



DIVISION III
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**NCAA DIVISION III
PRESIDENTS AND MANAGEMENT COUNCILS
SUMMARY OF SUMMER 2025
QUARTERLY MEETINGS**

KEY ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Championships Per Diem Increase	Page 7
Funding to Live Stream Regional Rules Seminar Education Sessions.....	Page 8
Presidents Council Futures Subcommittee Update	Page 9
Division III Playing Rules Structure and Process	Pages 10-11
Bylaw 16 Deregulation - 2026 Convention Proposals	Pages 13-15
Transfer Portal - 2026 Convention Proposal.....	Pages 15-16
Mental Health Hardship Waiver Program Proposal	Pages 17-18
Acrobatics and Tumbling, and Stunt - 2026 Convention Proposals.....	Pages 18-19
Proposed Legislation for the 2026 NCAA Convention	Pages 20-26
Council Elections for 2026.....	Page 26
Management Council Eligibility Discussion.....	Page 26

Division III Management Council July 21-22, 2025, In-Person Meeting	Division III Presidents Council August 4, 2025, Virtual Meeting
ATTENDEES	ATTENDEES
<p>Melissa Bauman, Ohio Northern University Joe Bednarsh, Yeshiva University Tony Berich, Stockton University Pete Bothner, Nazareth College Kristie Bowers, Rochester Polytechnic Institute Donnie Brooks, Macalester College Lillian Case, Juniata College, SAAC representative Ryan Erwin, East Texas Baptist University Crystal Gibson, St. Mary's College of Maryland Marybeth Lamb, Bridgewater State University (MA) Rob Larson, Luther College [<i>vice chair</i>] Heather MacCulloch, Baruch College Myranda Nash, Brevard College Keiko Price, Emory University Russ Rogers, Stevens Institute of Technology Meghan Roman, Illinois College Andrea Savage, New England Small College Athletic Conference Anthony Scola, North Park University Patrick Summers, New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference Melinda Treadwell, Keene State University Jason Verdugo, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire [<i>chair</i>] Brian Wigley, Shenandoah University</p>	<p>Dale Caldwell, Centenary University (New Jersey) Alberto Cardelle, State University of New York at Oneonta Lillian Case, Juniata College, SAAC representative Bryan Coker, Maryville College Julia Jasken, McDaniel College Marisa Kelly, Suffolk University Sebastian Knowles, Hartwick College, SAAC representative Lake Lambert, Hanover College Rob Larson, Luther College [<i>Management Council vice chair</i>] Carolyn Lepre, Salisbury University Steven Mauro, Alfred State University Milton Moreland, Centre College Raymond Rice, University of Maine at Presque Isle Jim Troha, Juniata College [<i>chair</i>] Jason Verdugo, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire [<i>Management Council chair</i>] Renee Wachter, University of Wisconsin-Superior John Walz, Milwaukee School of Engineering Adam Weinberg, Denison University</p>
ABSENTEES	ABSENTEES
<p>Julia Hathaway, Virginia Wesleyan University, SAAC representative Muthu Meenakshisundaram, University of Minnesota, Morris, SAAC representative</p>	<p>Allan Belton, Pacific Lutheran University Marc Camille, Albertus Magnus College [<i>vice chair</i>] Hiram Chodosh, Claremont McKenna-Harvey Mudd-Scripps Colleges Debbie Cottrell, Texas Lutheran University Suzanne Davis, Greenville University Douglas Lee, Waynesburg University</p>

OTHER PARTICIPANTS	OTHER PARTICIPANTS
Corey Berg, NCAA Gary Brown, NCAA (<i>via videoconference</i>) Jennifer Fraser, NCAA Grace Hadlich, NCAA Eric Hartung, NCAA Malik Henry, NCAA Louise McCleary, NCAA Heather McVeigh, NCAA Jeff Myers, NCAA Laura Peterson-Mlynski, NCAA (<i>via videoconference</i>) Nicki Pieart, NCAA Stephanie Quigg, NCAA Bill Regan, NCAA Lisa Rogers, NCAA Luke Schultheis, NCAA Rachel Seewald, NCAA Ali Spungen, NCAA Liz Suscha, NCAA Lynda Tealer, NCAA JP Williams, NCAA (<i>via videoconference</i>) Julie Zike, NCAA Janell Zimmer, NCAA	Charlie Baker, NCAA Corey Berg, NCAA Gary Brown, NCAA Michael Cioroianu, NCAA Grace Hadlich, NCAA Eric Hartung, NCAA Malik Henry, NCAA Kevin Lennon, NCAA Louise McCleary, NCAA Will Morrison, NCAA Jeff Myers, NCAA Laura Peterson-Mlynski, NCAA Nicki Pieart, NCAA Bill Regan, NCAA Lisa Rogers, NCAA Luke Schultheis, NCAA Ali Spungen, NCAA

1. WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

July 21-22 Management Council. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time, July 21, and 9 a.m. Eastern time, July 22. The chair, Jason Verdugo, welcomed the council, asked members to introduce themselves, and noted the council's newest member, Meghan Roman, the director of athletics at Illinois College.

August 4 Presidents Council. The meeting was called to order at 11:03 a.m. Eastern time, August 4. Division III Vice President Louise McCleary welcomed the group on behalf of the chair, Jim Troha, who was unable to join the videoconference until later in the agenda.

2. REVIEW OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS.

a. Management Council Meeting – April 16-17, 2025.

Management Council. The Management Council approved the summaries of its April 16-17 virtual meeting.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

b. Presidents Council Meeting – April 23, 2025.

Management Council. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. The Presidents Council approved the summary of its April 23 virtual meeting.

c. 2025 Committee/Subcommittee Assignments.

Management and Presidents Councils. The council members reviewed their 2025 assignments.

d. Division III Philosophy Statement and Strategic Positioning Platform.

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils reviewed the division's philosophy statement and strategic positioning platform and referred to these resources to support discussions throughout the agenda.

e. Administrative Committee Reports.

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils ratified the Administrative Committee's action to approve the following committee appointments.

- (1) NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports (immediate vacancy): Stacey Schley, physician.

- (2) NCAA Honors Committee (immediate vacancy): Joan Cronan, former recipient.
- (3) NCAA Division III Interpretations and Legislation Committee (July vacancy replacing Mike Mattia): Matt Grawrock, director of athletics, State University of New York at Morrisville, State University of New York Athletic Conference.
- (4) NCAA Division III Management Council (immediate vacancy replacing Nicole Pieart): Meghan Roman, director of athletics, Illinois College, Midwest Conference.
- (5) NCAA Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee (immediate vacancy replacing Charley Jacobs): Angel Mason, director of athletics, Berry College, Southern Athletic Association.
- (6) NCAA Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee:
 - Zoal Awad, University of Pittsburgh, Bradford, Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference;
 - Alberto Bustamante, Vermont State University, Lyndon, North Atlantic Conference;
 - R.J. Casey, Connecticut College, New England Small College Athletic Conference;
 - Michael Cohen, King's College (PA), Middle Atlantic Conferences;
 - Holly Hall, Alma College, Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association;
 - Olivia Hanson, Concordia College, Moorhead Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference;
 - Sonia Klein, Emory University, University Athletic Association;
 - Paige Kluba, Piedmont University, Collegiate Conference of the South;
 - Lauren Krupnikoff, Simmons University, Great Northeast Athletic Conference;
 - Alfred Lamptey, University of Mount Saint Vincent, Skyline Conference;
 - Kimberly Lila, Berry College, Southern Athletic Association;
 - Shea McKenna, McDaniel College, Centennial Conference;

- Kyle Neibch, Wheaton College (IL), College Conference of Illinois & Wisconsin;
- Isabella Nesbeth, Grinnell College, Midwest Conference;
- Joshua Osae, State University of New York at Cortland, State University of New York Athletic Conference;
- Maeve Perry, Denison University, North Coast Athletic Conference;
- Luana Batista Soares, University of Massachusetts Boston, Little East Conference;
- Ashlyn Voyles, Eureka College, St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; and
- Christin Yu, Claremont McKenna-Harvey Mudd-Scripps College; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

f. Presidents Council Policies and Procedures.

Management Council. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

g. Presidents Advisory Group Report.

Management Council. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. The council reviewed and approved the report from the advisory group's June 10 meeting.

3. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING DIVISION III.

a. Division III Joint Presidents Council/Management Council Committees or Subcommittees.

(1) Convention Planning Subcommittee.

Management Council. The council endorsed the proposed topics for the Division III educational sessions at the 2026 NCAA Convention in Washington, D.C., which are (a) Overcoming generational communication obstacles, and (b) AI and technology as tools to assist athletics departments. These topics were selected as part of a pilot program for the membership to submit ideas and from post-Convention surveys. The topic for the session being sponsored by the National Association of Division III Athletic

Staff Liaison:
Regan

Council Reps:
Bednarsh, Belton,
Berich, Brooks,
Lee, Moreland
Verdugo, Walz

Administrators will be determined later. The subcommittee will finalize recommended topics for the Issues Forum during its September videoconference. As with the 2025 Convention, the schedule for the 2026 Convention will be Tuesday through Friday (January 13-16, 2026).

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(2) **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee.**

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils reviewed the report from the subcommittee's June videoconference. No action was necessary.

(3) **Strategic Planning and Finance Committee (SPFC).**

(a) **Division III Strategic Plan Implementation for 2025-26.**

Management Council. The council approved the implementation plan for the second year of the division's strategic plan for the 2024-26 budget biennium as outlined in Attachment A. (The items in red font in Attachment A are the identified priority initiatives and programs.)

Presidents Council. The council approved the plan's implementation as recommended.

(b) **Championship Per Diem Increases for 2025-26 and 2026-27.**

Management Council. The council approved an increase in per diem to \$150 (traveling team) and \$60 (hosts) for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years (FY26/FY27). Due to rising costs associated with championships participation (e.g., meals and hotels) and the controlled nature of this specific per diem increase, the Division III Championships Committee, during its March meeting discussed the previously approved incremental increases in per diem for future budgets (\$140 and \$145), and noted that the expedited increase would provide immediate benefits to participating institutions without exceeding the \$150 that was approved for FY28. The Management Council and Presidents Council had already indicated initial support for this increase during the spring meetings.

Presidents Council. The council approved the recommended increase as specified, noting the estimated budget impact would be an additional \$1.2 million in 2025-26 and \$608,000 in 2026-27. There would be no additional cost for the 2027-28 academic year, as the \$150/\$60 rate already had been earmarked for that fiscal year. The additional funds will be supported by the amount above the division's mandated reserve.

