

College-Bound Student-Athlete Handbook



OCEAN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT ***ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT***

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K-12 ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

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NCAA vs. NAIA



The **National Collegiate Athletic Association** (NCAA) is the largest intercollegiate athletic association in North America that oversees the contests of 23 sports at over 1200 schools serving over 450,000 student-athletes annually. NCAA schools are broken down in Divisions I, II, and III. To be considered D-I, a school must field teams in at least seven sports for men and seven for women (or six for men and eight for women). At least two sports must be team sports for each gender. These schools must also meet minimum athletics program financial awards (there are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that D-I schools cannot exceed). (See pg. 14) To be considered D-II, a school must sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women (or four for men and six for women). At least two sports must be team sports for each gender. D-II schools also have contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria. Although there are no attendance requirements these schools, D-II schools are typically smaller than D-I schools and larger than D-III institutions. There are maximum financial aid awards for each sport, as well as a separate limit on scholarship awards in men's sports, that a Division II school must not exceed. D-III schools are not able to award athletic scholarships but can offer grants, academic scholarships, and loans.

The **National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics** (NAIA) sponsors 14 sports overall and conducts 25 annual championships (12 for men and 13 for women) including football, basketball, soccer, baseball, and softball. NAIA schools are generally smaller than NCAA D-I schools—they are closer in size to NCAA D-II or D-III schools—however, they can provide athletic scholarships to their students. Additionally, smaller schools usually equal smaller class sizes.

NCAA D-I & D-II Eligibility Requirements

- 1- High School Graduate
- 2- Complete 16 “Core Courses” (see pg. 11)
- 3- Satisfactory “Core GPA” AND SAT or ACT score based on sliding scale (see pgs. 12-13)
- 4- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center

NAIA Eligibility Requirements

- 1- Graduate with an overall GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale
- 2- Graduate in the upper half of your graduating class
- 3- Earn an 18 on the ACT or an 860 on the SAT

Important Terms & Information

Basic Terms

Prospective Student-Athlete

A prospective student athlete, or PSA, is any student who has started classes for the ninth grade. That student will remain a prospective student-athlete until he or she starts classes at a four-year institution or participates in an official practice.

Recruiting Materials

Recruiting materials are any documents, either printed or electronic, that promote a specific institution and its athletics program. These materials include but not limited to general correspondence (postal mail letters), business cards, media guides, note cards, and e-mails. NCAA D-I and NCAA D-II coaches and other athletic personnel must not send recruiting materials to prospective student athletes, or family, friends, or legal guardians of prospective student-athletes, until the dates in the table below. Questionnaires, camp information, and non-athletic information can be sent to a PSA at any time. NCAA D-III and NAIA institutions have no restrictions on sending recruiting materials.

Sport	NCAA D-I	NCAA D-II	NCAA D-III	NAIA
Men's Ice Hockey	January 1 of Sophomore Year	-	No restrictions	No restrictions
Men's Basketball	June 15 after Sophomore Year	June 15 after Sophomore Year	No restrictions	No restrictions
All Other Sports	September 1 of Junior Year	June 15 after Sophomore Year	No restrictions	No restrictions

Full Scholarship

A full scholarship is one that covers the entirety of the tuition and will also cover other typical costs of college including room, board, text books, and course-related fees.

Partial Scholarship

A partial scholarship is one that covers a percentage costs for college. Partial scholarships are more often awarded than are full scholarships. The full scholarships available for each sport may be broken down to provide more students with a partial scholarship. For example, NCAA Division-II men's basketball can award ten full scholarships—this can be a full scholarship to ten young men or twenty 50% scholarships.

Head Count Sport

A head count sport is one where the number of players receiving athletics awards is limited. NCAA D-I head count sports are as follows: Football (FBS only), Men's and Women's Basketball, Women's Tennis, Women's Gymnastics, and Women's Volleyball.

Equivalency Sport

An equivalency sport is one where scholarships can be split up amongst any number of athletes and the total value of all scholarships is equivalent to a set number. All sports in NCAA D-II and in the NAIA are considered equivalency sports. All NCAA D-I sports not listed in the head count sports above are also equivalency sports.

Contact

A contact is any off-campus face-to-face encounter between a PSA and/or his or her parents/guardians and a coach (or other athletic personnel) during which dialogue occurs in excess of a greeting. A contact can ONLY be made during the contact period (which varies for each sport). Refer to the following website to find out when the contact period is for your sport:
<http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/resources/recruiting-calendars/2017-18-division-i-and-ii-recruiting-calendars>

Evaluation

An evaluation is any off-campus activity designed to assess the athletic and/or academic qualifications of a prospective student-athlete by a member of the athletics staff. This may only occur during the evaluation period. Refer to the website above to learn when this period is for your sport.

