

REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION II STUDENT-ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
JULY 19-20, 2024, IN-PERSON MEETING

**ACTION ITEMS.**

- None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Discussion on 2024-25 SAAC Goals.** The committee reflected on its goals and priorities from the 2023-24 academic year. It also discussed feedback provided by Division II attendees in an exercise at the April 2024 NCAA Student-Athlete Leadership Forum on mental health; congressional engagement; Life After the Game; diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging; community engagement; and other items that the committee is not currently focusing on.

The committee discussed implementing two activations for its 2024-25 academic year goals and determined how these will align with Division II SAAC and student-athletes. The activation ideas will focus on civic engagement efforts ahead of Election Day this fall and the development of internal documents to aid committee members when they transition into a leadership position on the national SAAC. The three E's of empowering student-athletes with resources, empathizing with their concerns and enhancing the student-athlete voice remain a priority to the committee and as such, the two activations will encompass these overarching goals. The group also remains committed to growing the @d2saac Instagram platform to further enhance the student-athlete voice.

2. **Discussion on Congressional Engagement.** The committee received an update on the SAAC Day on the Hill and interactions with other divisional national SAAC representatives and staff of elected officials. Additionally, the committee discussed Congressman Bob Good's *Protecting Student-Athletes' Economic Freedom Act*, which states that a student-athlete may not be considered an employee of an institution, conference or association. Representative Good's bill aims to preserve the integrity of collegiate sports and safeguard educational opportunities for student-athletes. The committee urged Division II student-athletes to support this legislation and, as it awaits consideration from the House of Representatives, complete [this form](#) to sign on in support of the bill. The committee also discussed encouraging campus and conference SAACs to write a letter encouraging Congress to prohibit student-athletes from being classified as employees.

The following congressional engagement resources are available [here](#) for Division II student-athletes: tips for student-athletes to share their story, a templated letter that can be personalized by student-athletes and sent to members of Congress, previous letters written by national SAAC members and a document created to provide education on the NCAA's congressional engagement.

3. **Discussion on Civic Engagement Resource.** The committee's congressional/civic engagement team presented a civic engagement resource it plans to distribute prior to

Election Day this fall for the committee's feedback. The resource includes information on NCAA Division II Bylaw 17.1.6.8 (required day off – civic engagement) that prohibits all countable athletically related activities on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November, civic engagement and community engagement opportunities that student-athletes can consider, information on absentee voting, and nonpartisan voting resources.

4. **Discussion on 2025 NCAA Convention Proposed Legislation.** SAAC reviewed proposals for the 2025 NCAA Convention that are sponsored by the Division II governance structure and the Division II membership. The committee also discussed potential governance-sponsored proposals recommended by Division II committees as concepts. The committee will distribute materials to conferences and institutions regarding the legislative process, including the legislative grids, in September. These grids are a condensed version of each of the legislative proposals that make for easier understanding and workability when campus SAACs take a position on each proposal. Further instructions and submission details will be provided to each conference and institution by their national SAAC representative. Each institution should complete its grid and submit it via email or hard copy to their national SAAC representative not later than Monday, Oct. 14. National SAAC representatives should send their conference's completed grids to national SAAC Vice Chair Kara Amos by Monday, Oct. 21.
5. **Discussion with NCAA President Charlie Baker.** SAAC members had the opportunity to speak with President Baker about his experience to date as president, the NIL settlement and its impact on Division II, the topic of student-athlete employment, his takeaways from the Division II National Championships Spring Festival and an update on sports wagering.
6. **Discussion on Division II Operating Plan.** Division II contractor Gary Brown led a discussion that encouraged the committee to share feedback on their experiences as student-athletes as the division continues to plan for its next strategic plan. The committee discussed whether its experiences have lived up to the Life in the Balance philosophy, whether committee members are satisfied with the current level of student-athlete involvement/engagement in the Division II governance structure and what student-athletes are looking to gain out of the Division II student-athlete experience.
7. **Discussion on Voting on Football Issues.** The committee discussed Bylaw 9.3.10.2 (voting on football issues), which precludes an active member institution or voting member conference that does not sponsor football from voting on issues affecting only football. The committee feels football is different from other sports and given its unique differences, conferences and schools that do not sponsor football should not vote on football legislation. The committee also feels other sports have their own unique qualities and voting on sport-specific legislation should be equitable across all sports or schools who do not sponsor a particular sport should abstain from voting.
8. **Discussion on SAAC Newsletter.** The committee discussed the cadence, content and formatting of the Division II SAAC newsletter that is sent to campus SAAC advisors and campus SAAC presidents who are listed in the SAAC Network. The committee

recommended that the newsletter be sent two times in an academic year – in September and in early February – to campus SAAC advisors and campus SAAC presidents and athletics directors. The fall newsletter should include information about the upcoming Convention legislation and the legislative grids. The spring newsletter should recap the legislation that was voted on at the January NCAA Convention.