Staff Liaisons:
Henry, Blair
Hackworth

Council Reps:
Bowers,
Cardelle, Lam-
bert

Staff Liaisons:
McCleary, Hu-
bert, Regan,
Myers

Council Reps:
Camille, Lar-
son, Lepre

(c) Regional Rules Seminar Live Streaming.

Management Council. The council approved funding to live stream the Division III educational sessions during the 2026 Regional Rules Seminar. The seminar offers impactful educational opportunities for institutions to stay informed about NCAA rules and regulations. Live streaming the event eases an institution's administrative burden by reducing travel costs and logistical challenges. Establishing funding for a virtual option provides an invaluable educational tool to those in the Division III membership unable to travel to seminars.

(The council noted that the live streaming option does not satisfy the existing membership requirement to attend the seminar in person once every three years.)

Presidents Council. The council approved the funding as recommended.

(d) Division III Budget Guidelines and Principles.

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils, as charged to do annually, reviewed and approved the division's budget guidelines and principles that the SPFC endorsed. [See Attachment B]

(e) National Collegiate Championships Stability Policy.

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils noted the SPFC's approval to establish a budget policy to manage the creation of divisional championships from existing National Collegiate championships. The policy states that after divisional approval of a division-specific championship (i.e., adoption of legislation at the NCAA Convention), the new divisional championship effective date shall be after a minimum of two National Collegiate championships have taken place and with at least two years notice provided to the National Collegiate championship committee and sponsoring members in the sport. (For example, if Division III were to adopt legislation at the 2026 Convention to establish a Division III Women's Wrestling Championship as has been proposed, the championship would not begin until the winter of 2028 after the 2026 and 2027 National Collegiate championships have taken place.) The two-year waiting period offers time to properly budget for the championship, coordinate the administration of the new championship (e.g., establish format and qualifications processes; host site selection, committee creation) and allows the membership time to schedule their regular-season contests and post-season tournaments accordingly.

(f) 2024-25 Budget-to-Actuals.

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils reviewed the budget-to-actuals through the end of June.

(g) Future Budget Projections.

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils revisited the projections they reviewed during their April meetings, noting that the new fiscal year 2025 budget is \$6 million more than fiscal year 2024 budget due to revenue gained from the NCAA's two broadcast agreements. The councils highlighted the impact of the division's new enhancements – the per diem increases, championship bracket expansion, and championship livestreaming, as well as the health and safety grant and the new program to provide mental health training to all head coaches and athletic trainers.

Staff Liaisons:
McCleary, Regan

Council Reps:
Camille, Chodosh,
Davis, Kelly,
Mauro, Rice,
Troha, Wachter

(4) Presidents Council Futures Subcommittee.

Management Council. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. The council reviewed the reports from the subcommittee's most recent meetings. The subcommittee confirmed its updated mission and purpose, which is to serve as an action-oriented, future-looking, thought leadership body that reviews and provides insights on current external issues with potential long-range impact on Division III intercollegiate athletics, while simultaneously monitoring future issues. The subcommittee convenes at least four times annually and serves on behalf of the Presidents Council and in concert with the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee. With direction from the Presidents Council, the subcommittee identified several strategic priorities: future financial reviews and stability; congressional engagement that includes a collaborative approach to address the current external threats to higher education that will likely negatively affect Division III institutions; Division III membership stability; branding and marketing the division; and reducing costs for member institution athletics departments.

The council also noted the importance of Division III leadership engaging in strategic discussions to protect the division's core values and enhance the future of Division III. Council members cited examples of such strategic direction positioning Division III as an innovative leader for the Association overall, such as with the division's initiatives to enhance mental wellness and to address concerns within the athletic training space. The council and the futures subcommittee will continue developing processes to encourage in-depth discussion of pertinent issues going forward.

Staff Liaisons:
McCleary, Myers,
Regan

Council Reps:
Baumann, Bed-
narsh, Coker,
Cottrell, Jasken,
Scola, Troha,
Treadwell, Ver-
dugo, Weinberg

(5) **Joint Legislative Steering Committee.**

Management Council. No action was necessary, as the subcommittee had not yet convened.

Presidents Council. The council reviewed the report from the subcommittee's July 31 meeting, noting the new Division III legislative process that extends the deadline by which proposals can be formally submitted for a vote at the NCAA Convention. Accordingly, the subcommittee reviewed nine proposals submitted by member conferences by the July 1 deadline, three of which have received a second sponsor and will go forward for a vote at the 2026 Convention. The sponsors of the remaining six have until September 15 to secure a second sponsor to move forward. The subcommittee will review these proposals again after receiving committee feedback and will discuss which proposals are of particular interest to presidents and chancellors before the Presidents Council's October meeting. The subcommittee also reviewed the eight proposals sponsored by the Management Council and will review them again before the Presidents Council meeting and recommend which, if any, should be reviewed and sponsored by the Presidents Council before going to the membership for a vote at the 2026 NCAA Convention.

b. Division III Committees.

Staff Liaisons:
Peterson-Mlynski,
Suscha, Williams

Council Reps:
Rogers, Verdugo

(1) **Championships Committee.**

(a) **Noncontroversial Legislation – Bylaws 21.1 and 21.3 – Committees – Playing Rules Oversight Panel and Rules Committees Without Championships Administration Responsibilities – Establishment of New Playing Rules Structure and Process.**

Management Council. The council approved, in concept, noncontroversial legislation to establish a new playing rules structure and process for Division III as outlined in Attachment C. Given that Division I is revising its governance structure, including how playing rules will be administered, Divisions II and III are required to establish their own playing rules structures. Playing rules currently are managed Association-wide through the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) that includes representatives from all three divisions and provides opportunities for the playing rules to be federated if desired. The structure in Attachment C outlines a Playing Rules Oversight Panel for Divisions II and III as well as rules committees by sport for both divisions, including composition requirements and duties. The new structure maintains the ability for the divisions to federate a playing rule and the current role of the Division III Management Council in the process.

(Note: Because the new structure must be in place by September 1, the Division III Administrative Committee will subsequently review and approve the noncontroversial legislation in final legislative format.)

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(b) Noncontroversial Legislation – Bylaw 18.3.1 – National Collegiate Championships – Fencing – Establish Separate Men’s and Women’s Championships.

Management Council. The council approved, in concept, noncontroversial legislation to divide the current NCAA National Collegiate Men’s and Women’s Fencing Championships into separate men’s and women’s championships. The women’s championship (sponsorship of 44) and men’s championship (sponsorship of 35) would be held at the same site and conducted concurrently. The men’s championship would remain in place under the Olympic sport exception (Bylaw 18.2.10.1). Under the current scoring format, institutions that sponsor only women’s fencing face a statistical impossibility of winning a national championship. The separation of the two genders into individual championships would allow for a more equitable championship experience and a tangible pathway for all teams to compete for national championships. There is no budget impact on Division III, as the \$7,200 increase in the operational budget for four additional sets of team awards will come from the Association-wide budget.

[Note: Because of the proposal’s effective date, the council approved this proposal in final legislative format later in the agenda. (See Agenda Item 4-a-(9) on page 23).]

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(c) Alcohol Sales at the 2026 Division III Men’s Basketball Championship.

Management Council. The council approved a waiver of Bylaw 31.1.11.1 (availability of alcoholic beverages – exception) to permit alcohol sales at the Division III Men’s Basketball Championship game in Indianapolis as part of the joint championship with Divisions I and II. The current exception in Bylaw 31.1.11.1 permits alcohol sales when a Division III championship is held in conjunction with the Division I championship in the same sport and conducted at the same venue as that championship (e.g., the Division III Men’s Lacrosse Championship). Consistent with that approach, a waiver was granted to permit the sale of alcohol during the 2026 Division III Men’s Basketball Championship because it is being held in

conjunction with Divisions I and II. The Divisions II and III championship games will be played in Gainbridge Field House (home of the Indiana Pacers and Indiana Fever) and will have all the necessary security and provisions in place. The 2026 Men's Final Four will be played at Lucas Oil Stadium, and a waiver of the current legislation will ensure a consistent fan experience across the weekend with alcohol sales now being permitted at the Divisions I and II championships.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaison:
Mikrut

Council Rep:
Gibson

(2) **Committee on Infractions (COI).**

(a) **Noncontroversial Legislative Proposals.**

Management Council. Per a recommendation from the Division III Committee on Infractions, the council approved, in concept, the following noncontroversial legislative proposals regarding NCAA Bylaw 19:

- Infractions Program – Negotiated Resolution. To add within Bylaw 19 a negotiated resolution process to allow institutions and involved individuals to “settle” their infractions cases when they can reach agreement with the NCAA enforcement staff on the pertinent facts, violations, violation levels and penalties. The effective date of the proposal is immediate.

Presently, there is no mechanism for the enforcement staff to settle a Division III infractions matter with an institution or involved individual. The staff exercises discretion in alleging violations but does not negotiate with parties, make allegation deals or recommend penalties. This often frustrates cooperating member institutions, who seek to negotiate a resolution in favor of a more expeditious investigative process. Divisions I and II have been using the negotiated resolution process successfully for several years, and the process has proven popular with the membership and has significantly expedited the processing of infractions cases in both divisions.

- Infractions Program – Use of Multiple Resolution Methods. To provide the option to resolve a single infractions case through more than one resolution method, i.e., negotiated resolution, summary judgment and/or hearing resolution. The effective date of the proposal is immediate.

Currently, all parties to an infractions case must agree on the same resolution method. For example, if an institution can reach the requisite level of agreement for summary disposition (i.e., agreement on facts and violations, with the COI to decide penalties) but an involved individual wishes to contest their allegations at a hearing, then the whole case must be resolved via hearing. This slows the process for parties who wish to pursue a more expeditious form of resolution. With the introduction of negotiated resolution as an additional and even more expeditious resolution method, the COI recommends amending Bylaw 19 to permit a case to be resolved via more than one resolution method. This will expedite the process for parties who are able to reach agreement with the enforcement staff while also providing a full hearing opportunity for parties who wish to contest their alleged violations before the COI.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary

(b) Incorporate Policy Changes into Internal Operating Procedures.

Management Council. The council, based on approving the two noncontroversial legislative changes identified in item (a) above, approved incorporating the changes into the Committee on Infractions' Internal Operating Procedures.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Hartung, Hig-
gins

Council Rep:
Savage

(3) Financial Aid Committee.

Management Council. The committee had no formal report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaison:
Walters

Council Reps:
Scola

(4) Infractions Appeals Committee.

Management Council. The committee had no formal report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Berg, Myers,
Turner

Council Rep:
Gibson

(5) Interpretations and Legislation Committee (ILC).

(a) 2026 Convention Legislation – Bylaw 16.