NCAA Qualifier Terms

Full Qualifier

A full qualifier meets all of the NCAA eligibility requirements. This individual is eligible to participate in NCAA athletics immediately upon graduation from high school.

Partial Qualifier

A partial qualifier has only completed a core curriculum of 14 courses and has at least a 2.0 GPA. This individual must meet a specific SAT or ACT score to be eligible to participate in PRACTICE with his or her team at its home facility only at D-II schools. This person may receive an athletic scholarship during his or her

first year at a D-II school but cannot participate in games/contests and is not eligible for D-I athletics.

Academic Redshirt

An academic redshirt may practice in the initial semester and receive athletics aid during the first year of full-time college enrollment, but he or she may not compete in athletic competitions during his or her first year of full-time college enrollment. It will be risky to offer this individual an athletic scholarship as he or she may still not meet all NCAA eligibility requirements after the initial year AND he or she cannot participate in ANY competitions.

Non-Qualifier

A non-qualifier fails to meet the requirements of D-I or the D-II partial qualifier. This individual is ineligible to receive athletics-related aid as a freshman and is ineligible for regular season competition or practice during their first year.

NCAA Visit Terms

Unofficial Visit

An unofficial visit is the term given to trips that you or your parents/guardians take to a college campus that is funded by you and/or your parents/guardians. There is no limit to the number of unofficial visits you take and they can be taken at any time. During these visits, you can interact with athletic personnel. During dead periods, however, you cannot speak to any of the coaches while visiting the campus. During an unofficial visit, you cannot practice or “tryout” for the coaching staff. The coach or college representative cannot give you anything—not even a meal—except for three free tickets to a home athletic event!

Official Visit

An official visit is one that is paid for by that university. The college or university will pay for you and/or your parents/guardians to be transported to and from the campus as well as your room, meals (three per day), and entertainment expenses. You may also receive three free tickets to a home athletic event while on your visit. It is very important to remember that PSAs are limited to 5 total official visits. PSAs must present a test score and transcript and must be registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center before making an official visit, and each college or university can only finance one official visit to campus for each PSA. These visits are limited to 48-hours in length and can occur starting the first day of classes of your senior year. Just like during an unofficial visit, you cannot practice or “tryout” for the coaching staff during an official visit.

Just as the NCAA D-III and NAIA have no restrictions on sending recruiting materials, they have no restrictions on coaches contacting PSAs. Also, there are no limits to the number of official visits a PSA can make to a NAIA or NCAA D-III institution.

NCAA Period Terms

Contact Period

During the contact period, college coaches are allowed to have in-person contact with you or your parents/guardians. This period means coaches can watch you compete anywhere, and the coach can write and make telephone calls. Again, these periods vary by sport. Find out when your sport's contact period is at this link:

<http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/resources/recruiting-calendars/2017-18-division-i-and-ii-recruiting-calendars>



Evaluation Period

During the evaluation period, it is permissible for a college coach to evaluate your playing abilities at your high school or any other place where you are competing. During this period the coach cannot have off campus in-person contact with you or your parents/guardians. A coach may still make telephone calls to you or your parents/guardians, and you are allowed to make campus visits during this period.

Quiet Period

During the quiet period, a college coach cannot watch you compete at any location. A college coach is permitted to make in-person contact with you or your parents/guardians if it occurs on the coach's college campus. A coach can still make telephone calls to you or your legal guardians, and you can make visits to college campuses during this time.

Dead Period

During the dead period, a college coach is not permitted to have any face-to-face contact with college-bound student-athletes or their parents/guardians. Additionally, a coach may not watch student-athletes compete or visit their high schools. Coaches may write and call student-athletes or their parents/guardians during a dead period.

Other Recruiting Terms

Offers (and Inducements)

An offer will only come from a member of the college's athletic personnel. This offer should be in written form (or a letter of intent) and can only include the regular costs of college. A coach (or other institutional staff member) is not allowed to offer financial aid or other benefits to a PSA (or his or her relatives or friends) other than what is allowed by NCAA regulations. These inducements could include:

- Employment for PSAs relatives
- Gifts, clothing, or equipment
- Cash, loans, merchandise
- Free or reduced cost housing or services

One-Year Grace Period

This period is only for tennis, swimming, and diving. After the high school graduation date of the PSA's class, a student-athlete has one year to become immediately eligible for college athletics and retain the opportunity for four seasons of competition with the following stipulations:

- The PSA will be charged a season of eligibility for each year after the one-year grace period.
- The PSA will be charged a year in residence if he or she engages in organized events after the one-year grace period and before matriculation.

Matriculation After 20th Birthday

This applies to tennis only. If a PSA participates in organized tennis after his or her 20th birthday he or she will be charged with a season of eligibility and a year in residence.

