



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III STRATEGIC PLANNING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE  
JUNE 20, 2024, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative Items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative Items.**

**a. 2024-25 Division III Strategic Plan.**

- (1) Recommendation. That Management and Presidents Councils approve the 2024-25 Division III Strategic Plan. [Attachment A]
- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2024.
- (3) Rationale. The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee reviewed a draft of the 2024-25 strategic plan that positions the division for success during the first year of the 2024-26 budget biennium. The proposed plan builds upon the 2023-24 plan and highlights priorities identified through the governance structure and membership feedback.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. The strategic plan is driven by initiatives and funding that enhance Division III student-athletes' collegiate experiences.

**b. Enrichment Fund Budget Initiatives.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the Management and Presidents Councils approve the Enrichment Fund new budget initiatives for 2024-26. [Attachment B]
- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2024.
- (3) Rationale. Key enhancements include increases to the conference grant program to allow for additional conference office travel in Tier I, a one-time grant to support officiating initiatives, inflationary increases in diversity initiatives and NCAA Convention programming, one-time funding to update the LGBTQ OneTeam Program resources, programming for athletic communication directors and athletic trainers, and livestreaming for the annual Regional Rules Seminar.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. Increase of \$438,500 in 2024-25.
- (5) Estimated student-athlete impact. The recommendations provide expanded opportunities for the membership that positively impact the student-athlete experience.

**c. Championships Budget Initiatives.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the Management and Presidents Councils approve championships budget enhancements for 2024-26. [Attachment C]
- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2024.
- (3) Rationale. The committee noted that the items will enhance championship operations and in turn the student-athlete postseason experience in all sports. The committee also noted that the enhancements related to bracket expansion, per diem and officiating fees have been consistently requested by sport committees and are in line with priorities the membership has expressed via two championships surveys distributed this past year.
- (4) Estimate budget impact. Increase of \$2.6 million in 2024-25 and \$941,000 in 2025-26.
- (5) Estimated student-athlete impact. The recommendations will enhance the championship experience for student-athletes and improve championship administration.

**d. Supplemental Budget Initiatives.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the Management and Presidents Councils approve the supplemental budget enhancements for 2024-26. [See Attachment D]
- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2024.
- (3) Rationale. In its effort to support the Division III membership, enhance the student-athlete experience and reduce the amount above the mandated reserve, the committee is recommending several supplemental enhancements for the 2024-26 budget. These enhancements include providing championships hosts with a stipend to offset livestreaming production and creating a national platform to house the livestreams of preliminary rounds of team championships to increase the division's brand. A health and safety grant for an institution's athletic training department will assist in deferring costs and providing an online mental health module for coaches to improve their skills to identify mental health issues will enhance the student-athlete experience. Finally, a two-year pilot to provide bracketing flexibility to sport committees to protect high ranked teams from facing each other in early rounds is in response to consistent membership requests.
- (4) Estimate budget impact. Increase of \$3.6 million in 2024-25.

- (5) Estimated student-athlete impact. The recommendations will increase the division's brand and directly assist institutions.

**e. Division III Budget Guidelines.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the Management and Presidents Councils approve a new resource that details the division's budget guidelines and principles. [Attachment E]
- (2) Effective date. Immediate.
- (3) Rationale. After soliciting Championships Committee feedback, the committee approved a newly drafted document outlining the Division III budget principles to guide deliberations related to the potential use of funds allocated to Division III. If approved by the councils, the committee will share more broadly (e.g., with Division III governance and sport committees) to help ensure transparency in the division's fiscal decision-making processes.
- (4) Estimate budget impact. None.
- (5) Estimated student-athlete impact. None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

- 1. **Welcome and review of agenda.** Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee chair Joanne Berger-Sweeney welcomed the group, previewed the agenda, and called the videoconference to order at 1:30 p.m. Eastern time.
- 2. **Report from the March 25, 2024, meeting.** The committee approved the report from its March meeting as presented.
- 3. **Presidents Council/Management Council Summary of Actions.** The committee reviewed the summary of actions from the April Division III Presidents and Management Council meetings, noting that several of the discussion items relate to topics that will be addressed later in the meeting (e.g., funding requests for the next budget cycle, budget policies and guidelines).
- 4. **Division III Philosophy Statement.** The committee reviewed the current Division III Philosophy Statement to guide its work during this meeting and noted that the newly revised philosophy statement, adopted at the 2024 NCAA Convention, will become effective August 1, 2024.
- 5. **SPFC policies and procedures.** The committee reviewed its policies and procedures document.