Management Council. Per a recommendation from the ILC resulting from its comprehensive review of Bylaw 16 (Awards, Benefits and

Expenses for Enrolled Student-Athletes), the council agreed to sponsor the following proposals for the 2026 Convention:

- Awards, Benefits and Expenses for Enrolled Student-Athletes – Types of Awards, Awarding Agencies, Maximum Value and Numbers of Awards – Remove Exact Dollar Amounts and References to Award Values (Bylaw 16.1.4). To remove the exact dollar amounts and references to the value of awards from the awards legislation. The proposal's effective date is August 1, 2026.

Rationale. Current legislation limits awards to a specific dollar amount and restricts the manner these awards may be purchased. The specific dollar amounts have not been adjusted in nearly 15 years and have not been regularly monitored. Due to rising costs, it is becoming increasingly difficult to purchase the same or similar types of awards from year to year. Removing the exact dollar amounts would eliminate the need to monitor and modify award limitations moving forward. This awards legislation remains permissive; thus, it is left to the institution and/or conference policies to determine the amount that can be spent on awards to student-athletes and provides flexibility in spending on awards.

- Awards, Benefits and Expenses for Enrolled Student-Athletes – Permit Actual and Necessary Expenses for One All-Star Contest or Other Post-Eligibility Event (Bylaw 16.1.7.1). To permit institutions to provide actual and necessary expenses for student-athletes to participate in one collegiate all-star contest or similar post-eligibility competitive event. The proposal's effective date is August 1, 2026.

Rationale. Current legislation prohibits an institution from providing expenses for a student-athlete to participate in a collegiate all-star contest or similar competitive event. An institution may, however, provide a student-athlete with a one-time award for their participation, which could be used toward an expense costing \$400 or less but could not be contributed toward an expense costing more than \$400. This proposal would eliminate the confusion and permit institutions to provide actual and necessary expenses for a student-athlete to participate in a single all-star contest or similar post-eligibility competitive event.

- Team Entertainment – Professional Sports Tickets (Bylaws 16.7.1 and 16.7.1.1). To clarify that institutions may provide reasonable entertainment during the playing season; and that reasonable entertainment could include providing professional sports tickets. The proposal's effective date is August 1, 2026.

Rationale. While current legislation permits an institution to provide reasonable entertainment to student-athletes in conjunction with practice or competition, providing professional sports tickets as such entertainment is specifically prohibited unless it is in conjunction with an away from home contest. Regulating certain types of entertainment expenses is overly burdensome, and institutions should have discretion to determine when to provide entertainment expenses to student-athletes during the team's declared playing season. This proposal would provide flexibility for entertainment while also maintaining the prohibition of providing cash for such entertainment.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(b) 2026 Convention Legislation – Transfer Portal.

Management Council. Per a recommendation from the ILC, the council agreed to sponsor the following legislative proposal.

- Recruiting – Contacts and Evaluations – Four-Year College Prospective Student-Athletes – Require Use of the NCAA Transfer Portal. To (1) replace the current “permission to contact” legislation related to NCAA four-year college transfer student-athletes with a “notification of transfer” model; (2) specify that an institution must place a student-athlete's written request for transfer into the NCAA Transfer Portal within seven consecutive calendar days; and (3) maintain the existing processes for the Division III self-release for student-athletes interested in transferring to another Division III institution. The proposal's effective date is August 1, 2026.

Rationale. While the current legislation requires Division III institutions to secure permission to contact another NCAA institution's student-athlete before recruitment, institutional policy dictates how that permission is gained. Optional use of the NCAA Transfer Portal and differences in institutional transfer tracer forms is overly burdensome and can be

difficult for administrators to accurately track. This proposal will streamline the transfer certification process for Division III institutions and establish a system to allow for better tracking and information sharing. Additionally, maintaining the self-release processes will continue to allow Division III student-athletes to pursue transfer opportunities without fear of repercussion from their original institutions.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Hartung,
Higgins, Zike

Council Rep: Ber-
ich

(6) **Membership Committee.**

Management Council. The council reviewed the committee's most recent meeting reports, noting that the committee discussed the referral from the council to review the membership requirement regarding regional accreditation. The committee noted it would be appropriate for the division to take no action at this time considering the uncertainty of the status of the U.S. Department of Education, the entity responsible for higher education accreditation. The committee also noted there would be no disparate impact on current Division III members if the current rule were maintained. The council accepted the recommendation and decided to take no action at this time but noted its commitment to continue to monitor this issue.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Regan, Myers,
Zike, Seewald

Council Rep:
Brooks, Erwin,
MacCulloch, Nash,
Price, Rogers, Sav-
age

(7) **Management Council Playing Rules Subcommittee.**

Management Council. The subcommittee had no formal report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaison:
Roe,

Council Rep:
Bothner

(8) **Nominating Committee.**

Management and Presidents Councils. The committee's recommendations were addressed by the councils' ratification of the Administrative Committee's action.

Staff Liaisons:
Spungen, Trovato,
Youngblood

Council Reps:
Hathaway, Meenak-
shisundaram, Nash,
Wigley

(9) **Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.**

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils reviewed the committee's report. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Bullock,
Hubbard, Perry

Council Rep:
Nash

(10) **Student-Athlete Reinstatement Committee (SAR).**

- **Noncontroversial Legislation – Incorporate the Mental Health Hardship Waiver Pilot Program into Legislation.**

Management Council. The council agreed, in concept, to adopt noncontroversial legislation to incorporate the existing Mental Health Hardship Waiver pilot program criteria listed below into Division III legislation.

Criteria for hardship waivers asserting mental health. The use of the following medical documentation standard for hardship waiver requests based on a student-athlete's mental health condition:

Contemporaneous or noncontemporaneous medical documentation from a practitioner licensed to diagnose mental health conditions demonstrates that:

- (a) The student-athlete's mental health issue or condition occurred during the season in question;
- (b) Occurred before completion of the first half of the traditional playing season; and
- (c) Prevented the student-athlete from competing in more than one third of the traditional playing season in that sport for the season being waived.

The effective date of the proposal is immediate.

Mental health conditions are not treated or documented in the same manner as physical injuries or illnesses. Additionally, mental health conditions are not always diagnosed and/or treated by a medical doctor. The criteria implemented during the Mental Health Pilot Program provide a more appropriate standard for demonstrating a student-athlete who was unable to participate in athletics due to their mental health condition. *[Note: Because of the proposal's effective date, the council approved this proposal in final legislative format later in the agenda. (See Agenda Item 4-a-(8) on pages 22 and 23.]*

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(11) **Subcommittee for Legislative Relief.**

Management Council. The subcommittee had no formal report. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Trovato, Zike

Council Rep:
Bothner,
Bowers, Erwin,
Larson,
MacCulloch,
Price, Summers

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

c. Association-Wide Committees.

Staff Liaisons:
Hubbard,
Lokhande, Pieart,
Rohlman

Council Rep:
Lamb

(1) Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports (CSMAS).

Management Council. The council receive an update from the committee's recent meetings. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Hubbard,
Liddane,
Lokhande, Miron

Council Rep:
Lamb

(2) Committee on Women's Athletics (CWA).

(a) 2026 Convention Legislation – Women's Acrobatics and Tumbling – National Collegiate Championship.

Management Council. The council agreed to sponsor a legislative proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention to add acrobatics and tumbling as an NCAA National Collegiate championship and to establish an NCAA Women's Acrobatics and Tumbling Committee.

Acrobatics and tumbling has been an emerging sport in all three divisions since 2020. In spring of 2025, based on unofficial data during a staff review, 44 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. Additionally, 46 programs indicated sponsoring acrobatics and tumbling during the 2024-25 academic year, which demonstrates additional participation. It is anticipated that the announcement of sponsoring an NCAA championship would continue to drive membership interest in the sport.

If approved, the Women's Acrobatics and Tumbling Committee would begin its work in January 2026 to prepare for the first National Collegiate championship in spring 2027.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(b) 2026 Convention Legislation – Women's Stunt – National Collegiate Championship.

Management Council. The council agreed to sponsor a legislative proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention to add stunt as an NCAA

National Collegiate championship and to establish an NCAA Women's Stunt Committee.

Stunt has been an emerging sport in Division I and Division II since August 2023, and Division III since August 2024. In spring of 2025, based on unofficial data during a staff review, 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. Additionally, while 40 programs indicated sponsoring stunt prior to the 2024-25 academic year, at least 45 sponsored the sport, demonstrating additional growth opportunities for future years. It is anticipated that the announcement of sponsoring an NCAA championship would continue to drive membership interest in the sport.

If approved, the Women's Stunt Committee would begin its work in January 2026 to prepare for the first National Collegiate championship in spring 2027.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Preston, Loechel,
Register

Council Rep:
Scola

(3) Honors Committee.

Management Council. The council reviewed the committee's report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Blair Hackworth,
Kennedy

Council Rep:
Bowers

(4) Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee.

Management Council. The council reviewed the committee's report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Miron, Blair
Hackworth,
Kennedy

Council Reps:
Lamb, Bowers

(5) Joint Committee on Women's Athletics and Minority Opportunities and Interests.

Management Council. The council reviewed the joint report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaison:
Seewald

(6) **Playing Rules Oversight Panel.**

Management Council. The council reviewed the panel's reports. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaison:
Rogers,
Thomas

Council Rep:
Brooks

(7) **Postgraduate Scholarship Committee.**

Management Council. The council reviewed the committee's report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

Staff Liaisons:
Thomas, Rogers

Council Rep:
Price

(8) **Walter Byers Postgraduate Scholarship Committee.**

Management Council. The committee reviewed the committee's report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

4. PROPOSED LEGISLATION FOR THE 2026 NCAA CONVENTION.

a. Review of Noncontroversial Legislation to be Ratified at the 2026 NCAA Convention.

(1) **NC 2026-8 Eligibility – Criteria for Determining Season of Eligibility – Participation in Organized Competition Before Initial Collegiate Enrollment – Elimination of Major Junior Ice Hockey Conditions.**

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation confirming that Major Junior ice hockey participation is subject to the same standards as all other pre-enrollment participation, effective for student-athletes enrolling in Division III on or after August 1, 2025.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(2) **NC 2026-9 Awards – Types of Awards, Awarding Agencies, Maximum Value and Numbers of Awards – Recognition Banquets.**

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation clarifying that student-athletes may receive expenses to attend a recognition banquet and may receive an award at that banquet, effective immediately.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(3) NC 2026-10 Housing and Food – Exceptions – Vacation Period Expenses – Missed Meals – Occasional Meals.