The committee recommended moving the chair's letter to the bottom of the newsletter, starting the newsletter with an overview of the committee's goals and goal progress, encouraging campus SAACs to submit content that national SAAC can consider posting to its social media channels and to contact national SAAC via the committee's @d2saac Instagram handle. The committee also recommended bolding names and important words to help information stand out, include deadlines in a standalone box, keep the blurbs short and link off to supplemental information, and use graphics to help condense information.

9. **Conference SAAC Guide.** The committee received a preview of its conference SAAC guide that should be completed within the next couple of weeks and shared with the Division II membership. Similar to the Division II campus SAAC guide, the conference SAAC guide will include information about the purpose of a conference SAAC, how conference SAACs can consider organizing, best practices for conference SAAC communication, running conference SAAC meetings and more.
10. **Sports Wagering Legislation Update.** The committee was briefed on a review of the NCAA's sports wagering legislation, potential legislative concepts that are being discussed, questions that are being considered as part of the review and a timeline for the review. The committee will further discuss sports wagering with the Division II Management Council at the July 20-21 summit.
11. **Women's Wrestling Update.** The committee received an update on women's wrestling as a National Collegiate Championship sport. Women's wrestling has been an emerging sport in all three divisions since 2020. In fall 2023, 41 NCAA member institutions met minimum sports-sponsorship requirements, putting the sport above the legislatively required threshold of 40 varsity programs to be considered for National Collegiate Championship status.
12. **NCAA Fan Database Update.** The committee received an update on the NCAA fan database that currently includes 12 million fans. Those fans have bought tickets, expressed an interest in buying tickets or have subscribed to newsletters on NCAA.com. The fan database can be used to grow attendance at championships through targeted marketing towards fans in a particular area who enjoy watching certain sports.
13. **Team IMPACT®.** The committee was provided highlights from the division's 2023-24 Team IMPACT partnership from Regional Executive Director of the Midwest Alexis Randall. During the 2023-24 academic year, 83 Division II teams were matched with a Team IMPACT child. Currently, Division II has 155 matches across 88 campuses and 23

conferences. Since Division II began partnering with Team IMPACT, the division has had 670 matches across 217 campuses and all 23 conferences. In addition, Team IMPACT is interested in growing Division II fellows to increase community engagement and overall awareness. Currently, there are 35 active fellowships on 18 campuses. For more information on the fellowship program or for questions, the committee was encouraged to contact Ms. Randall at [atarandall@teamimpact.org](mailto:atarandall@teamimpact.org).

14. **Make-A-Wish®.** Division II continues to partner with Make-A-Wish to create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. Division II has raised more than \$6.8 million toward granting the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions. Over 785 “wishes” have been granted through Division II contributions.

All donations for the 2023-24 academic year must be submitted directly to Make-A-Wish by July 31. The committee was reminded that conferences and institutions can visit [ncaadii.wish.org](https://ncaadii.wish.org) to view their donation page that can be customized for their conference office or school, and access the Make-A-Wish [page](#) on NCAA.org for information on the Workout for Wishes fundraiser and for other resources available to assist the Division II membership with fundraising. For questions, the committee was encouraged to email [wishyourway@wish.org](mailto:wishyourway@wish.org).

The committee determined that \$175,000 will be the division’s 2024-25 fundraising goal for Make-A-Wish based on the division’s current 2023-24 donations and its current championships and enforcement fine total. The new goal will be noted on the division’s Make-A-Wish fundraising page.

