



REPORT OF THE NCAA
DIVISION II STUDENT-ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 20, 2025, IN-PERSON MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Establish NCAA Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Positions for the 2026 NCAA Convention.** The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee reviewed and supported 15 of the 17 legislative proposals that will be voted on by the Division II membership at the 2026 Convention. Committee members discussed how their conference voted on the proposals and offered additional feedback they received.

The committee discussed the following pieces of proposed legislation:

- a. **NCAA Proposal No. 2026-1:** NCAA Division II Membership and Institutional Control, Financial Aid and Playing and Practice Seasons – Emerging Sports for Women – Women's Flag Football. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- b. **Proposal No. 2026-2:** National Collegiate Championships – Acrobatics and Tumbling. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- c. **Proposal No. 2026-3:** National Collegiate Championships – Stunt. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- d. **Proposal No. 2026-4:** Division II Championships – Women's Bowling. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- e. **Proposal No. 2026-5:** Recruiting – Definitions and Applications – Football Recruiting Dead Period. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- f. **Proposal No. 2026-6:** Eligibility – Athletics Eligibility – Seasons of Competition: 10-Semester/15-Quarter Rule – Five Seasons of Competition in 10-Semesters/15-Quarters. **Committee Position: Opposes.**

The committee opposed Proposal No. 2026-6 for several reasons, including that many states having regulations that do not allow students to receive nonathletically related financial aid beyond four years of collegiate enrollment. Many private institutions rely on their student-athletes' ability to receive federal financial aid to help offset the cost of tuition and if student-athletes are unable to receive federal financial aid, this could result in a negative financial impact for institutions. Eliminating medical hardship waivers and the opportunity to redshirt in their initial year of collegiate enrollment is not student-athlete friendly. Some institutions do not offer master's degree programs; therefore, student-athletes at those institutions would not have the opportunity to pursue a master's degree during their fifth season

of competition unless they transferred. This change could result in Division I student-athletes transferring to Division II to participate in a fifth season of competition and as a result, could potentially take away opportunities for Division II student-athletes. Further, it was noted that Division II's eligibility review began because of legal cases that impacted Division I student-athletes. With Division II adopting Proposal No. 2025-5, student-athletes in their initial year of collegiate enrollment may participate in up to 30% of the maximum permissible number of contests or dates of competition set forth in Division II Bylaw 17 in their sport without using a season of competition. It was noted that Division II should have the opportunity to see how that legislation impacts student-athletes before deciding to update its eligibility legislation. Finally, this proposal could result in athletics becoming more of a priority than academics, which is contrary to the Division II Life in the Balance philosophy.

- g. **Proposal No. 2026-7:** Financial Aid – Eligibility for Athletics Aid – Eligibility of Student-Athletes for Athletics Aid – Retroactive Athletics Aid – Issuance of Retroactive Athletics Aid. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- h. **Proposal No. 2026-8:** Playing and Practice Seasons – General Playing-Season Regulations – Time Limits for Athletically Related Activities – Daily and Weekly Hour Limitations – Nonchampionship Segment – Baseball. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- i. **Proposal No. 2026-9:** Playing and Practice Seasons – Baseball – Number of Contests – Maximum Limitations – Institutional – Student-Athlete. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- j. **Proposal No. 2026-10:** Playing and Practice Seasons – Basketball – First Permissible Contest. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- k. **Proposal No. 2026-11:** Playing and Practice Seasons – Golf – Number of Dates of Competition – Maximum Limitations – Institutional – Student-Athlete. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- l. **Proposal No. 2026-12:** Playing and Practice Seasons – Soccer – Preseason Practice and First Date of Practice – Championship Segment. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- m. **Proposal No. 2026-13:** Playing and Practice Seasons – Softball – Number of Contests – Maximum Limitations – Institutional and Student-Athlete – Nonchampionship Segment. **Committee Position: Supports.**

- n. **Proposal No. 2026-14:** Championships Administration – Administration of Division II Championships – Minimum Sponsorship for Division II Championships – Exception for Field Hockey and Women's Rowing. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- o. **Proposal No. 2026-15:** Championships Administration – Administration of Division II Championships – Criteria for Selection of Participants – Criteria for Selection in Team Sports – Required Selection Criteria and Sport-Specific Selection Criteria – NCAA Power Index. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- p. **Proposal No. 2026-16:** Championships Administration – Administration of Division II Championships – Criteria for Selection of Participants – Automatic Qualification – Requirements – Division Championship – Institutions in Final Year of Division II Membership Process. **Committee Position: Supports.**
- q. **Resolution No. R-2026-17:** Division II Football Championship Date Formula. **Committee Position: Opposes.**

If the NCAA Division II Football Championship is conducted in January as opposed to December, the committee noted that the two remaining teams would have a three or four week break between the semifinal games and national championship. This long break is not beneficial for student-athletes as it would require them to build back up to playing again. The committee also noted the importance of the winter break period and adjusting the football date formula would result in student-athletes losing that time. The winter break is important for student-athlete mental health and rest, and provides an opportunity for student-athletes to spend time with family and friends.

