

Congrats to area athletes moving along

Written by By Bernie Dotson
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Lately, around Gallup and greater McKinley County, student athletes who are now high-school graduates are signing letters-of-intent to attend colleges and universities to further their scholastic and athletic careers. Some will garner four-year scholarships and others will play as walk-ons.

We congratulate them all, as we know it isn't easy to manage academics and athletics, no matter the school.

We've seen Lakota Curley of Rough Rock High School, "Nabo" Nez of Navajo Pine, Kitana Kenneth of Crownpoint High School, Jasmine Coleman of Navajo Prep, among others commit to an institution of their choice.

Curley impressed scouts so much at St. Augustine University in Raleigh, N.C., that the school asked her to walk on, since a deadline to sign a letter-of-intent had already gone.

Congratulations to Lakota!

One important reality these student athletes must keep in mind is that a minimum grade-point average in college is required to stay active in the sport. Not everybody can do that and successfully manage their time. Some student athletes get caught up in partying, and by the time they've realized it, they're no longer part of the college or university system as a student or athlete.

Officially, signing a letter-of-intent allows an athlete to mentally lock in to the school of their choice. Signing that letter is not a starting point, but a finish line, for both boys and girls. All the flip-flopping, committing, de-committing, and re-committing is over.

Signing Day is a formality. Even if one is a blue-chipper, that doesn't mean athletic success is in one's future. Sure, there are occasional stragglers among the blue-chippers. Some kids get cold feet and need a little extra time when it comes to attending college, whether they're an athlete

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or not. Or maybe the parents flip out and re-think letting Susie or Johnny leave.

But by the time summer is over, a vast majority of kids from greater McKinley County will be on their way to something glaringly different than what they've experienced here.

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