15. **New Championships and Enforcement Fine Allocation.** The committee was reminded of the division’s new championships and enforcement fine allocation that was approved by the Division II Executive Board (formerly Division II Presidents Council) in January 2023 and went into effect starting with the 2023-24 academic year. The championship and enforcement fine dollars received during the 2023-24 fiscal year will benefit Division II honorees of the Division II Award of Excellence, Team IMPACT and Make-A-Wish in the following ways:

- **Award of Excellence.** The award that each conference winner, independent winner, and at-large winner receives will increase by \$250 from the championships and enforcement fine money. This increase will result in the award going from \$500 to \$750 for each winner. In addition, the award that the top three national finalists (1st place, 2nd place, and 3rd place) receive will increase by \$500 from the championships and enforcement fine money. This increase will result in the award going from \$1,000 to \$1,500 for third place; from \$1,250 to \$1,750 for second place; and from \$2,500 to \$3,000 for the national winner. Overall, \$7,500 will benefit Award of Excellence finalists.

- **Make-A-Wish.** Forty percent of the fine monies remaining after the Award of Excellence distribution will be donated to supplement Division II institutions that fundraise less than the average cost of a wish reveal in an academic year, which is currently \$10,000.
  - **Team IMPACT.** Sixty percent of the fine monies remaining after the Award of Excellence distribution will be donated to Team IMPACT for current and new Division II matches.
16. **New Board of Governors Student-Athlete Engagement Committee Representative.** The committee held an election for its newest representative on the Board of Governors Student-Athlete Engagement Committee. Grace Hoepfner (Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, Michigan Technological University) will fill the position previously held by Eddie Baker and join Haley Gilbert (Peach Belt Conference, Augusta University) on the committee. Ms. Hoepfner's first opportunity to represent national SAAC will be at the August Student-Athlete Engagement Committee meeting.
  17. **Division II Committee Reports.** SAAC members serving on Division II committees provided updates on their respective committees. The Division II committees represented were the Academic Requirements Committee, Administrative Committee, Championships Committee, Executive Board, Legislation Committee, Management Council, Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement.
  18. **Association-Wide Committee Reports.** Committee members representing Association-wide committees provided updates on their respective committees. The Association-wide committees represented were the Board of Governors, Board of Governors Student-Athlete Engagement Committee, Committee on Women's Athletics and Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee.
  19. **SAAC and Management Council Summit.** The committee prepared for the SAAC and Management Council Summit that occurred in-person July 20-21. The committee prepared to lead and facilitate discussions during the summit with members from the Management Council.
  20. **NCAA Postgraduate Internship Opportunity.** The 2025-26 application for the NCAA Postgraduate Internship Program opens at 8 a.m. Eastern time Monday, Aug. 5. Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. Eastern time Friday, Sept. 6. NCAA leadership development staff will host an informational webinar related to the postgraduate internship program from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Eastern time Thursday, Aug. 15.
  21. **Meta Safety and Well-Being Tools.** Meta has created a safety and well-being resource to promote two-factor authentication and hidden words. Both resources support safety across Facebook, Instagram and Threads social media platforms and are notable for any organization utilizing the platforms.

22. **SAAC Network.** SAAC members were reminded to make sure their conference's SAAC network is updated with both campus SAAC advisors and presidents for the 2024-25 academic year by Sept. 15. If there are any questions or members need best practices for this initiative, committee members were encouraged to reach out to fellow committee members or Ryan Jones at [rjones@ncaa.org](mailto:rjones@ncaa.org).
23. **Dr. Dave Pariser Faculty Mentor Award.** The Dr. Dave Pariser Faculty Mentor Award honors faculty members at Division II schools for their dedication to supporting and mentoring student-athletes, as well as their commitment to Division II student-athletes' lifelong learning, competition and well-being. The committee noted that the nomination process for the 2024 Dr. Dave Pariser Faculty Mentor Award is open and the nomination form is available [here](#). SAAC representatives should work with their conference office and conference SAAC to nominate one representative from an active member institution for the award. Division II independent institutions may also nominate one representative each for the award. The deadline to submit nominations is Tuesday, Oct. 15. SAAC's honors, awards and recognition subcommittee will choose the recipient and present them the award at the 2025 Convention in Nashville. For more information on the award, the committee was encouraged to reference the award's [frequently asked questions](#).
24. **SAAC Policies and Procedures Updated.** The committee reviewed and approved updates recommended to its policies and procedures document. The updates included editorial changes, adding policies for existing policies that other committees have in place that impact SAAC, a new conflict of interest statement, and updated language for the committee's mentor-mentee program to reflect the committee's current practices.
25. **SAAC Annual Reports.** Each SAAC representative except for the committee's at-large representatives is responsible for providing a written report by email to their commissioner by Aug. 31. The report should summarize the work of their conference SAAC and national SAAC. When the report is submitted to the commissioner, SAAC members were asked to send it to Ryan Jones at [rjones@ncaa.org](mailto:rjones@ncaa.org).
26. **April and June Meeting Reports.** The April 2024 and June 2024 committee meeting reports were reviewed and approved.
27. **Future Meetings.**
  - a. September 2024 videoconference; date to be determined.
  - b. Nov. 23-24, 2024; SAAC videoconference.
  - c. Jan. 13-17, 2025, in conjunction with 2025 NCAA Convention; Nashville, Tennessee.
  - d. April 24-27, 2025, in conjunction with SAAC Super Region Convention; Indianapolis.