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation (a) permitting an institution to provide meals to student-athletes not on a meal plan in the same manner as those on a meal plan when meals are missed for practice activities, or during a vacation period, and (b) permitting a student-athlete or team to receive an occasional meal, at any location, from an institutional staff member, a relative of a student-athlete or booster, consistent with institutional policy. The effective date of the proposal is immediate.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(4) NC 2026-11 Benefits, Gifts and Services – Nonathletic Apparel and Athletics Apparel and Equipment.

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation permitting institutions to issue non-athletics apparel and allow student-athletes to retain their athletics apparel and equipment, consistent with institutional policy, effective immediately.

[Note: The council during its April meeting had approved, in concept, four noncontroversial legislative proposals regarding housing, food, gifts and services that subsequently were combined into the two preceding proposals (NC 2026-10 and NC 2026-11).]

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(5) NC 2026-12 Awards, Benefits and Expenses for Enrolled Student-Athletes – Academic and Other Support Services.

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation consolidating the existing bylaws addressing academic, career and other support services and clarifying that institutional policy is the standard to determine the permissibility of such programming, effective immediately.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(6) NC 2026-13 Amateurism – Financial Donations from Outside Organizations – Relationships with Third Parties.

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation deregulating the current limits on financial donations and sponsorships from outside organizations and allowing for institutions and conferences to pursue partnerships and sponsorships with third parties, including professional sport organizations, effective immediately.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

- (7) **NC 2026-14 Committees – Association-Wide Committees – General Committees – Honors Committee -- Amend Name, Composition and Duties.**

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation to rename, increase the composition of, and expand the duties of the NCAA Honors Committee as specified, effective August 1, 2025.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

- (8) **NC 2026-16 Eligibility – Seasons of Participation: 10-Semester/15-Quarter Rule – Hardship Waiver – Criteria for Administration of Hardship Waiver – Mental Health Condition.**

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation stating that in the administration of a hardship waiver, the use of contemporaneous or noncontemporaneous medical documentation from a physician, or any licensed practitioner qualified to provide mental health services when the assertion is the student-athlete's mental health condition is permitted. The effective date of the proposal is immediate.

[Note: The council approved this proposal, in concept, earlier in the agenda. (See Agenda Item 3-b-(10) on pages 17 and 18).]

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

- (9) **NC 2026-17 Championships – National Collegiate Championships -- Separate Men's and Women's Fencing Championships.**

Management Council. The council approved, in final legislative format, noncontroversial legislation to establish separate men's and women's National Collegiate championships, effective immediately.

[Note: The council approved this proposal, in concept, earlier in the agenda. (See Agenda Item 3-b-(1)-(b) on page 11).]

Presidents Council. No action was necessary

b. Review of Governance-Sponsored Legislation.

- (1) **Awards, Benefits and Expenses for Enrolled Student-Athletes – Expenses Provided by the Institution for Practice – Eliminate Distance and Location Restrictions.**

Management Council. The council approved moving forward to the 2026 NCAA Convention a proposal to permit institutions to provide expenses for practice sessions at any location, provided the student-athlete is eligible and no class is missed.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

- (2) **Division Membership – Playing and Practice Seasons – Emerging Sports for Women – Women's Flag Football.**

Management Council. The council approved moving forward to the 2026 NCAA Convention a proposal to establish flag football as an emerging sport for women.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary

c. Review/Referral of Membership-Sponsored Legislation.

- (1) **Recruiting – Unofficial Visit – Meals for Prospective Student-Athletes and Their Guests.**

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention seeking to allow institutions to provide meals in an on-campus dining facility for a prospective student-athlete and those individuals accompanying the prospective student-athlete. The council referred the proposal to the Division III Interpretations and Legislation Committee and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

- (2) **Eligibility – Criteria for Determining Season of Eligibility – Minimum Amount of Participation – Only Competition Triggering Use of a Season.**

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention seeking to specify that a student-athlete would be charged with a season of eligibility if the student-athlete competes at any point during the traditional season. The council referred

the proposal to the Division III Interpretations and Legislation Committee, the Division III Championships Committee, the Division III Faculty Athletics Representatives Advisory Group, the Division III Financial Aid Committee, and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(3) Playing Seasons – Add a Mandatory Winter Break.

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention seeking to establish a seven consecutive calendar day period over the winter break and to specify that during this break, student-athletes may not be employed at institutional camps and clinics, may not participate in any countable athletically related activities and may not participate in any voluntary athletically related activities on campus unless the facility is open to the general student body. The council referred the proposal to the Division III Interpretations and Legislation Committee and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(4) Championships – Amend the In-Region Competition Requirement.

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention seeking to reduce the required minimum percentage of in-region competition for championships eligibility from 70% to 50% for all sports except golf, which would stay at 25%, and tennis, which would maintain its 50% requirement, and to expand the spring break exception to allow institutions hosting contests during another institution's break to also exempt the out-of-region contest even if that hosting institution is not in an institutional vacation period. The council referred the proposal to the Division III Championships Committee and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(5) Championships – Automatic Qualification – Multisport Conference – Eliminate Requirement to Conduct Competition During Waiting Period.

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention seeking to eliminate the condition that a multisport conference must conduct competition in the sport during the required waiting period for an automatic qualification. The council referred the proposal to the Division III Championships Committee and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(6) Multiple Automatic Qualifier Model.

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention seeking to develop a formula to provide multiple automatic qualifiers to multisport conferences that have 13 or more members that sponsor a sport that includes the following factors: (a) once a conference reaches 13 or more core members sponsoring a sport, the conference would immediately receive a second automatic qualifier in that sport; (b) if a conference falls below 13 core members sponsoring a sport, the conference would immediately lose their second automatic qualifier in that sport; and (c) the method by which the conference determines its conference representatives is the responsibility of the conference and shall be declared and outlined at the time of the automatic qualifier declaration. The council referred the proposal to the Division III Championships Committee and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(7) Automatic Qualification – Required Participation by Conference Core Members.

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention stating that if an institution is a core member of a conference and that conference has an AQ in a sport, that institution must participate in the conference's fully established AQ process in that sport to have access to the NCAA championship. This access is either winning the conference AQ or through the at-large selection process. The conference has authority to define its AQ process (regular-season champion, tournament champion, etc.). If the institution decides not to participate in its conference's defined AQ process (including declining participation in the conference's postseason tournament), the institution is not eligible for NCAA selections, including at-large selections. The council referred the proposal to the Division III Championships Committee and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(8) Championships – Automatic Qualification – Waiting Period – Multisport Conference – Adjust from Two Years to One.

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention seeking to reduce the wait time for a multisport conference to receive an automatic qualification from two years

to one. The council referred the proposal to the Division III Championships Committee and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

(9) Championships – Establish a Division III Women’s Wrestling Championship.

Management Council. The council reviewed a membership-sponsored proposal for the 2026 NCAA Convention seeking to establish a Division III Women’s Wrestling Championship starting in the 2027-28 academic year and a Division III Women’s Wrestling Committee as specified. The council referred the proposal to the Division III Championships Committee, the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for feedback.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

5. CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR ELECTIONS.

• **Council Elections for 2026.**

Management Council. The council elected Rob Larson, faculty athletics representative at Luther College, and Crystal Gibson, director of athletics and recreation at St. Mary’s College of Maryland, to serve one-year terms as chair and vice chair, respectively, effective at the conclusion of the 2026 NCAA Convention.

Presidents Council. The council elected Marc Camille, president at Albertus Magnus College, and Suzanne Davis, president at Greenville University, to serve one-year terms as chair and vice chair, respectively, effective at the conclusion of the 2026 NCAA Convention.

6. DIVISION III INITIATIVES AND UPDATES.

a. Eligibility Discussion.

Management Council. Council members discussed the current Division III eligibility standards regarding the use of season for Division III and those entering Division III (as undergraduate or postbaccalaureate students) from another division or association that has different standards for measuring the use of a season. The council recognized the complexity of the issue and reinforced that any approach should focus on the primary goal of graduation for student-athletes.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

b. Key Strategic Priorities Discussion.

Management Council. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. The council reviewed a document staff created outlining the strategic priorities for the coming year. No action was necessary.

c. Governance Scorecard.

Management and Presidents Councils. Staff provided the results of the 2024-25 governance scorecard, which is a tool that allows Division III committee members to evaluate their committee service and the NCAA staff liaison's support.

d. Athletics Communication Working Group.

Management Council. The council received the working group's report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

e. Faculty Athletics Representative Advisory Group.

Management Council. The council received the advisory group's report. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

f. Division III Branding and Promotions.

Management Council. The council reviewed the division's social media engagement and noted the expanded reach with Division III messaging and branding.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

g. Championships Live Streaming.

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils received an update on livestreaming for Division III championships in 2024-25, noting the increased exposure through the agreements with Hudl, NCAA.com and ESPN+. Overall, the division livestreamed 810 championship contests and had 65.6 million minutes watched.

h. Officiating.

Management Council. The council received updates on the Division III Commissioners Association's partnership with the National Association of Sports Officials to enhance officiating.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

i. Sportsmanship.

Management Council. The council received an update on the development of a de-escalation training module developed to support the Division III membership's efforts to promote sportsmanship and improve the game environment.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

7. ASSOCIATION-WIDE UPDATES AND ISSUES.

a. Update from NCAA President Charlie Baker.

Management Council. No action was necessary.

Presidents Council. President Baker joined the videoconference to update the council on issues affecting the Association overall and Division III in particular.

b. Update from Division I Governance.

Management Council. The council received an update regarding the governance restructuring underway in Division I.

Presidents Council. No action was necessary.

c. Board of Governors Updates.

Management Council. The council reviewed the reports from the board's recent meeting.

Presidents Council. In addition to reviewing those reports, the council as part of the consultative process received an overview of key agenda items for the board's August 7 meeting, including the board finalizing its annual evaluation of the NCAA president, finalizing the budget for the 2026 fiscal year, and creating a committee that focuses on risk trends impacting higher education and athletics.

d. Legal Update.

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils received updates from the NCAA's office of legal affairs on litigation affecting the Association and Division III if applicable.

e. **Sport Science Institute (SSI) Updates.**

Management and Presidents Councils. The councils received an update regarding the following items:

- (1) **Athletic Trainer Stakeholder Meeting.** On July 23, the SSI will host a meeting with representatives from the National Athletic Trainers' Association and divisional representatives that will focus on current trends in the credentialing of athletic trainers and the work the NCAA has undertaken since the last stakeholder meeting in 2023.
- (2) **Sports Betting – Harm Reduction Strategies.** The councils were informed of the recent publication of the “Harm Reduction Considerations for Gambling and Sports Betting in Collegiate Sports” resource for the membership in June.
- (3) **Training and Performance Advisory Group.** In May, the SSI conducted a Performance Technologies in College Athletics Summit during which nomenclature, use trends, responsible use and medical decision-making were discussed. The NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports is currently reviewing the information from the summit.
- (4) **Sickle Cell Testing.** The Management Council also received an update on clarification being provided to the membership regarding sickle cell testing through interpretations and educational columns. Additionally, the council was updated about a new partnership to provide reduced-cost testing.

