market themselves to college coaches. Some are very successful, some are not. It's not a difficult process if you have a road map and the basic resources to give your student athlete the best possible advantage. Regardless of the type of college sport, the process is the same - you have to get noticed to get recruited!

The key to success is to remember that this process is not a sprint; it's a multi-year marathon and the journey starts with a common sense plan. Working the plan, as a Parent/Student team, spending a little time each month, can open doors you never thought possible, leading you to a collegiate student-athlete experience of a lifetime.

Can my Student Athlete compete at the college level?

Let's be realistic. College sport positions and athletic scholarships aren't available to everyone. You should be aware that most student athletes will not be able to play Division 1 sports. There are too many athletes and only so many D1 schools. However, the vast majority of colleges or universities are not D1 schools and yet they have very competitive sports programs.

You or your student athlete will have to meet some important conditions to get to the next level. There are significant numbers of student athlete competitors seeking to fill college sports positions and potential scholarship offers. You may be a "star" athlete at your high school, but you will need to know how you match up with other high school star athletes from around the country.

You'll need to identify your academic and athletic abilities and what division level student athlete you are in order to target the right schools where you have the best chance of competing for an opportunity, or receiving a scholarship or incentive package. Ask all of your coaches and others you know who will be honest and candid with you. Ask them what they think of your athletic abilities and at what division level they believe you could compete in.

You may find that the truth hurts, or perhaps you'll be surprised to find that you have underestimated your abilities. This is a critical first step in the process. You may waste your time if you focus your efforts on colleges with the wrong athletic division and academic requirements. You want to make sure you are targeting the right academic schools in the right athletic talent division. To compete at the college level, coaches are looking for a student athlete who possesses the applicable sport specific tools such as strength, speed, hitting, hitting for power, fielding etc. After that they look at character and mental toughness that make up the will-to-win, attitude following failure, performance under pressure, and respect for family and teammates.

What do College Coaches expect?

A very small percentage of high school student athletes receive college playing opportunities, scholarships or incentive packages because the coach "happened to find him or her." Only the top elite athletes – the top 100 nationally – receive enough media coverage and recognition that they are automatically recruited without having to make an effort. The other 99 percent have to take the initiative to contact the colleges and coaches where they have an interest. Most schools' recruiting budgets are small, and coaches rely on you to contact them.

College coaches are very busy; they don't have the time or budget to travel around the country to see student athletes compete. Phone calls, emails, cover letters, profiles, resumes, stats, video and references become key tools for the coach in the recruiting and evaluating process. You might think that it's too self-promoting to make the initial contact with a coach and to "market" your student athlete. However, this is the norm. If you don't do it, other student athletes will get the opportunity, get noticed and get recruited because they and their parents will have made the effort and received the attention. These days, college coaches expect you to do this – it's a common and expected practice!

Coaches expect you to prepare academically. College coaches expect that you understand that preparation academically is of primary importance to the recruiting process. This means preparing in the classroom as much as on the field. Failure to take care of your academic standing often means failure to achieve athletic goals. As an example, since Division III institutions do not offer athletic scholarships; academic performance is just as valued as athletic performance in the recruiting process.

Understand this: Regardless of how talented your athletic abilities are, your academic record will make the biggest difference in admissions and financial aid outcomes! Every college has academic scholarships or grant money that is awarded students and student athletes who demonstrate academic achievement. High academic achievement means you will be accepted into more colleges and have greater college choices.

College coaches expect you to make the first contact with them. In most cases, if you're not interested in their institution, they will not force themselves upon you. Here are a few common sense rules of engagement college coaches would expect of you:

1. Be an effective communicator. The student athlete (not the parents) should write or email the coach when appropriate. The student athlete should always call the coach back when they call you.

2. Little things count. Be sure to review your letters and/or email messages and spell their name and the school's name correctly.

3. Be honest. If you are interested in their program, great, tell them. If not, say so. Don't waste their time or yours.

4. Provide your student athlete contact information. Make sure to note when you are available. Share your cell phone number and e-mail address.

5. Complete applications. Follow-up and send transcripts and teacher recommendations to the schools in which you have an interest. Get all the paperwork taken care of as early as possible.

6. Prepare your questions for them so when they call or when you visit you're prepared. Have something to talk about. This shows that you are interested.

7. Do your homework. Know about the athletic program, the coach's name, the division they're in, their current record, any program history etc.

Keep in mind most coaches are working with limited budgets and very little time, staff and resources. You have to be persistent, prepared, and polite to get noticed at any division. If nothing else, every

coach wants players who can enhance their program. Character is a key component of integrity. Show your character!

What can you expect from your High School Coach?