- e. July 18-19, 2025; SAAC meeting; Indianapolis.
- f. July 19-20, 2025; Management Council/SAAC Summit; Indianapolis.
- g. Nov. 2025; in conjunction with SAAC Super Region Convention; dates and location to be determined.
- h. Jan. 13-17, 2026; in conjunction with 2026 NCAA Convention; Washington, D.C.

*Committee Chair:* Dani Mabry, Rockhurst University, Great Lakes Valley Conference  
*Staff Liaisons:* Ryan Jones, Governance  
 Marcus Brown, Academic and Membership Affairs  
 Becca Medel, Governance  
 Morgan Melchert, Eligibility Center  
 Megan Villanueva, Academic and Membership Affairs

NCAA Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee July 19-20, 2024, In-Person Meeting	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Laura Amaya, Roberts Wesleyan University, East Coast Conference.	
Kara Amos, Missouri Southern State University, Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association.	
Davaris Cheeks, Concordia University, St. Paul, Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference.	
Ben Cherry, California State University, San Marcos, California Collegiate Athletic Association.	
Addison Courtney, Fairmont State University, Mountain East Conference.	
Alexis Devlin, Catawba College, South Atlantic Conference.	
Cullen Dore, Francis Marion University, Conference Carolinas.	
Haley Gilbert, Augusta University, Peach Belt Conference. (July 19)	
Theresa Grosbach, Missouri Western State University, Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association.	
DJ Guest Jr., California State University, Dominguez Hills, California Collegiate Athletic Association.	
JJ Hayes, Palm Beach Atlantic University, Sunshine State Conference.	
Avery Hellmuth, Oklahoma Baptist University, Great American Conference.	
Grace Hoeppner, Michigan Technological University, Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.	
Scout Huffman, Texas Woman's University, Lone Star Conference. (July 19)	
Shani Idlette, Clark Atlanta University, Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.	
Dani Mabry, Rockhurst University, Great Lakes Valley Conference.	
David Mayser, University of Hawaii at Hilo, Pacific West Conference.	
Dustyn McKenney, Western Oregon University, Great Northwest Athletic Conference.	
Courtney Medwin, West Chester University, Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference.	

Austin Mondello, Colorado Mesa University, Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference.
Alexis Montalvo, Ashland University, Great Midwest Athletic Conference.
Larry Parkinson, Executive Board Independent Member
Alia Scotka, University of West Florida, Gulf South Conference.
Haley White, Lincoln Memorial University, At-Large.
Katie Williamson, Southern Connecticut State University, Northeast-10 Conference.
<b>Absentees:</b>
Scott Borgmann Jr., Wilmington University (Delaware), Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference.
Haley Gilbert, Augusta University, Peach Belt Conference. (July 20)
Scout Huffman, Texas Woman's University, Lone Star Conference. (July 20)
Derrick Parker II, Grand Valley State University, At-Large.
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>
Hilary Butler, Maggie Gibbons, Roberta Page and Alexis Randall.
<b>NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>
Charlie Baker, Gary Brown, Marcus Brown, Dawn Buth, Brooke Dixon, Terri Steeb Gronau, Molly Hansen, Brian Higgins, Chelsea Hooks, Maritza Jones, Ryan Jones, Becca Medel, Morgan Melchert, Gretchen Miron, Angela Red and Megan Villanueva.