8. ***EXECUTIVE SESSION.***

Presidents Council. The council convened an executive session from 2:25 to 2:47 p.m. Eastern time August 4.

9. ***ADJOURNMENT.***

Management Council. The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. Eastern time July 21, and 11:30 a.m. Eastern time July 22.

Presidents Council. The meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m. Eastern time August 4.

Division III Strategic Plan

2024-26 Budget Biennium [Year 2: 2025-26]

Vision Statement: Division III will be a dynamic and engaging group of colleges, universities and conferences of varying sizes and missions committed to an environment that encourages and supports health and safety, diversity, values, fairness, and equity, and places the highest priority on the overall educational experience of its student-athletes in the conduct of intercollegiate athletics.

Mission Statement: Promoting the student-athlete academic and athletic experience, with a commitment and dedication to the membership through effective inclusion, communication, and engagement.



DIVISION III
DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE

INTRODUCTION

The Division III Strategic Plan serves many purposes. It begins with the Division III Philosophy Statement to establish the framework from which the division's programs, resource allocations, and regulatory decisions are made. It highlights the Division III Strategic Positioning Platform to clarify the practical impact of the Division III philosophy and summarizes the division's strategic priorities by outlining what must be accomplished in the current budget cycle for the division to be successful.

The plan also serves to highlight the programs and services offered for the division's membership. This list of offerings is arranged in a way that demonstrates the connection of each Division III program to the NCAA Strategic Plan and explains when a program or initiative is funded from Division III dollars or a different Association budget. To bring further transparency to the division's operations, the plan justifies every line of the Division III budget against the philosophy statement or NCAA Constitution. Finally, the plan includes the division's budget policies and a note on its history, which tracks the evolution of the division's entire strategic initiatives program.

CONTENTS

Philosophy Statement...	page 3
Strategic Positioning Platform Summary...	page 4
Strategic Priorities for the Budget Cycle...	page 5
Budget Justification (Appendix A) ...	page 11
History of the Strategic Plan and Budget Policies (Appendix B) ...	page 14

DIVISION III PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The purpose of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual members to determine their own unique objectives and programs. The philosophy statement articulates principles that represent a commitment to Division III membership and shall serve as a guide for the preparation of legislation by the division and for planning and implementation of programs by institutions and conferences.

- (a) Division III members affirm the purposes and fundamental policy of the NCAA, as set forth in Constitution Article 1 with emphasis on:
 - (1) Division III members shall establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's activities are conducted with the appropriate primary emphasis on the student-athlete's academic experience.
 - (2) Division III intercollegiate athletics shall be conducted in a manner designed to protect, support, and enhance the physical and mental health and safety of student-athletes.
 - (3) Division III members shall be committed to the creation of diverse and inclusive environments with respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person.
 - (4) Division III athletics shall be conducted in a manner free of gender bias.
- (b) NCAA Constitution Article 2 establishes the independent authority of Division III to organize itself and determine its own governing structure and membership.
 - (1) Institutional presidents and chancellors have the ultimate responsibility and final authority for the conduct of Division III intercollegiate athletics at the national, conference and institutional levels.
 - (2) Institutional and conference members determine policy at the national level through the Division III governance and legislative processes.
 - (3) Key institution and conference constituents who play an integral role in the governance and operation of Division III at the national, conference and institutional levels include, but are not limited to athletics direct reports, athletics diversity and inclusion designees, athletics health care administrators, coaches, conference commissioners, directors of athletics, faculty athletics representatives, presidents and chancellors, senior compliance administrators, senior woman administrators, and student-athletes.
- (c) Division III members abide by the following principles that help to define and distinguish the division and its policies and legislation.
 - (1) Student-Athlete Collegiate Experience.

- (i) Primarily focus on intercollegiate athletics as a four-year undergrad experience.
 - (ii) Seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of their educational experience.
 - (iii) Assure that student-athletes are supported in their efforts to meaningfully participate in nonathletic pursuits to enhance their overall educational experience.
- (2) Student-Athlete Athletics Experience.
 - (i) Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach the highest levels of athletics performance, with a primary emphasis on conference and regional competition, while providing access to national championships.
 - (ii) Prioritize the experience of the participants, and the internal constituency (e.g., students, alumni, institutional personnel) rather than on the entertainment needs of spectators or the general public.
 - (iii) Develop and maintain an environment that promotes sportsmanship and a positive culture for student-athletes, coaches, and administrative personnel, recognizing the role intercollegiate athletics can play in human development. Ensure spectators contribute to a positive sporting experience in support of all participants.
- (3) Member Responsibility and Oversight.
 - (i) Encourage participation and provide equitable opportunities with support for gender and ethnic/racial diversity. Give equal emphasis to men's and women's sports.
 - (ii) The administration of an institution's athletics program (e.g., hiring, compensation, professional development, certification of coaches) should be integrated into the campus culture and educational mission.
 - (iii) Assure all teams are provided with appropriate facilities, competent coaching, and competitive opportunities.
 - (iv) Assure student-athletes are treated similarly to the student-body in areas that include, but are not limited to, admissions, enrollment, financial aid, academic and career support, academic performance, and degree completion.
 - (v) Assure that financial aid is not awarded to any student on the basis of athletics leadership, ability, participation or performance.

Division III Positioning Statement

Follow your passions and discover your potential. The college experience is a time of learning and growth. For Division III student-athletes, this happens most importantly in the classroom and through earning an academic degree. The Division III experience provides for participation in a competitive athletics environment. Student-athletes push themselves to achieve excellence and build upon their academic success with new challenges and life skills within an environment that fosters health and wellness. Student-athletes are encouraged to pursue the full spectrum of opportunities available during their time in college. In this way, Division III provides an equitable and inclusive environment for student-athletes to take responsibility for their own paths, follow their passions and discover their potential through a comprehensive educational experience.

Division III Attributes

Proportion: appropriate balance of academics, athletics, and additional collegiate opportunities.

Comprehensive Learning: opportunity for broad-based education and success.

Passion: playing for the love of the game, competition, enjoyment, self-improvement, and our teammates and communities.

Responsibility: development of accountability through personal commitment and choice.

Sportsmanship: fair and respectful conduct toward all participants and supporters.

Citizenship: dedication to developing responsible leaders and global citizens.

Reasons to Believe

Comprehensive educational experience. Division III institutions develop student-athlete potential through a holistic educational approach that includes rigorous academics, competitive athletics, and opportunities to pursue other interests and passions.

Competitive athletic programs. Student-athletes participate in an intense, competitive athletics environment. Student-athletes do not receive any monetary incentive (athletics scholarship) to play sports in college and play for a love of the game.

Integrated campus environment. A quarter of all Division III students participate in athletics. These student-athletes are integrated into the campus culture and educational missions of their institutions:

Commitment to inclusive environments. Division III prides itself on creating inclusive, diverse, and equitable environments for its student-athletes.

Academic focus. Student-athletes most often attend a Division III institution because of the excellent academic programs.

Available financial aid. 80% of all student-athletes in Division III receive some form of grant or non-athletics scholarship. Student-athletes have equal opportunity and access to financial aid as the general student body – but are not awarded aid based on athletics leadership, ability, performance, or participation. Without the obligation of an athletics scholarship, student-athletes can emphasize academics, athletics, and other opportunities of college life appropriate to the necessary commitment and their own passions.

Commitment to athletics participation. Division III institutions are committed to a broad-based program of athletics because of the educational value of participation for the student-athlete. The division averages 19 sports per institution; more than any other division. It also emphasizes integrating competitive men's and women's sports into higher education so that the educational experience of the student-athlete is paramount.

National championship opportunities. Division III has over 200,000 student-athletes competing annually in 37 different national championships. These competitions provide an opportunity for student-athletes to compete at the highest level and fulfill their athletics potential.

NOTE: Strategic initiatives are divided between championships and Enrichment Fund initiatives and programs. Most strategic initiatives support the Division III student-athlete experience. The strategic priorities are not listed in priority order; all are of equal value. **Text in red highlights key initiatives during year two of the 2024-26 biennium.**

DIVISION III STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2024-26 BUDGET BIENNIUM [YEAR 2: 2025-26]

Maintain Fiscal Integrity. All programs and budget priorities shall be managed in a manner that ensures they are fiscally responsible, sustainable and reflect the division's priorities. Further:

- Maintain and annually evaluate the divisional operating budget for the current budget cycle (2025-26).
- Continue to monitor the division's current mandated reserve.
- 1. **Provide Quality Division III Championships. FY26 budget equals \$37.5 million.** The Division III experience provides for participation in a competitive athletics environment, and Division III is committed to conducting quality championships with fair selection processes and appropriate access. Strategic priorities support student-athletes in their efforts to reach high levels of athletics performance, which may include opportunities for participation in national championships, by supporting institutions as they provide all teams with adequate facilities, competent coaching, and appropriate competitive opportunities. The Division III Championships Committee is responsible for continual assessment of policies and NCAA legislation related to the championships program including the appropriateness of bracket sizes, regional alignment and select criteria processes. Championship funding enhancements will start at the sport committee level with recommendations to the Championships Committee, endorsement to the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and ultimate approval by the Management and Presidents Councils. **Incorporate approved FY26 budget enhancements (e.g., joint men's basketball championship, increased per diem, flexibility to protect highly ranked teams, livestreaming of preliminary rounds of NCAA team championships) and recommendations from the Deloitte consultant analysis. Budget plan for the next budget cycle (2026-28).**
- 2. **Provide Division III Conference Office Support. FY26 budget equals \$4.5 million.** These funds support the Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program, annual commissioner meeting with NCAA staff and a grant to support officiating resources.
 - The Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program is divided into five tiers.
 - Tier One: Professional Development and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee support. All institutions may annually access conference grant dollars to support campus and conference SAAC meetings, programs, and initiatives as well as professional opportunities for key constituent groups (e.g., senior woman administrators, staff and administrators of color, sports information directors, athletic trainers). Funding also is available to offset conference office travel. All conferences will optimally use the full allocation of funds each year.

