

Eastern Illinois football added ten high school players as the NCAA's early signing day opened on Wednesday (Dec. 4). The Panthers bolstered positions on both sides of the ball with six defensive players and four offensive players.

"We are thrilled to sign an outstanding group of talented student-athletes in this first signing period. Our coaching staff has done a phenomenal job identifying and connecting with this incoming group and we can't wait for them to get to campus," said EIU head coach Chris Wilkerson. "This group comes with a championship pedigree and will undoubtedly have an amazing impact both on and off the field and will arrive ready to make a difference. They will continue to build the foundation that has been solidified by those before them and complement the high character, quality young men who are currently on our roster. We are excited about them becoming Panthers and joining our FAMILY! The future of EIU Football is bright!"

#### HIGH SCHOOL ADDITIONS (DECEMBER 4)

NAME	POSITION	HT	WT	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL
Kennyan Chandler	Linebacker	5-10	230	Kankakee, Ill.	Kankakee
Michael Curry	Running Back	5-10	180	Louisville, Ky.	Atherton
Brady Ford	Quarterback	6-0	195	Toledo, Ohio	Whitmer
Tyler Fortis	Defensive Line	6-2	265	Park Ridge, Ill.	Maine South
Dejan Guzina	Offensive Line	6-8	345	Delta, B.C. (Canada)	Football North Canada
Davian Humphrey	Linebacker	6-1	200	Chicago, Ill.	Phillips
Carlyun Neal	Wide Receiver	5-11	180	Cincinnati, Ohio	Withrow
Le'Javier Payne	Defensive Back	5-8	170	Chicago, Ill.	Chicago Mt. Carmel
Jett Reese	Linebacker	6-2	220	Chicago, Ill.	DePaul College Prep
Barron Sholl	Defensive Line	6-4	240	Rockford, Ill.	Boylan Central Catholic

#### HIGH SCHOOL SIGNEES

**Kennyan Chandler (Linebacker, 5-10, 230, Kankakee, Ill. / Kankakee HS)** – Played for coach Miles Osei at Kankakee High School... earned first team IHSA Class 6A All-State honors as a senior after being named the Southland Athletic Conference Defensive Player of the Year... recorded 86 tackles with 20 tackles for loss, seven sacks and three forced fumbles... first team All-Southland Athletic Conference... set school record for career tackles finishing with 247... team finished with a 10-2 record advancing to IHSA Class 6A state quarterfinals... team posted an 11-1 record during junior year also making state quarterfinals...

**Michael Curry Jr (Running Back, 5-10, 180, Louisville, Ky. / Atherton HS)** – Played for coach Anthony White at Atherton High School... as a senior set the school single season rushing record finishing with 1,867 yards with a school record 182 (25 rushing TD / 4 receiving TD / 1 INT returned for TD) points scored... finished as program's all-time leading rusher with 2,991 yards and all-time leader in touchdowns with 48... set school record with a 99-yard touchdown run during season... named Kentucky 5A District 3 Player of the Year... team finished with a 10-3 record advancing to Class 5A state quarterfinals...

**Brady Ford (Quarterback, 6-0, 195, Toledo, Ohio / Whitmer HS)** – Played for coach Ken Winters at Whitmer High School... named the Ohio Northwest District Division I Offensive Player of the Year as a senior... as a senior completed 60 percent of passes for 2,094 yards with 21 touchdowns and three interceptions... finished second in school history in both career passing yards and career touchdown passes... led team to a 9-3 record advancing to the Regional Quarterfinals as a senior...

**Tyler Fortis (Defensive Line, 6-2, 265, Park Ridge, Ill. / Maine South HS)** – Played for coach David Inserra at Maine South High School... earned first team IHSA Class 8A All-State honors as a senior after being named the Central Suburban League Lineman of the Year... first team All-CSL honors... led team to an 8-3 record advancing to the IHSA Class 8A state quarterfinals... finished season with 13.5 tackles for loss, 5.5 sacks, two forced fumbles, three pass break-ups and one blocked kick...

**Dejan Guzina (Offensive Line, 6-8, 345, Delta, British Columbia (Canada) / Football North Canada)** – Played for coach Jamie Lalonde at Clarkson Football North in Burlington, Ontario... starting offensive lineman that helped team post an 8-3 record during 2024 season against some top American teams winning the East Coast Power Prep League title... earned All-League honors at offensive tackle...

**Davian Humphrey (Linebacker, 6-1, 200, Chicago, Ill. / Phillips HS)** – Played at Phillips High School with senior season under coach Ivan Simmons... was a versatile player starting at both linebacker and wide receiver while serving as the team's punter and kickoff specialist, slated to play linebacker in college... named an All-Chicago Public League first team selection... on offense hauled in five touchdown receptions... on defense finished season with eleven tackles for loss and four forced fumbles...

**Carlyun Neal (Wide Receiver, 5-11, 180, Cincinnati, Ohio / Withrow HS)** – Played for coach Anthony Berry at Withrow High School... hauled in 12 passes for 229 yards and two touchdowns as a senior... had a 19.1 yards per reception average during the season as a two-way player that was named a first team Cincinnati All-Metro Athletic Conference selection... helped lead team to a Red Division Championship with a 5-0 conference record during senior season... added 300 yards on kick returns returning both kickoffs and punts... as a junior team went 12-2 reaching Division 2 Regional Final...

**Le’Javier Payne (Defensive Back, 5-8, 170, Chicago, Ill. / Chicago Mt. Carmel HS)** – Played for coach Jordan Lynch at Chicago Mt. Carmel High School... was a starter on IHSA Class 7A State Championship team that posted an 11-3 record during senior season... recorded six tackles with a half tackle for loss and interception in state championship win over Batavia... also a member of 7A State Championship teams in 2023 and 2022 finishing as team's leading tackler in title game during junior season... multiple time CCL/ESCC BLUE All-Conference selection...

**Jett Reese (Linebacker, 6-2, 220, Chicago, Ill. / DePaul College Prep)** – Team captain that played for coach Michael Passarella at DePaul College Prep... helped lead team to IHSA Class 4A State Championship as a senior finishing season with an 11-3 record... finished with five tackles in state championship win over Mt. Zion... finished season with 66 tackles including one sack and two tackles for loss...

**Barron Sholl (Defensive Line, 6-4, 240, Rockford, Ill. / Boylan Central Catholic HS)** – Played for coach John Cacciatore at Rockford Boylan Central Catholic High School... two-time first team All-Northern Illinois Conference 10 (NIC-10) honors as a junior and senior... team advanced to the second round of the IHSA Class 4A State Playoffs as a senior... recorded 67 tackles with 15 tackles for loss and five sacks as a junior... had 56 tackles with 13 tackles for loss and four sacks as a senior... is the son of former EIU All-OVC center Scott Sholl who snapped to Tony Romo...