High school coaches are a great resource for college coaches. They're a valuable and powerful reference that college coaches will want to talk to about your student athlete. They are an excellent source for a positive student athlete recommendation letter. Work hard to keep your relationship with the coach a positive one. Do not get caught up in the parent/coach "my athlete doesn't get enough playing time" discussion /argument. If your student athlete is good enough, is working hard, and doing what is asked of them, they'll get enough playing time.

At Urban, your coaches and the athletic department can work with you to create your highlight video or website to send to coaches. This can be especially important if you are interested in schools who won't be able to come out and watch you play in person.

It's your responsibility to market your talents, get your name in front of college coaches and control your own college career!

THE GAME PLAN

Checklists
Academic Checklist
Athletic Checklist

Freshman/Sophomore Years

- Establish a four-year academic plan to meet all core course requirements.
- Take a strong academic course load.
- Maintain a strong grade point average in core courses.
- Talk with your coach about other opportunities to increase your exposure in your sport.
- Attend summer camps:
    - For exposure (select camps at colleges that you might want to attend)
    - To improve skills
    - 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 email to the coach. Also view college athletic rosters to see number of athletes graduating, as well as potential trends in recruiting (area, high schools, leagues).

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) in spring semester.
    - Designate the NCAA to receive SAT & ACT scores when registering for test.
- Attend college meetings and read literature sent to you by schools.
- Begin to visit college campuses.
- 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.
    - 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 and phone call 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 (Huddle, YouTube and/or DVDs) 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.
- Submit NCAA Clearinghouse form in the fall of your senior year.
- Take and/or retake the standardized tests as needed. Check with your counselor for national testing dates.
- Obtain college applications.
- Meet with your college counselor to review application materials.
- Write a personal statement.
- Complete Financial Aid forms early.
- 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.
- Continue to write, call or email 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 for applying to college.

NCAA 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, academic 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 September of their Senior year. The procedure is as follows:

If you wish to participate in DI or DII sports, you must submit your SAT 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 Urban 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.ncaa.clearinghouse.net (select Prospective Student Athlete and click on Domestic Student Release Form).

IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO COMPLETE THIS FORM. YOU CANNOT MAKE OFFICIAL VISITS (financed by the college) TO A COLLEGE CAMPUS, TRYOUT OR PRATICE WITH A COLLEGE TEAM UNTIL THIS PAPERWORK IS FILED WITH THE NCAA.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DIVISION 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 percent of the minimum number of contests against Division I opponents - anything over the minimum number of games has to be 50 percent Division I. Schools that have football are classified as Division I-A ("Football Bowl Subdivision") or I-AA ("Football Championship Subdivision"). Division I-A football schools are usually fairly elaborate programs. Division I-A teams have to meet minimum attendance requirements. 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. 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.

Consider This

- There are more than 2,000 high schools in California
- There are more than 17,000 high schools in the United States
- There are 10,000,000 participants in high school athletics in America
- 2 percent of these participants are contacted by a college coach
- 3.5 percent of these participants actually participate in college sports (Division I, II or III)
- Less than half of 1 percent of athletes receive some form of aid
- Most high schools never produce a full scholarship Division I athlete

Estimated Probability of Competing in Athletics Beyond the High School Level in a Given Year for NCAA Divisions I & II (source: NCAA)

TYPE OF ATHLETE	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	Football	Baseball	Men's Soccer
High School Student Athletes	546, 335	452,929	1,071,775	470,671	358,935
High School Senior Student Athletes	156,096	129,408	306,221	134,477	102,553
NCAA Student Athletes	16,571	15,096	61,252	28,767	19,793
NCAA Freshmen Roster Positions	4,735	4,313	17,501	8,219	5,655
NCAA Senior Student Athletes	3,682	3,355	13,612	6,393	4,398
NCAA Student Athletes Drafted	44	32	250	600	76
% High School to NCAA	**3.00%**	**3.30%**	**5.70%**	**6.10%**	**5.50%**
% NCAA to Professional	**1.20%**	**1.00%**	**1.80%**	**9.40%**	**1.70%**
% High School to Professional	**0.03%**	**0.02%**	**0.08%**	**0.45%**	**0.07%**