- 2. **Preparation for 2026 Convention Division II Business Session.** The committee assigned members to speak on legislative proposals for the 2026 Division II business session.
- 3. **2026 Convention Overview.** The committee was presented with the 2026 Convention schedule. SAAC will attend its January meeting, then participate in Convention programming.
- 4. **2026 Convention Programming.** The committee discussed possible topics for the joint SAAC, NCAA Division II Management Council and Executive Board breakfast and meeting. In addition, it was noted that Division II education sessions will be dedicated to business models and enrollment strategies in Division II; the future of Division II championships; how Division I decisions shape the Division II landscape and strengthening the Division II academic and compliance framework.

5. **Discussion with NCAA President Charlie Baker.** SAAC members had the opportunity to speak with President Baker about the SCORE Act and its impact on Division II, the importance of mental health in sports, how student-athletes can advocate for protections with sports wagering, Division II's five seasons of competition proposal and the Division II football date formula resolution.
6. **Update on NCAA Sports Wagering Legislation.** The committee received an update on Division I considering rescinding a previously approved rule change that would have permitted student-athletes and athletics department staff members to legally participate in sports wagering on professional sports only. In October, the NCAA Division I Administrative Committee adopted a proposal to deregulate sports wagering. Later in October, the Division II and III Management Councils approved the same proposal. Division I has until 5 p.m. Eastern time November 21 to rescind the sports wagering rules change. The committee was reminded that sports wagering legislation is common legislation among all three divisions.
7. **Division II Civic Engagement Update.** The committee recapped Division II's civic engagement efforts around Election Day. The committee discussed different ways their institutions got involved and ideas to increase engagement in the future.
8. **2026 SAAC Elections.** The committee will hold annual elections during its January meeting. The committee received a preview of the positions that will be open for election. Committee members will submit nominations for the open positions before the January meeting.
9. **Update on 2025-26 SAAC Goals.** The committee discussed progress made toward its two goal themes for fall 2025: (1) maintaining consistent communication with campus and conference SAACs to keep student-athletes informed on Division II events and issues; and (2) encourage and spotlight community engagement efforts in Division II conferences and schools. The two task forces will continue to meet in advance of SAAC's next quarterly meeting at the Convention in January.
10. **Discussion on Festival Budget Allocation.** In July, Management Council approved a recommendation from the NCAA Division II Championships Committee to sunset the National Championships Festivals after the 2026 fall festival and consult with SAAC to generate ideas on how to enhance the student-athlete experience at championships using the budget dollars allocated to the festival. SAAC received an overview of the current festival budget and where the money is being allocated. The committee discussed initial ideas to utilize the budget dollars, including enhanced web streaming production, in-game and postgame interviews, nutrition stations and awarding individual trophies for winning a regional championship.

11. **2025 Dr. Dave Pariser Faculty Mentor Award.** The Dr. Dave Pariser Faculty Mentor Award honors an institutional faculty member who has demonstrated dedication, support and guidance to student-athletes and the institution's athletics program. SAAC's Honors, Awards and Recognition Subcommittee has chosen the Division II 2025 Dr. Dave Pariser Faculty Mentor Award winner. The winner will be announced during the week of Jan. 5, 2026, and recognized at the Faculty Mentor Award Reception at Convention.
12. **Division II SAAC Newsletter Update.** The committee was reminded of the 2025-26 biannual cadence and content plan for the SAAC newsletter that is sent to campus SAAC advisors, campus SAAC presidents and conference SAAC liaisons who are listed in the SAAC Network. The first newsletter of the academic year was sent in October 2025 and the second will be sent in February 2026.
13. **Make It Yours Paid Media Update.** Division II staff provided an update on a new partnership with Paciolan and the continued activation of the Make It Yours brand. Paciolan has launched a targeted paid media strategy among prospective student-athletes and parents that is aimed at strengthening the perception and understanding of Division II nationally by increasing awareness that Division II is the balance between athletics, academics and community engagement. Division II is planning to increase brand awareness and perception by promoting the division through paid media on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok; paid search leading up to the Division I transfer window; utilizing video on YouTube and over-the-top streaming services; and creating geofences around select high school showcases to promote the division to prospective student-athletes and their parents.
14. **Make-A-Wish®.** In 2024-25, Division II raised almost \$270,000 from membership donations and the division's championships and enforcement fines for Make-A-Wish. The Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference raised over \$40,000, Augustana University (South Dakota) and Fairmont State University both raised \$20,000 and 16 institutions earned the opportunity to host a wish experience. The committee was reminded about several Make-A-Wish resources available [here](#), including information about how to donate, get started with fundraising, a fundraising toolkit, a game day activation guide, a preapproved fundraising ideas list, a thank you card template, a sample event flier, sample wish week fliers and more.
15. **Team IMPACT®.** The committee was informed that Division II currently has 300 active fellowships on 138 campuses. It was also noted that Division II donated approximately \$77,000 from its 2024-25 championships and enforcement fines to Team IMPACT.
16. **Scholarship Opportunities.** The 2026-27 application for the NCAA Division II Degree Completion Award opened October 15. Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. Eastern time February 16, 2026. To apply for the program or for more information, the committee was encouraged to visit the Division II Degree Completion Award Program page. The NCAA also offers several graduate scholarships that were previewed for the committee.