- Tier Two: Student-Athlete Well Being Initiatives. Funds are available for a wide-variety of student-athlete well-being initiatives with an emphasis on programming related to diversity, equity and inclusion, academic experiences, identity and integration and sportsmanship initiatives.
- Tier Three: Technology and Officiating Improvement. Funding is available for conference offices to improve technology and support of officiating improvements.
- Tier Four: Funding is available to support the division's strategic priority of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the conference and/or institutional level.
- Tier Five: Third-Party Review. Aids conference offices to provide documentation of a third-party external review of grant fund usage to the national office annually.
- Continue to monitor divisional challenges with officiating, including the quality and pipeline of officials. Maintain funding, via the conference grant program, to enhance officiating, and evaluate additional grant funds provided for FY26.
- All conferences will be represented annually; commissioners will be provided with the opportunity to discuss Division III hot topics, governance, and championships issues. Additional funding is provided through Tier One of the Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program to supplement a portion the conference office's travel costs.

3. Effectively Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. FY26 budget equals \$2.7 million.

- Create partnerships and review the objectives and establish meaningful goals for the division's programs supporting equity and inclusion. Partner with Division III conferences and institutions to support innovative programs that promote inclusion.
 - Continue professional development and networking opportunities for underrepresented groups (e.g., SWA Program, Institute for Administrative Advancement, Student Immersion Program).
 - Continue to fund the Division III diversity grants – pathway to excellence, strategic alliance matching and coaching enhancement.
 - Support the office of inclusion in promoting resources for the athletics diversity and inclusion designee.
 - Support the Management and Presidents Council DEI subcommittee that absorbed the work of the LGBTQIA+ and Diversity and Inclusion Working Groups.
 - Continue to provide the LGBTQ OneTeam program that provides education to the membership on ways to create a safe and inclusive environment for LGBTQ individuals and allies. Maintain the annual LGBTQ of the Year awards. Continue to promote the LGBTQ non-discrimination policy guide.
 - Promote the Inclusive Leaders Program that provides education on improving the recruitment and retention of students of color.
- Establish strategies to increase and diversify the pool of candidates for Division III committee service and membership job searches.

- Maintain the division's database of underrepresented individuals that have participated in an NCAA program. Continue to send out a quarterly Diversity and Inclusion newsletter.
- Monitor NCAA emerging sports (e.g., triathlon, acrobatics and tumbling, stunt, flag football).
 - Monitor, with the office of inclusion and the membership, new emerging sports for women and specifically, vote on the women's flag football as an emerging sport and vote to establish a national collegiate championship for stunt and acrobatics and tumbling at the 2026 Convention.
- Ensure a gender equitable experience for all student-athletes.

4. **Ensure Student-Athlete Support. FY26 budget equals \$654K.**

- Maintain the promotion and use of the Injury Surveillance Program, SSI's data collection system, by the Division III membership.
- Continue to sponsor a regular and representative academic reporting program to compare the academic success of student-athletes and the general student body. Continue to emphasize the academic success of Division III student-athletes as compared to other students. Focus on solutions and best practices to address graduation rates of teams and demographic groups that are lower than their counterparts who do not participate in intercollegiate athletics. Maintain the annual student-athlete graduation rate submission.
- Maintain and enhance the partnership with the College Sports Communicators by providing professional development funding and opportunities (e.g., Emerging Elite Program, Division III Day at the CSC Convention and CSC Student Program), overseeing a recognition system awarded three times per year, and providing funds to support the Division III-specific Academic All-America program.
- Amplify the student-athlete voice. Collaborate with Division III SAAC to provide opportunities for effective student-athlete engagement and leadership.
- Fund student-athletes to attend the annual NCAA Student-Athlete Leadership Forum. The Forum is an opportunity for college athletes, coaches and administrators to collectively learn about themselves and grow as the next generation of leaders. Fund DISC assessments that are an important resource that institutions and conference offices use to help student-athletes, coaches and administrators learn more about their behavioral styles and how their individual styles come together in a team environment.
- Support Gameday the DIII Way, the Division III sportsmanship and game environment initiative. Promote existing tools and resources (e.g., facilitator training and on-line educational modules).
- Monitor and promote institutional commitment to the Board of Governor's policy on sexual assault violence prevention education and annual requirements.

- Continue to create specific programming for student-athletes attending the annual Convention to help better engage and educate on the Division III philosophy.
 - Promote the division's mental health program, Mental Health First Aid training, that is available to all Division III institutions, at no charge, through August 2027. Support the Sport Science Institute's resources related to mental health. Codify the division's mental health pilot related to waivers for mental health into legislation.
 - Promote sports wagering resources and research the opportunity to create a safe harbor for those seeking help to address problem gambling.
5. **Maintain the Value of Division III Athletics. FY26 budget equals \$335K.** The division continues to serve as a conscious alternative to the sport-specialization youth culture, and as an accessible and fulfilling educational and athletics destination. It also emphasizes a fuller, more integrated academic experience in all divisional endeavors.
- Communicate the distinct Division III philosophy as articulated in the Philosophy Statement and supported by the Strategic Positioning Platform.
 - Emphasize, promote, and steward the Division III brand, identity, and unique philosophy as articulated in the division's Strategic Positioning Platform to prospective student-athletes and their families, guidance counselors and high school and club coaches. Support conferences and institutions to better tell the Division III story to a variety of internal and external target audiences with the following identity activation initiatives: Division III week, national and customizable videos. Maintain a recognition award for athletics communication directors to recognize outstanding work that tells the Division III story.
 - Emphasize the values of Division III to effectively manage its membership growth. Maintain a cross-divisional governance staff and Membership Committee liaison group to monitor divisional membership issues.
 - Monitor the federated process for Division III playing rules. Ensure communication between playing and sport rule committees and inform the membership of key rule changes to encourage feedback. Monitor new playing rules committee structures.
 - Continue to support athletic trainers and factors impacting their hiring and retention. Provide institutional funding to offset athletic training costs. Assist with resources and professional development.
 - Continue the strategic partnership with Special Olympics. Maintain the activity reporting program to better tell the partnership's story from a division-wide perspective.

- Continue to create specific programming for delegates attending the annual Convention (e.g., educational sessions, Issues Forum, and technology to support all sessions) to help better engage and educate the membership. Properly engage and educate the membership on legislative proposals.

6. Provide Professional Development for Division III Constituents. FY26 budget equals \$602K.

- **In partnership with the NCAA Executive Staff and divisional Association-wide governance staffs, enhance Division III specific presidential programming to educate and engage all Division III chancellors and presidents.** Continue to selectively forward issues of presidential importance to the division's presidents and chancellors. **Create a Division III specific engagement program.**
- Maintain in-person, full-day orientation programs for new athletics directors and commissioners to assist these individuals in understanding and promoting the division.
- Strengthen the advocacy of Division III faculty for the values of the athletics experience by offering annual professional development training and networking opportunities to FARs. Maintain the Faculty Advisory Group to provide quarterly updates to the Division III Management Council.
- Partnership with National Association of Division III Athletics Administrators. The governance structure will provide financial support to NADIII AA for its professional development offerings.
- The division will fund professional development opportunities for female athletics administrators in a manner most accommodating to applicant individuals (e.g., Women Leaders in Sports Institutes, SWA Program).
- Continue to maintain and enhance Division III University – an on-line learning management system. **Create and add new division-specific educational modules.**
- Support a day-long professional development program for the division's athletics communication and sports information directors in conjunction with the annual College Sports Communicators (CSC) Convention – DIII Day. Maintain the Emerging Elite Program to provide professional development to athletics communication staff. **Consider institutional grant funding, with the next budget cycle, to offset communication and technology costs.**
- Provide funding for the DIIICA and NADIII AA executive leadership groups to come to Indianapolis in Aug./Sept. to discuss current hot topics in Division III and plan communication strategies for the upcoming year. Emphasize communication, shared accountability, and collaboration in leading the division.
- **Evaluate the effectiveness of a live stream option for the annual Regional Rules Seminar to enhance compliance education.**

7. Enhance Formal Accountability of the Governance Structure and National Office Support. FY26 budget equals \$78K.

- Continue to distribute the annual performance scorecard to committee members for regular accountability of key Division III programs and committee staff liaisons.
- Monitor, and address as needed, the enrollment and related financial challenges within higher education, and the related challenges affecting the Division III membership. Monitor the impact on conference office stability and the impact of conference realignments.
- Continue to make membership communication a priority. Provide clear, concise, and consistent communication. Strengthen relationships with the leadership of the DIICA and NADIIAA. Provide effective transparency and opportunities for input in the work of governing bodies. Conduct a comprehensive review of communication initiatives and platforms to better identify and reach target audiences as well as streamline and improve efficiency.

8. Support Association-wide initiatives.

- Support the Association in its efforts to engage Congress to introduce federal legislation to address threats (e.g., Name, Image and Likeness, student-athlete compensation, select litigation).
- Monitor the implementation of the House settlement agreement and strategically plan for any impacts to the division.
- Support relevant issues identified through the Association's Business Review (e.g., fan database, purchasing collective, post-eligibility insurance) and couple with recommended opportunities identified by the Deloitte analysis.
- Monitor legal threats and cases against the Association and analyze and strategically plan for impacts to the division.
- Continue to partner with the Sport Science Institute regarding priority health and safety issues, including mental and physical health. Provide Division III representatives for on-going summits. Provide timely and consistent communication to the membership regarding new SSI interassociation guidelines and best practices.