NCAA SPORT SPONSORSHIP – NUMBER OF TEAMS and PARTICIPANTS

	High School Participants	NCAA Participants	Overall % HS to NCAA	% HS to NCAA Division I	% HS to NCAA Division II	% HS to NCAA Division III
Men						
Baseball	486,567	34,198	**7.0%**	2.1%	2.2%	2.7%
Basketball	541,479	18,697	**3.5%**	1.0%	1.0%	1.4%
Cross Country	250,981	14,330	**5.7%**	1.9%	1.4%	2.3%
Football	1,083,617	72,788	**6.7%**	2.6%	1.8%	2.4%
Golf	148,823	8,654	**5.8%**	2.0%	1.7%	2.1%
Ice Hockey	35,875	4,071	**11.3%**	4.6%	0.5%	6.3%
Lacrosse	108,450	13,165	**12.1%**	2.9%	2.2%	7.1%
Soccer	432,569	24,477	**5.7%**	1.3%	1.5%	2.8%
Swimming	137,087	9,715	**7.1%**	2.8%	1.1%	3.2%
Tennis	157,240	8,211	**5.2%**	1.7%	1.1%	2.4%
Track & Field	578,632	28,177	**4.9%**	1.9%	1.2%	1.7%
Volleyball	54,418	1,818	**3.3%**	0.7%	0.8%	1.8%
Water Polo	21,626	1,044	**4.8%**	2.6%	0.7%	1.5%
Wrestling	258,208	7,049	**2.7%**	1.0%	0.7%	1.0%
Women						
Basketball	429,504	16,589	**3.9%**	1.2%	1.1%	1.6%
Cross Country	221,616	16,150	**7.3%**	2.7%	1.7%	2.8%
Field Hockey	60,549	5,894	**9.7%**	2.9%	1.2%	5.7%
Golf	72,582	5,221	**7.2%**	3.0%	2.1%	2.1%
Ice Hockey	9,418	2,175	**23.1%**	9.0%	1.1%	13.1%
Lacrosse	84,785	10,994	**13.0%**	3.7%	2.5%	6.7%
Soccer	375,681	26,995	**7.2%**	2.4%	1.9%	2.9%
Softball	364,103	19,628	**5.4%**	1.7%	1.6%	2.1%
Swimming	166,838	12,428	**7.4%**	3.2%	1.1%	3.1%
Tennis	182,876	8,960	**4.9%**	1.6%	1.1%	2.2%
Track & Field	478,726	28,797	**6.0%**	2.7%	1.5%	1.8%
Volleyball	432,176	17,026	**3.9%**	1.2%	1.2%	1.6%
Water Polo	19,204	1,152	**6.0%**	3.5%	1.1%	1.4%

NCAA SCHOLARSHIPS BY SPORT

The following table lists the allowable number of scholarships for NCAA Divisions I and II, for both Men's and Women's athletics. This does not suggest that each college program offers the full amount of possible scholarships for each sport. That decision is governed by each school's sports budget and other factors.

	NCAA DIVISION I	
SPORT	**MEN'S**	**WOMEN'S**
Baseball & Softball	11.7	12
Basketball	13	15
Track & Field	12.6	18
Football	85	0
Golf	4.5	6
Gymnastics	6.3	12
Field Hockey	0	12
Ice Hockey	18	18
Lacrosse	12.6	12
Rowing	0	20
Soccer	9.9	12
Swimming/Diving	9.9	8.1
Tennis	4.5	8
Volleyball	4.5	12
Water Polo	4.5	8
Wrestling	9.9	0

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AND/OR COACHES

Athletics

1. **What positions will I play on your team?** It is not always obvious. Most coaches want to be flexible, so you might not receive a definite answer.

2. **What other players may be competing at the same position?** The response could give you an idea of when you can expect to be a starter.

3. **Will I be redshirted my first year?** The school's policy on redshirting may impact you both athletically and academically.

4. **What expectations do you have for training and conditioning?** This will reveal the institution's commitment to a training and conditioning program.

5**. How would you best describe your coaching style?**
Every coach has a particular style that involves different motivational techniques and discipline. You need to know if a coach's teaching style matches your learning style.

6. **When does the head coach's contract end? How long does the coach intend to stay?** The answer could be helpful. Do not make any assumptions about how long a coach will be at a school. If the coach leaves, does this change your mind about the school/program?

7. **What are preferred, invited and uninvited walk-on situations? How many do you expect to compete? How many earn a scholarship?** Situations vary from school to school.

8. **Who else are you recruiting for my position?** Coaches may consider other student athletes for every position.

9**. Is medical insurance required for my participation? Is it provided by the college?** You may be required to provide proof of insurance.

10**. If I am seriously injured while competing, who is responsible for my medical expenses?**
Different colleges have different policies.

11. **What happens if I want to transfer to another school?** You may not transfer without the permission of your current school's athletic administration. Ask how often coaches grant this privilege and ask for an example of a situation in which permission was not granted.

12. **What other factors should I consider when choosing a college?** Be realistic about your athletic ability and the type of athletic experience you would enjoy. Some student athletes want to be part of a particular athletics program, even if that means little or no playing time. Other considerations include coaching staff and style. Of course, the ideal is to choose a college or university that will provide you with both the educational and athletics opportunities you want.

Academics

1. How good is the department in my major? How many students are in the department? What credentials do faculty members hold? What are graduates of the program doing after school?