17. **Division II Committee Reports.** SAAC members serving on Division II committees provided updates on their respective committees. The NCAA Division II committees represented were the Academic Requirements Committee, Championships Committee, Executive Board, Legislation Committee, Management Council and the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee. The committee also received an update from the NCAA Division II Management Council Identity Subcommittee and Eligibility Review Working Group.
18. **Association-Wide Committee Reports.** Committee members representing Association-wide committees provided updates on their respective committees. The Association-wide committees represented were the NCAA Board of Governors and the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports.
19. **Cross Divisional Student-Athlete Group Update.** The committee received an update on the Cross Divisional Student-Athlete Group and were provided education on the Board of Governors' structure, including their role and responsibilities.
20. **July, September and October Meeting Reports.** The July, September and October committee meeting reports were reviewed and approved.
21. **SAAC Network.** SAAC members were reminded to keep their conference's SAAC Network updated with changes to their campus SAAC advisors and presidents and conference SAAC liaison.
22. **Future Meetings.**
 - a. January 12-16, 2026, in conjunction with the 2026 NCAA Convention, National Harbor, Maryland.
 - b. April 11-12, 2026, SAAC meeting, videoconference.
 - c. July 17-18, 2026, SAAC meeting; Indianapolis.
 - d. July 18-19, 2026, Management Council and SAAC Summit; Indianapolis.
 - e. November 21-22, 2026, SAAC meeting; videoconference.

Committee Chair: Avery Hellmuth, Oklahoma Baptist, Great American Conference
Staff Liaisons: Ryan Jones, Governance and Member Services
Marcus Brown, Governance and Member Services
Katie Mucci, Governance and Member Services
Morgan Melchert, Eligibility Center
Megan Villanueva, Governance and Member Services

NCAA Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee November 20, 2025, In-Person Meeting	
Attendees:	
Sean Belzer, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference.	
Scott Borgmann Jr., Wilmington University (Delaware), Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference.	
Yahir Chairez-Salazar, Colorado School of Mines, At-Large.	
Ben Cherry, California State University, San Marcos, California Collegiate Athletic Association.	
Addison Courtney, Fairmont State University, Mountain East Conference.	
Adorijan Daniels, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association.	
Darcey Dorris, Central State University, Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.	
Connor Fournier, Minnesota State University, Mankato, Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference.	
Haley Gilbert, Augusta University, Peach Belt Conference.	
Theresa Grosbach, Missouri Western State University, Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association.	
Avery Hellmuth, Oklahoma Baptist University, Great American Conference.	
Scout Huffman, Texas Woman's University, Lone Star Conference.	
Zeke Jarzyniecki, Belmont Abbey College, Conference Carolinas.	
Mário Kirkov, Eckerd College, Sunshine State Conference.	
Vivian Martinez, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, California Collegiate Athletic Association.	
Rita-Marie Masi, Mercy University, East Coast Conference.	
Abbie McCants, Coker University, South Atlantic Conference.	
Rachel McCool, Ashland University, Great Midwest Athletic Conference.	
Dustyn McKenney, Western Oregon University, Great Northwest Athletic Conference.	
Emma Neal, Maryville University of Saint Louis, Great Lakes Valley Conference.	
Derrick Parker II, Grand Valley State University, At-Large.	
Larry Parkinson, Executive Board Independent Member.	
Rowan Ruggerio, American International College, Northeast-10 Conference.	
Darius Satterfield, Elizabeth City State University, Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association.	
Lily Ventresca, Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference.	
Haley White, Lincoln Memorial University, At-Large.	
Gabe Zeldes, Wayne State University (Michigan), Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletics Conference.	
Absentees:	
Mariah Hughes, Point Loma Nazarene University, Pacific West Conference.	
Ryan Lovelace, Lee University, Gulf South Conference.	
NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Charlie Baker, Marcus Brown, Davaris Cheeks, Michael Cioroianu, Terri Steeb Gronau, Chelsea Hooks, Maritza Jones, Ryan Jones, Karen Keyler, Karen Kirsch, Morgan Melchert, Katie Mucci, Kaylen Overway, Angela Red, Megan Villanueva and Courtney Wengryn.	