Appendix A

Division III Budget Justification

Projected NCAA Division III 2025-26 Budget Breakdown		Division III Philosophy Statement and Constitutional Principles Justifying Funded Programs
Revenue:		<i>Division III Institutions....</i>
Division III 3.18% Revenue	\$46,057,953	
Additional Revenue		
Membership Dues	NA for FY26	
Championships Expenses:		
Total Championships Operational Expenses	\$37,523,999	Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach high levels of athletics performance, which may include opportunities for participation in national championships, by providing all teams with adequate facilities, competent coaching and appropriate competitive opportunities. (Division III Philosophy Statement – section r)
Total Championships Supplemental	\$1,756,000	Supports live stream production on ESPN+ (football, volleyball, basketball). Provides hosts of team championships a stipend to offset livestream costs. Supports maintaining livestreaming at no cost.
Conference Office Expenses:		
Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program	\$4,376,703	Place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators and place greater emphasis on the internal constituency (e.g., students, alumni, institutional personnel) than on the general public and its entertainment needs; (Bylaw 20.11-(b))
Conference Commissioners/SID Meeting	\$40,000	The purpose of the NCAA is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual institutions to determine their own special objectives and programs. (Bylaw 20.11)
Grant funding to support officiating resources	NA for FY26	With the on-going crisis in the recruitment and retention of officials, this two-year grant will provide funding for the D3CA to establish relationships and build resources. All funding (\$40K) provided in FY25.
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Expenses:		
Pathway to Excellence Grant	\$1,600,000	Support underrepresented constituent groups; This two-year grant provides \$30K annually plus professional development.
Strategic Alliance Matching Grant	\$708,600	Support underrepresented constituent groups; This five year grant provides 75% of the salary in year one; 50% in year two and 25% in year three. The recipient must fully fund the position for years four and five.
Diversity. Equity and Inclusion Programs	\$275,000	Support underrepresented constituent groups;
Coaching Enhancement Grant	\$100,000	Support underrepresented asst. coaches. The two-year matching grant provides \$7,500 in salary and benefits and \$1,500 annually in professional development.
LGBTQ Programming	\$85,000	Funding for the annual LGBTQ of the Year recognition (\$30K) and update the OneTeam Program. Partner with office of inclusion.
Student-Athlete Support Expenses:		
Mental Health First Aid	\$930,000	Through Aug. 2027 institutions may receive a one-time free mental health first aid training for 30 individuals.
Student-Athlete Leadership Forum	\$400,000	Seek to establish and maintain an environment in which student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience, and in which coaches play a significant role as educators. (Bylaw 20.11)
Convention Programming including specific student-athlete programs	\$100,000	Continue to create specific programming for student-athletes attending the annual Convention to help better engage and educate on the Division III philosophy.
Increased national SAAC committee	\$45,000	Provide funds to pay expenses for every conference to have a representative on national SAAC and attend two in-person meetings (NCAA Convention and the July national SAAC meeting).
Division III Academic All-America (College Sports Communicators)	\$44,000	Colleges and universities in Division III place highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students' academic program (preamble to philosophy statement).

Projected NCAA Division III 2025-26 Budget Breakdown		
Expenses, continued:		
Campus Based Student-Athlete Leadership Programming	\$20,000	The purpose is to provide behavioral assessments to student-athletes, coaches and administrators. The assessment aids participants with understanding their individual behavioral styles and preferences, a common language when addressing these topics and methods to better relate to others. It also provides additional strategies to build more effective relationships on teams and in the workplace.
CSC Student Program	\$15,000	Programming for students interested in sports information/athletics communication.
Value of Division III Expenses:		
Branding and Identity Initiatives	\$300,000	These initiatives provide branding and promotion support in the form of PSA videos, championships webcasting enhancements and resources.
Special Olympics Partnership	\$35,000	Institutions seek to establish and maintain an environment in which student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience (preamble to philosophy statement).
Professional Development Expenses:		
Division III Health and Safety Grant	\$860,000	Provide each institution a \$2,000 grant to offset athletic training expenses.
Athletic Trainer Initiatives	\$85,000	Resources to support the Division III Athletic Trainer Working Group recommendations.
Emerging Elite Program	\$85,000	Resources to support the professional development of athletics communication/sports information directors.
FAR Institute	\$75,000	Colleges and universities in Division III place highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students' academic programs. They seek to establish and maintain an environment in which student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience (preamble to philosophy statement)
NADIII AA Partnership	\$75,000	The purpose of the NCAA is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual institutions to determine their own special objectives and programs. (Bylaw 20.11)
New Athletics Director Orientation	\$70,000	Create in-person, orientation programs for new athletics directors to assist with the knowledge, resources and philosophy of the division.
Women Leaders Enhancement Grant	\$30,000	Support ethnic and gender diversity for all constituents; (Bylaw 20.11-(p))
Division III University	\$20,000	Funding to create new modules for Division III University.
New Commissioner Orientation	\$15,000	Create in-person, orientation programs for new commissioners to assist with the knowledge, resources and philosophy of the division.
CSC DIII Day	\$12,000	This initiative supports sports information directors to receive professional development.
NADIII AA and D3CA leadership meeting	\$10,000	The executive leadership groups from NADIII AA and D3CA come to Indianapolis in Aug./Sept. to discuss current hot topics in Division III and plan communication strategies for the upcoming year.
Misc. Division III Initiatives	NA	This includes contracting costs, as well as money earmarked to support future initiatives.
Conference Rules Seminar	Association-wide	The Association shall assist the institution in its efforts to achieve full compliance with all rules and regulations and shall afford the institution, its staff and student-athletes fair procedures in the consideration of an identified or alleged failure in compliance.
Division III National Office Expenses:		
Division III Cancellation Insurance	\$61,000	Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be administered in keeping with prudent management and fiscal practices to assure the financial stability necessary for providing student-athletes with adequate opportunities for athletics competition as an integral part of a quality educational experience.
Working Groups	\$5,000	This initiative exists to provide opportunities for working groups/task forces in the future.
NCAA staff professional development	\$7,000	Allows annual professional development for NCAA Division III staff.
Total Division III Expenses	\$50,609,779	

- * The \$5 million event cancellation insurance protects the budget in case of a catastrophic event that would reduce or eliminate, for one year, the division's share of media rights revenue.
- ** Intentionally overspending the operating budget by approximately \$2.2 million to reduce the excess above and beyond the mandated reserve.
- *** Spending an additional \$4 million in supplemental spend (livestreaming preliminary rounds of team championships, mental health training, ESPN+ production, and grants to assist athletic trainers) to reduce the excess above and beyond the mandated reserve.

Appendix B

History of the Division III Strategic Plan and Budget Policies

History

The original Division III strategic plan was unveiled in 1998 as the division embarked on its new federated structure. The Division III Management Council Strategic Planning Subcommittee developed the framework for the plan with broad participation of the Presidents Council, Division III and Association-wide committee structure, and the Division III membership. The 2004 version of the Division III Strategic Plan was developed by a joint subcommittee of the Management and Presidents Councils consistent with the Association-wide Strategic Plan adopted by the NCAA Executive Committee in April 2004. The 2004 plan contained many of the existing initiatives and priorities to ensure that the programs and results remain consistent with Division III objectives. However, significant changes occurred as the 2005 and 2006 plans linked the relationship to the Division III philosophy with each Association-wide goal and outlined a series of outcome measures for each goal. Another significant change occurred in 2006-07 as the Division III Strategic Initiatives Grant Program resources were funneled directly to Division III Conferences and the Association of Independents. With this change, many strategic initiatives previously administered at the NCAA national office moved to the local control of conferences and institutions. The localized program encourages collaboration and involvement of all Division III constituent group representatives in the planning, decision-making and accountability of programming and funding to achieve the goals established in the Division's Strategic Plan. Presidential oversight and accountability with the process and budget allocations, consistent with the legislated leadership role of presidents within conference governance, is paramount.

In 2008-09, the strategic plan underwent a format change to create a forward-looking document that highlights the goals and expectations of a budget biennium. Much of the reporting done in previous plans was moved into a Division III Annual Report, and standard committee operations are now reflected in each committee's policy and procedure guide (available on each committee's home page on ncaa.org). The plan clearly articulates the division's funding priorities, and explains when an initiative is funded by Division III, and when it is funded by a broader Association-wide budget. The plan also includes an appendix to show the philosophical or constitutional justification for all programs funded with Division III dollars.

In 2009-10, the plan was updated to highlight the division's near-term strategic priorities. Most 2009-10 priorities resulted from a series of presidentially authored white papers on membership growth published in September 2008. For 2010-12, the plan was updated based on the Division's release of a Strategic Positioning Platform, and clearly defined the near- and medium-term goals the division needed to accomplish to be successful in embodying the platform.

For 2012-15, the plan was updated to reflect the Association's move to a three-year budget cycle.

After the 2012-15 budget cycle, the plan returned to a two-year budget cycle and emphasizes budget accountability and management.

With the start of the budget cycle in 2021, the Councils approved a one-time, three-year budget cycle (2021-24) to align with the current CBS/Turner broadcast agreement that ends in 2023-24. In FY25, the division will return to its two-year budget cycle as well as adjust its mandated reserve policy from 50% of the annual revenue to a flat 15 million annually in addition to a five million event cancellation insurance policy.

In 2022, the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee recommended a new format for the strategic plan that better reflects the division's commitment to the student-athlete experience.

Division III Budget Policies

The Division will maintain the following budget policies. SPFC must recommend, with final approval from the Management and Presidents Councils, to change the policies.

- The division will have a two-year budget cycle unless a specific request by SPFC to alter.
- The budget will reflect the annual spend on championships and the Enrichment Fund with a priority on enhancing the student-athlete experience (approximately 80% of the budget annually will fund the division's 28 national championships).
- Only consider new budget enhancements in the last year of a current budget cycle unless SPFC determines there is extenuating circumstances.
- Annual mandated reserve that is 50% of the annual revenue through FY24. In FY25, the mandated reserve moved to a flat \$15 million.
- Annually evaluate the need to purchase \$5 million in event cancellation insurance.

Division III Budget Initiatives (in priority order)

- a. Contractual obligations.
- b. Championships.
 - (1) Bracketing.
 - (2) Per diem allotment.
 - (3) Experience funding.
 - (a) Game operations (e.g., travel, officials, web streams, marketing, etc.).
 - (b) Student-athlete experience (e.g., trophies, mementos, banquets, etc.).
- c. Conference strategic initiatives grant.
- d. Diversity grants.
- e. Enrichment Fund programs.

Division III Budget Guidelines and Principles

In accordance with NCAA Constitution Article 3 (finance), Division III is guaranteed revenue through allocations made to each division from the Association's general operating revenue; and Division III shall receive at least 3.18 percent of the Association's annual general operating revenue, as agreed on January 9, 1996.

The NCAA Division III Presidents Council, Management Council and Strategic Planning and Finance Committee are committed to developing budgetary principles/guidelines that are reflective of the NCAA mission and principles and the Division III philosophy, strategic positioning platform and strategic plan. These principles/guidelines will be used to guide any deliberations that may occur related to the potential use of funds allocated to Division III.

These principles/guidelines include the following:

1. The Division III budget shall operate on a biennial budget timeline to ensure a manageable approach to proposed adjustments. A biennial budget allows the division to make strategic decisions versus immediate reaction to items brought forth by the committees and keeps the division in alignment with the long-range budget determined for the division. The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee shall, however, have the ability to address items related to gender equity or health and safety brought forth outside of the normal budget process, and recommend any such items to the Management and Presidents Councils, which allows the division to address any immediate budget needs that may come forth between budget proposal years.
2. The budget will reflect the annual spend on championships and the Enrichment Fund with a priority on enhancing the student-athlete experience (approximately 80% of the budget annually will fund the division's national championships).
3. The Division III mandated reserve maintain a balance of at least 15 million plus an event cancellation insurance policy. The balance shall include the prior year's cash reserve and the current year's budget surplus.
4. Decisions regarding whether a budget request needs to be made outside of the biennial budget cycle should be made in consultation with necessary subject matter experts (e.g., Office of Inclusion, Sports Science Institute).
5. Budget decisions will be made to support the Division III strategic priorities including, but not limited to, national championships, conference office support, diversity, equity and inclusion, student-athlete support, professional development programs, initiatives and resources and support of Association-wide and Division III membership initiatives.