2. What percentage of players on scholarship graduate? The response will suggest the school's commitment to academics. You might want to ask two follow-up questions:
-- What percentage of incoming students eventually graduate?
-- What is the current team's grade point average?

3. What academic support programs are available to student athletes? Look for a college that will help you become a better student.

4. If I have a diagnosed and documented learning disability, what kind of academic services are available? Special academic services may help you achieve your academic goals.

5. How many credit hours should I take in season and out of season? It is important to determine how many credit hours are required for your degree and what pace you will follow to obtain that degree.

6. Are there restrictions in scheduling classes around practice? NCAA rules prevent you from missing class for practice.

7. Is summer school available? If I need to take summer school, will the college pay it for? You may need to take summer school to meet academic and/or graduation requirements.

College Life

1. What is a typical day for a student-athlete? The answer will give you a good idea of how much time is spent in class, practice, study and travel. It also will give you a good indication of what coaches expect.

2. What are the residence halls like? The response should give you a hint of how comfortable you would be in your room, in study areas, in community bathrooms and at the laundry facilities. Also ask about the number of students in a room, co-ed dorms and the rules governing life in the residence halls.

3. Must student-athletes live on campus? If "yes," ask about exceptions if that is important to you.

SAMPLE RESUME FOR BOBBY BLUE

Bobby Blue
1562 Page St.
San Francisco, CA. 94117
415 555 7500
bblue@urbanschool.org

Educational Background:
GPA of 3.2/4.0 scale
PSAT of 1200 (610 CR – 590 M)
SAT score of 1210 (610 CR – 600 M)
Will pursue degree in Communications

Extracurricular:
Student Government 9-12
Nature Club 10-12
Chorus 10-12
Jazz Band 9-12

Athletic Background:
Basketball
Junior Varsity 9
Varsity 10-12
Coaches Award 9
Voted “Mr. Hustle” by coaches 11
All Conference First Team 12
Most Improved Summer Select AAU

Soccer
Junior Varsity 9-10
Grade 9: center halfback, 8 goals
Grade 10: left wing, 14 goals
First Team All Conference

References:
Mr. Barney Browning, Head Soccer Coach (bbrowning@urbanschool.org)
Mr. Bill Blaster, Head Basketball Coach (bblaster@urbanschool.org)
Mr. Barry Bucket, AAU Head Coach (bbucket@urbanschool.org)

SAMPLE COVER LETTER TO COACH
(send with resume)

Date

Mr. Joe Coach
The University of California, Berkeley
1234 Campus Drive
Berkeley, CA 12345

Dear Mr. Coach:

I am a 6'4" guard at the Urban School, in San Francisco, CA. I am interested in attending UC Berkeley after I graduate. As a Sophomore I started for our conference championship basketball team averaging 12 points per game, 8 rebounds and 4 assists. This year, my Junior season, I have been elected team captain and currently average 19 points per game. Our team continues to be successful and will look to repeat as conference champions. **{Paragraph introduces you and provides basic athletic details…in a brief manner.}**

Academically, I have a 3.2 GPA and have earned a 1200 on my PSAT score. I plan to take both the ACT and SAT this spring. In addition, my course load this year includes all core requirements as well as one Advanced Placement course in Spanish. I will have my college entrance scores sent directly to UC Berkeley and to the NCAA Clearinghouse when completed. My high school will also be sending my junior year transcript as it becomes available. **{Academic information given in simple, brief form here.}**

I am very interested in attending UC Berkeley because of its academic excellence, social opportunities and outstanding basketball program. I am particularly impressed with the graduation rate of student athletes at Cal, as well as the national reputation of the Communications program, my preferred major. I believe that my academic and athletic skills make me qualified to be considered for the Golden Bear program. **{This paragraph is critical, as you communicate detailed facts of interest you know and desire from that coach and their program. Separates them from the perception of "blanket approach."}**

Please send me information on the Cal program at your convenience, and let me know what information I can provide to be evaluated by the basketball coaching staff. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Sincerely,

Bobby Blue
1562 Page St.
San Francisco, CA 94117

RECRUITING SERVICES

Recruiting services will not help you if you are not good enough to play in college. If you follow the advice of this packet, you may be able get the attention of a college. However, there are no guarantees! That being said, following the steps in this packet can do for you what many expensive recruiting services offer. But the one thing they do not have is your character or your voice. Coaches need to hear from YOU!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some of the information in this planner was put together referencing the sources below:

Do it yourself recruiting guide (www.SACRG.ORG)

www.ncaa.org (terms, calendars, rules, qualifications, numbers)

www.hsbaseballweb.com (not just baseball specific info here…great testimonials and available info on college recruiting in general)

St. Ignatius Preparatory School (http://siprep.org/)

Bellarmine Preparatory School (http://bellarmineprep.org/)