



The Next Level **NCAA**®

Our Mission is to advance the great winning tradition at Central Dauphin through the **character** development, **academic** development and **physical** development of *all* players in a way that enables them to reach their full potential while at Central Dauphin and in their lives after graduation.

“It’s More Than Just Football!”

Success in the CD Rams Football program is not defined entirely by whether a player participates in college football. Success is defined mainly by the degree of improvement made in the on-going journey toward achieving the Mission of being the best possible person, player and student.

That being said, if a player wants to continue his football career in college, we have built a structure that gives all our players the best chance possible to do so. As evidence of this, we have seen over 130 CD Rams Football players accept offers to join the college football ranks since 2006!

In general, we prefer to call it the “college selection process” rather than the “recruiting process”. The term “recruiting process” implies that players and families take a passive approach and wait for opportunities to come to them, thus putting all the control in the hands of the college coaches. Instead, by viewing it as the “college selection process”, the players and families will take a much more active approach in finding the best possible fit for the student-athlete and thereby exercising more control over the outcome.

To help our players and their families take a more active approach, we wanted to share some helpful information about the process. The list provided on the ensuing pages certainly does not encompass everything related to the college selection process, but hopefully it will be a good start. If ever you have any questions, please contact the head football coach, Glen McNamee at gmcnamee@cdschools.org. Coach McNamee has had the benefit of seeing the process from the perspective of a high school and college player, a Division II college coach for 5 years, and a high school head coach for 17 years. One perspective that Coach McNamee has not seen the recruiting process from is the “parent perspective”. To provide help from that perspective, Jeff Heshler has agreed to be our “College Selection Parent Liaison” for a 7th straight year. He can be reached at jheshler@live.com.

The biggest piece of advice we want to give to players and families is this: *give your very best effort in trying to achieve our Mission*. For each aspect of our Mission, we have a Road Map that spells out how to be your best in that particular element of the Mission. Follow the Road Maps! If you do, you will be in the best position possible to make your dreams come true after high school. For that reason, the following information is mostly organized around our Mission.



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“CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT”

- College coaches often talk about finding and recruiting “good character kids”. This phrase encompasses many character qualities. If you live by the “CD Football Character Map”, you will help yourself greatly when it comes to being seen as a “good character kid”. Here is the “CD Football Character Map”.

<http://www.cdschools.info/cdramsclub/graphics/CharacterMap.pdf>

- The estimated value of a full scholarship can be a huge amount of money so be sure that a coach will want maximum value from his investment and he will want players who are low-risk. Some things that make a player low-risk in their eyes are: being mature, responsible, and exercising good judgement.
- One big criterion that coaches will use to evaluate players is attitude. Recruiters will be much less interested or not at all interested in players who possess a bad attitude or who are lazy.
- College coaches DO check social media. There are many true stories of players losing opportunities because of things they posted on social media. Don’t make the same mistake! Right or wrong, coaches believe it provides a window of insight into the “real you”. It also shows them what kind of judgement a player has.
- When you shake hands and speak with coaches, look them in the eye and listen intently. This can go a VERY long way.
- Intangibles that college coaches use to separate similar athletic prospects include: coach-ability, motivation, listening, enthusiasm, discipline, uniqueness, and happiness.
- Be Humble! Do not come across as arrogant. ALSO, make sure not to ever treat a coach or a school like you are too good for them or that you deserve more than they are offering. Always be respectful and appreciative. You never know what might happen as the process goes on. This is true not only in the recruiting process but in life.
- Stay away from trouble!



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“ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT”

- Work hard in the classroom. Follow the “CD Rams Road Map For Academic Excellence”.
<https://www.cdschools.info/cdramsclub/graphics/AcademicMap.pdf>
- As mentioned above, the estimated value of a full scholarship can be a huge amount of money so be sure that a coach will want maximum value from his investment, and he will want players who are low-risk. One big thing that makes a player low-risk in their eyes is if he gets good grades.
- Coaches don’t want to deal with the hassle of trying to convince his admissions office to get a kid into that school. So if there’s a player who is on the bubble for getting in, a college coach may not recruit that player. Instead, he may try to get a different player who will definitely get into school because it makes his life easier.
- Your ability to communicate in writing and speech will be important to the recruiting process and your success in the college classroom.
- Whether it’s right or wrong, many times college coaches associate “good students” with being “good kids”.
- The NCAA is not requiring an SAT or ACT score for the class of 2024.
- Get good grades! Get good grades! Get good grades!