6. As budget discussions occur and decisions are made, funding Division III national championships will remain a priority to ensure a quality championship experience for Division III student-athletes.
7. To limit an institution's expenses for participating in a Division III championship, as prescribed by the Division III Championships Committee's policies and procedures and ensure consistent transportation and per diem guidelines for all Division III championships.
8. Division III championship policies will reflect an overall cost-containment philosophy supporting initiatives, such as geographic proximity. For purposes of these budget principles, cost containment encompasses the efficient and cost-effective operation of Division III championships that aligns with the division's commitment to provide a quality championship experience for student-athletes.
9. The Division III Championships Committee shall initially approve any budget request from a sports committee. Sport committees should collaborate where appropriate across genders when making requests. The Championships Committee's review process of budget request(s) should ensure that any gender difference across sports is necessary, appropriate, and equitable. All requests will go to the Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and Management Council. The Division III Presidents Council shall have final approval.
10. The Division III Administrative Committee shall address issues in light of any unexpected event(s) to determine the use of Division III insurance and reserve dollars. As needed, the Administrative Committee will seek input from the Division III Presidents Council.
11. Division III budget initiatives (in priority order):
 - a. Contractual obligations.
 - b. Championships.
 - (1) Bracketing.
 - (2) Per diem allotment.
 - (3) Experience funding.
 - (a) Game operations (e.g., travel, officials, web streams, marketing, etc.).
 - (b) Student-athlete experience (e.g., trophies, mementos, banquets, etc.).
 - c. Conference strategic initiatives grant.

- d. Diversity grants.
 - e. Enrichment Fund programs.
12. The division (including colleges, universities, and conferences) shall commit to fiscal responsibility at the local, conference, regional and national levels and that the division shall be accountable for spending NCAA Division III dollars in a fiscally responsible manner. To that end, the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee has the authority to audit dollars allocated to Division III institutions and conferences from the Division III budget, including, but not limited to, conference grant funding and sports sponsorship requirements of Division III member conferences. It also includes establishing regular reporting requirements for one-time funds and funds used for on-going initiatives and programs.
 13. The division will attempt to avoid funding special interests of various segments of the Division III membership or items that may be more an institution's or conference's responsibility than that of the Association or the division.
 14. Division III will follow the Association's request for proposal (RFP) process when the division has specific vendor relationships and/or consultant needs.
 15. These budget principles will be reviewed annually by the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee, Management Council and Presidents Council and modified as necessary to ensure that they are reflective of the Division III philosophy, strategic positioning platform and strategic plan. The Presidents Council has ultimate authority to approve the modifications to these guidelines and principles.

Approved August 5, 2024, by the Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee, Management Council and Presidents Council. Reviewed and approved August 4, 2025.



**Division II and Division III Playing Rules
Structures for Consideration and Feedback
UPDATED – July 15, 2025**

To address the evolving landscape of higher education and intercollegiate athletics, the NCAA Division I Board of Directors created the Division I Decision-Making Working Group. Tasked with revising the current Division I governance structure, the working group has been reviewing and re-imagining Division I's decision-making processes. Recommendations from the working group must be approved by the Division I Board of Directors. The working group shared its recommendations with the Division I Board in June, with final action to occur in August.

One concept includes expanding the Division I sport oversight committee structure beyond football and men's and women's basketball. The oversight committees would have responsibilities for championships administration and selections, legislative matters (e.g., recruiting, playing and practice seasons) and playing rules.

Under this new federated model for playing rules, the Division I sport oversight committee structure would take on the duties to establish and maintain rules of play for Division I sports.

Anticipating this change may be approved in August, Division II and Division III have been discussing a change in structure for playing rules.

The divisions have sought initial feedback from committees and affiliate groups including the divisional championships committees, conference commissioners and athletics directors' groups.

Based on the initial feedback, there was consensus that the preferred model for Division II and Division III is to continue to work together on rules changes and to closely monitor the changes in Division I to ensure consistency, where appropriate. Additionally, each sport shall maintain one common rule book.

Further, any new process comes with the understanding that the playing rules process is still a federated process, and each division has autonomy over its playing rules. Current processes to gather membership feedback on existing and new rules as well as comment periods will remain.

The divisional Management Councils will continue to oversee playing rules as they currently do under divisional legislation.

Finally, the NCAA playing rules staff will continue to provide support/serve as liaisons to the divisions on its playing rules structure.

Playing Rules Approval Process

A joint Division II and Division III Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) would give final approval on playing rules changes.

- PROP members shall serve four-year terms unless representing a committee or council (or to achieve necessary staggering of terms).

- Each division's governance structure will appoint its divisional members to serve on PROP.
- Duties of PROP:
 - a. Oversee all Division II and Division III playing rules committees. This includes approval of playing rules recommendations and oversight of other issues pertaining to playing rules;
 - b. Recommend the establishment and dissolution of playing rules committees;
 - c. Monitor playing rules maintained outside of the NCAA;
 - d. Be responsible for all research and communication pertaining to the administration of playing rules, including the advancement of budgetary recommendations from the playing rules committee and to ensure consistency among different sports, when appropriate (e.g., policies controlling fighting or abusive language);
 - e. Review all playing rules changes pertaining to finances, safety and image of the game; and
 - f. Provide input on the selection process for secretary-rules editors.

Recommended composition of PROP:

The panel shall consist of 12 members, including six members from Division II and six members from Division III. A conference may not have more than one representative on the panel. Individuals with only coaching responsibilities and no administrative responsibilities are not eligible to serve.

- One appointed by the Division II Championships Committee.
- One appointed by the Division III Championships Committee.
- One appointed by the Division II Management Council.
- One appointed by the Division III Management Council.
- One appointed by the Division II Conference Commissioners Association.
- One reserved for a Division III Conference Commissioners Association member and appointed by the Division III Nominating Committee.
- The remaining three representatives from Division II and three representatives from Division III will be appointed at-large through the division's nominating committee process.

Playing Rules Committees

- Each division's governance structure will appoint its divisional members to serve on the rules committees (e.g., nominating committee process).
- Composition of rules committees shall include at least 25% of the positions to be filled by athletics directors, associate or assistant athletics directors, senior woman administrators, individuals who are employed full time as administrators by member conferences, or individuals who are employed both part time as administrators by member conferences and full time by member institutions.
- At least 50% of the total positions on each rules committee shall be filled by coaching staff members.
- A conference may not have more than one representative on a rules committee, unless there are two or fewer conferences sponsoring the sport.
- As its duties, each rules committee shall establish and maintain rules of play in its sport consistent with the sound traditions of the sport and of such character as to ensure good sportsmanship and safe participation by the competitors. Playing rules committees shall have the authority to permit rules experimentation in the nontraditional/nonchampionship season without the PROP approval. Experimentation in the regular season shall be subject to the PROP review.
- The term of office for each member will be four years.
- The secretary rules editor is a nonvoting member.
- Rules changes will typically be on a two-year cycle (consistent with current process).

Composition Numbers:

	Current	Recommended New
Baseball Rules Committee	4 Division I members 2 Division II members 2 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor
Men's Basketball Rules Committee	6 Division I members 3 Division II members 3 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor

	Current	Recommended New
	At least two representatives from each of the following four geographical regions: Districts 1 and 2; District 3; Districts 4 and 5; and Districts 6, 7 and 8 ^	For Division II, one representative from each of the four championships super regions.
Women's Basketball Rules Committee	<p>6 Division I members 3 Division II members 3 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor</p> <p>At least two representatives from each of the following four geographical regions: Districts 1 and 2; District 3; Districts 4 and 5; and Districts 6, 7 and 8 ^</p>	<p>4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor</p> <p>For Division II, one representative from each of the four championships super regions.</p>
Football Rules Committee	<p>6 Division I members 3 Division II members 3 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor</p> <p>At least two representatives from each of the following four geographical regions: Districts 1 and 2; District 3; Districts 4 and 5; and Districts 6, 7 and 8 ^</p>	<p>4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor</p> <p>For Division II, one representative from each of the four championships super regions.</p>
Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Committee	<p>6 Division I members 1 Division II member that sponsor Division I or Division II men's or women's ice hockey 4 Division III members 1 member from Division II or Division III 1 secretary rules editor</p> <p>Within Divisions I and III, one-half of the members shall represent men's ice hockey interests and one-half of the</p>	<p>2 Division II members 6 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor</p> <p>Within Divisions II and III, one-half of the members shall represent men's ice hockey interests and one-half of the members shall represent women's ice hockey interests</p>

	Current	Recommended New
	members shall represent women's ice hockey interests	
Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee	4 Division I members 1 Division II members 3 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	3 Division II members 5 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor
Women's Lacrosse Rules Committee	4 Division I members 1 Division II members 3 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	3 Division II members 5 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor
Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee	4 Division I members 2 Division II members 2 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor Within each division, one-half of the members shall represent men's soccer interests, and one-half of the members shall represent women's soccer interests	4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor Within each division, one-half of the members shall represent men's soccer interests, and one-half of the members shall represent women's soccer interests
Softball Rules Committee	4 Division I members 2 Division II members 2 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor
Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving Rules Committee	4 Division I members 2 Division II members 2 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor
Men's and Women's Track and Field Rules Committee	4 Division I members 2 Division II members 2 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor
Women's Volleyball Rules Committee	4 Division I members 2 Division II members 2 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor

	Current	Recommended New
Men's Wrestling Rules Committee	4 Division I members 2 Division II members 2 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor	4 Division II members 4 Division III members 1 secretary rules editor

Future Decisions:

Once a structure and process are approved, additional decisions will be made either by national office staff or the divisional committee structure, where appropriate.

- National office and FTE support models.
- In-person and virtual meeting structures for the playing rules committees. Note: Currently, the playing rules committees that are in a rules change year meet in person. In addition, football, men's basketball, and women's basketball meet in person every year. Most committees also meet virtually outside of the annual meeting.
- Sports with rules determined by an outside entity (e.g., field hockey). At this time, the structure for non-NCAA playing rules will not change. However, the process to review and adopt playing rules may change (e.g., the membership can provide comment and feedback on all new rules versus only modifications).

Timeline:

May	Divisional Championships Committee review and discussions.
May	Feedback from affiliate organizations (e.g., conference commissioners, athletics directors).
June	Divisional Championships Committee recommendations.
July	Divisional Management Council approval.
September 1	Effective date of changes.