6. **Division III budget guidelines and principles.** The committee recommends using a new resource to guide deliberations related to the potential use of funds allocated to Division III. [See Nonlegislative Action Item 2e]
7. **Division III budget.**
  - a. **2023-24 budget-to-actuals.** The committee reviewed the current budget-to-actuals through May.
  - b. **Future budget projections.** The committee also reviewed the future forecast, noting the items that the committee endorsed in concept during its March meeting.
8. **Division III Strategic Plan.**
  - a. **Final 2023-24 plan.** The committee approved the 2023-24 Strategic Plan final analysis that details the outcome of the division's initiatives (e.g., accomplished, on-going or not accomplished). [Attachment F]
  - b. **Proposed 2024-25 plan.** [See Non-Legislative Action Item 2a] The committee noted the 2024-25 plan builds upon the current strategic plan [Attachment F] and highlights concepts identified through the governance structure and membership feedback. Key strategic priorities include implementing the Deloitte and Lewis Rice recommendations, addressing the officiating crisis, creation of a diversity, equity, and inclusion council subcommittee, providing mental health resources, increasing branding, monitoring the federated rules process, providing support to athletic trainers and athletic communication/sports information offices, and supporting Association-wide initiatives.
9. **Captive insurance – event cancellation.** The NCAA director of insurance provided an update on the captive insurance and the division's current event cancellation policies. The NCAA is currently finalizing the rates for FY25 and FY26. The committee agreed to maintain the division's current annual event cancellation insurance (currently \$48,000 annually). The committee also noted it will continue to review the policy annually, which means the contribution to the policy could be modified if conditions warrant.
10. **Enrichment Fund review.** The Lewis Rice consultants updated the committee on their evaluation of the Division III Enrichment Fund with the completion of the review. The review concluded that the grants and programs align with the division's strategic priorities and are being managed in a fiscally responsible manner. However, it also was noted that there needs to be more consistency with the marketing and branding, selection processes, objectives and measurable outcomes for each program. The consultants provided recommendations to address these identified concerns and enhance the division's grants and programs.

11. **Division III Financial and Risk Management Working Group.** The committee reviewed the working group's most recent report, noting that the working group emphasized that with the completion of Deloitte's analysis, the governance structure, and primarily the Division III Presidents Council, now owns the analysis. With this understanding, the committee was informed that the working group will recommend its sunsetting.
12. **Deloitte financial analysis.** Staff reviewed Deloitte's final analysis of the division's finances based on interviews with key Division III stakeholders, engagement with the Division III Financial and Risk Management Working Group, the division's financial reports and market research. The executive readout outlined the analysis process, identified threats and opportunities, and provided a roadmap for implementation.
13. **Division III Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program.** Staff reviewed a draft of the 2024-25 conference grant allocations noting that there will be 42 multi-sport conferences plus independent institutions.
14. **Enrichment Fund requests.** [See Nonlegislative Action Item 2b]
  - a. **Regional Rules Seminar livestreaming.** While the committee approved the request from the Membership Committee to provide a livestream option for the Regional Rules Seminar, it also noted concerns with the cost (i.e., \$50,000 annually) versus the number of potential viewers. Consequently, it only approved funding for FY25, and directed staff to establish success metrics in terms of number of viewers and length of time viewed. At this year's seminar, 179 individuals used the livestream, and staff is waiting for additional data in terms of length of time and sessions viewed.
  - b. **OneTeam update.** The committee approved a one-time request from the LGBTQIA+ Working Group to fund the hiring of an outside consultant to update the OneTeam Program.
15. **Championships enhancement request.** [See Nonlegislative Action Item 2c] The committee recommended the enhancements approved in concept during its March meeting as well as funding to provide bracketing flexibility to sport committees. The committee understands that the Management Council still needs to review and approve a waiver request of Bylaw 31.3.5.1 (b) that requires geographic proximity to take precedence over seeding when constructing championship bracket before implementation of the funding.
16. **Supplemental requests.** [See Nonlegislative Action Item 2d]
  - a. **Health and safety grant.** The committee supported a recommendation of an annual grant of \$2,000, for two years, to each institution's athletic training department to support health and safety resources (e.g., professional development, Electronic Medical Records, programming). The committee also supported the

Deloitte recommendation for the NCAA to purchase an online mental health course for Division III head coaches and athletic trainers.

- b. Livestreaming proposal.** The committee supported a recommendation to provide a \$1,000 per day stipend for all NCAA team championship preliminary round hosts to help offset livestreaming production and announcing costs. Further, the committee supports the Deloitte recommendation to create a national platform to house the livestreams.
- 17. 2024-26 budget recommendations.** After thoughtful discussion, the committee recommended the championships, Enrichment Fund and supplemental enhancements for FY25 and FY26. The committee noted that the enhancements will maximize the annual budget, reduce the amount above the mandated reserve and provide meaningful resources to the membership. [See Nonlegislative Action Items 2b-d]
- 18. Strategic priorities.** Time did not permit the committee to review a resource that staff uses to monitor and support the division's strategic priorities. The chair recommended committee members review and forward questions to staff, as needed.
- 19. Division III Enrichment Fund initiatives with a budget impact.** Time did not permit the committee to review the initiatives. The chair recommended committee members review and forward questions to staff, as needed.
- 20. Additional business.** There was no additional business.
- 21. Future meeting dates.** The committee will next convene in November via videoconference on a date to be determined.
- 22. Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m. Eastern time.

*Committee Chair: Joanne Berger-Sweeney, Trinity College (Connecticut)*

*Staff Liaisons: Louise McCleary, Division III Governance  
Bill Regan, Division III Governance  
Mark Aiken, Administrative Services  
Jeff Myers, Academic and Membership Affairs*

NCAA Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee June 20, 2024, Videoconference	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Joanne Berger-Sweeney, Trinity College (CT).	
Stephanie Dutton, United East Conference.	
Michael Harrison, Framingham State University.	
Charley Jacobs, St. Norbert College.	
Joe Onderko, Presidents' Athletic Conference.	
Nicki Pieart, Lake Forest College.	
Adam Puckett, George Fox University.	
Karen Tessmer, Worcester State University	
Shanna Trone, Agnes Scott College.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
Jeff Abernathy, Alma College.	
Muthu Meenakshisundaram, University of Minnesota, Morris.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
Sarah Mullen and Brad Wachler (Lewis Rice).	
<b>NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:</b>	
Mark Aiken, Eric Hartung, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers and Bill Regan.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Katie Mucci, Liz Schneckenberger and Ali Spungen.	