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“PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT”

- Follow the “CD Football Road Map for Physical Development”. This will put you in a MUCH better position for opportunities and success at the next level.

<http://www.cdschools.info/cdramsclub/graphics/PhysicalMap.pdf>

- Some important criteria that coaches will use to evaluate players include: height, weight, body-type, ability, athleticism, speed, and strength.
- College coaches like “Athleticism” which includes: athletic ability, quickness, agility, balance, competitiveness, strength, explosiveness, lateral movement and more. The first step in maximizing your potential in these areas is to attend all CD Rams training sessions that you possibly can.
- Don’t worry about how many other players bench 300+ pounds or who run the 40 faster. Worry about improving consistently through commitment and hard work in our offseason program so you can maximize your potential in all areas of athleticism.
- Speed can be improved – you are not ‘stuck’ with your speed. Stretching, sprinting, improving your form and especially strength will make you faster. Our off-season program is geared toward improving speed.
- Talk to your coach and ask him to rate you objectively in all areas as a player and teammate. Then set goals and work hard to improve in all of his ratings over the next year.
- Your efforts in gaining size and strength will be only as successful as your dietary program!
- It is possible to add several pounds of muscle per year and remain athletic if you follow our strength and conditioning AND nutrition programs.
- Set goals and track your speed, weight, and lifts through your four high school years for improvement. This will be valuable information to share with college coaches you meet.
- Study film and learn as much about your position, the scheme, and the game of football in general.
- Watch football, ask questions, and listen to your coaches so you know the game you love to play.



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NCAA/NAIA and FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

- There are over 500 schools playing football in several divisions in college football including FBS (formerly D-IA), FCS (formerly DI-AA), DII & DIII. You can see every NCAA team by division at:

<https://web3.ncaa.org/directory/memberList?type=12&division=>

(This link takes you to the DI member schools. If you click on the icon on the upper left, you can select the other levels to see those schools)

- The NCAA web site has information on eligibility and recruiting.
- It is worth noting that the NCAA established new rules for Division I and Division II eligibility which are now in effect. It is also important to know that every prospective NCAA athlete must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center (formerly known as the Clearinghouse)
- Scholarships are not the only answer. Financial Aid is readily available at many schools. Be prepared to establish an account and complete a FAFSA form online so schools can evaluate your needs.
- FBS is allowed a maximum of 85 scholarships and they do not split them up. FCS is allowed a maximum of 63 scholarships. Division II is allowed a maximum of 36 scholarships. It is possible for a player to receive a partial scholarship along with other aid (academic money, financial aid, etc...)

Division III does not have athletic scholarships.

- The NAIA is a separate governing body from the NCAA with their own rules. There are over 80 NAIA schools that play football. Some offer athletic scholarships. Here is the website for the NAIA:

<http://www.naia.org/>

- The CDHS Guidance Office can also be helpful when it comes to NCAA rules and Financial Aid information. Ms. Nicole Snyder is the Guidance Counselor who responsible for helping student-athletes with this process.



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“COLLEGE COACHES”

- Remember to always keep the college coach’s perspective in mind. His job is on the line in that he needs the best possible talent to win games. That makes this a critical process for both of you.
- As far as tangible items, there are three BIG things that college coaches want in the recruiting process: film, a transcript, and a way to get in touch with the player. (twitter, phone number)
- Create a hi-lite film on HUDL. College coaches now will search on-line for players’ hi-lite films. Use your best moments on film. It’s quality more than quantity! College coaches may also want to see a complete game film for their evaluation.
- Almost every FBS and FCS college now host prospect camps. These are one-day camps where the coaches from the host school can evaluate high school players. They are usually relatively low cost - \$80 or so (although many are creeping up over recent years). Some camps will have ONLY the coaches from that school. Other camps, such as the University of Pittsburgh camp, will have coaches from other staffs there to evaluate players. Many Division II colleges are now having prospect camps. College coaches place a great deal of value on being able to see players and interact with them in person. That’s why these camps can be very important in the process for them.
- Combines are events held by independent organizations. The people who run them will share the results with colleges. FBS coaches can’t attend combines. But FCS, DII, and DIII generally can. Combines that have the most coaches present are the ones where you can get the most bang for your buck. “National combine” results can affect your ratings with online services.
- Colleges will not necessarily stay in touch with you. If you want to know what’s going on, you need to ask. If they’ve decided they are not interested, they will not call to say so.
- There are strict regulations regarding when and how coaches may contact you so do not be surprised if your messages are not returned. These rules can be different depending on the level and what time of year it is, and they have changed over the years and can possibly change again.



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- The timeline for when college coaches identify, recruit, and offer scholarships is generally different at each level. For example, DIII coaches will start evaluating and recruiting players AFTER the senior football season. DII coaches will also. However they are now doing more to identify players before the senior season. That's why many of them now have their own one-day prospect camps in the spring/summer. FCS coaches will commonly identify and even offer scholarships to players before the senior season, although they will occasionally start recruiting and offering kids during or after the senior season. FBS coaches often have most or all of their offers out to players before the senior season begins. It can happen where they offer a player after the senior season but it's more the exception than the rule.
- The term "offer" could refer to an offer of a scholarship or an offer of a spot on the team.
- A player can visit a campus at any age and at any time of the year. Visits can be arranged through the Admissions Office. College coaches are also allowed to talk to players in person if it is on their campus.
- Official visits are visits in which the college pays for something. There are limits to the number of official visits that can be taken (5). Visits in which nothing is paid for are unofficial visits. There is no limit to the number of unofficial visits that can be taken. Visits are very important because it gives a player a great idea as to how he feels about the college, the location, the campus, the atmosphere, the facilities, coaching staff, etc...
- The reality is this: College coaches, especially at the higher levels, place a great deal of emphasis on potential based on physical attributes. This is why some players who are exceptionally productive on the field do not get the offers one might expect. Conversely, some players receive offers despite not being as productive on Friday nights. College coaches believe they can take a player with potential and physical tools and MAKE him into a great college-level player. (Of course, there are always exceptions to every rule.)



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MISCELLANEOUS

- If a player wants to play football in college and goes about the process correctly, there is an extremely good chance he will have the opportunity to play at the next level. Players who never started a game in high school have realized their dream of playing in college. We have examples of that from Central Dauphin. You can do what you believe you can do!
- The first step in the transition from high school to college is setting goals. You may want to play in a large stadium or you may want to play where your family can watch you. The important thing is knowing what you want! Set your goals and review them for changes often. Maturity and reality dictates you will change your goals throughout your high school years.
- Do not expect to play the position in high school that you may be asked or told to play in college. Your high school coach should play you where the team needs you. College coaches know this.
- There is life after football so your first focus in selecting a school should be academics and “fit”.
- Parents: when a student-athlete says “This is MY school! This is where I should be!”, listen carefully. Trust your instincts.
- Go to college football games so you can see them play in person. By going to games at different levels of play (FBS, FCS, DII, DIII) you will be giving yourself a better idea of where you might fit the best. It can also give you a better idea of what you need to improve upon in order to be able to play at a particular level or school.
- Have mentors and helpers but remember this process is for you, the player, so you must be responsible for your goals, plans, and actions in finding the right college to play football.
- Talk to players from Central Dauphin who play or played college football. They will give you a unique perspective on the differences between high school and college football.
- Many starting college football players went to school as “Walk-ons” and earned their starting spot and, in turn, a scholarship sometimes. A Walk-on is not guaranteed a spot on the team – they must try out and earn their uniform, sometimes over the summer months. A “Preferred Walk-on” is assured a spot on the team but does not receive an athletic scholarship. Being a walk-on is a viable method to “playing on Saturday” (getting on a college football team).
- There are many paid “recruiting services” out there that can do a variety of things to help with the process. Please make sure you are getting what you are paying for.