Agents and Amateurism

Per NCAA and NAIA regulations, only an amateur student-athletes are eligible for intercollegiate athletics participation. Student-athletes can jeopardize their amateur status if they have inappropriate contact with an agent or their representatives. A PSA may NOT:

- Agree, either orally or in writing, to be represented by an agent for the purpose of marketing his or her athletics ability or reputation in a sport. In addition, it is not permissible for a student-athlete to enter into a verbal or written agreement with an agent for representation in future professional sports negotiations once his or her collegiate eligibility has expired in that sport.

- Accept transportation or other benefits (merchandise, dinner, lodging, etc.) from anyone who wishes to represent their athletic interests.
- Enter into any kind of agreement to compete in professional athletics, either orally or in writing, regardless of the legal enforceability of that agreement.
- Receive any type of pay or compensation for play (either directly or indirectly).
- Be involved in any commercial endorsements for a product, service or establishment.

Five-Year Rule

A collegiate student-athlete has five years of eligibility in which to complete four years of intercollegiate competition. Any competition, regardless of the length of time, during a season counts toward a student-athlete's participation and is therefore, considered a "year". Even if an athlete plays in just one minute of one game, he or she is considered to have participated in the season and has used one year of his or her eligibility. If a student-athlete competes ONLY in preseason/exhibition contests and preseason practice scrimmages and does not participate in any regular season competitions, the student-athlete maintains that year of eligibility—this is called a redshirt year. A redshirt (not the same as an "academic redshirt") can be granted during a student-athlete's initial year of enrollment at a four-year institution.

- A student-athlete who does not compete at all during one of his/her seasons will not use a season of competition. This is commonly referred to as a "redshirt" year. An athlete only receives one "redshirt" year within his/her five-year clock.
- Another exception is in the case of a season ending injury at the beginning of a season of competition. An injured student-athlete may then apply for a Medical Hardship Waiver (aka medical redshirt) to get that season of competition/eligibility back.
- Take advantage of the five-year eligibility rule and complete an accelerated Master's program in the fifth year of your athletic scholarship.

Course Selection

There are two schools of thought on course selection when participating in college athletics under an athletic scholarship. Remember, while on an athletic scholarship, the institution is granting a full or partial tuition waiver for participating in the sport you (hopefully) love. Some suggest to take a maximum course load (as many courses/credits allowed by the institution) while a redshirt and while in the off-season of your sport. This allows you to take advantage of the time when you are not competing in your sport to be able to fulfill as many of your credit requirements as possible and then be able to take a smaller course load during your competitive season. Some student-athletes may find this approach allows them to deal with the rigors of a college schedule a little more easily knowing that when they have games, contests, or competitions, they won't also have to juggle excessive coursework. Using the five-year rule discussed above, if you use a red shirt year, the courses can be spread out even more to accommodate your busy athletic schedule. This will allow you to ensure you can participate and then graduate after five years.

The other suggestion is to take full advantage of the five-year rule discussed above and take on a full course load each semester. This will allow you, as a student-athlete on an athletic scholarship, to get five years-worth of college paid for by your institution. Some student-athletes will be able to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in four years and then complete an accelerated Master's program in the fifth year. This plan takes a lot of dedication, hard work, and the right set of circumstances. Some student-athletes have even been known to complete their Bachelor's degrees in three years then become a graduate-transfer where they can then use their remaining two years of eligibility at a different institution AND still compete at their sport! Again, this takes a great deal of dedication and hard work!

It is important that you as a PSA really consider what field you may one day want to work in, what interests you, or what you could see yourself doing in the future. What programs line up with your interests? What schools offer those programs? What of these schools ALSO offer your sport? This is a great place to start in order to start determining where you want to study and with which college to sign your National Letter of Intent.

NCAA & NAIA Eligibility Centers

NCAA Eligibility Center

The **NCAA** Eligibility Center certifies that student-athletes hoping to play in the NCAA D-I or D-II have met the required academic and other requirements for intercollegiate participation. The Eligibility Center requires the user to provide basic information regarding address, high school, year of graduation, GPA, SAT/ACT scores, and core courses taken. You will also have to answer questions about your level of athletic participation to verify your amateur status.

Go to www.eligibilitycenter.org to create your account.

The Eligibility Center does require a payment of \$80.00 for D-I or D-II student-athletes to register. Division III student-athletes are not required to register on the Eligibility Center, but they can create a free profile on the site.

Notes/Tips:

- You **MUST** be registered for and certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center if you want to participate in D-I or D-II as a freshman **BEFORE** you are eligible.
- You cannot practice or compete in D-I or D-II during your first year of enrollment at a D-I or D-II school if you are not registered and certified.
- Register in the beginning of your JUNIOR YEAR or earlier.
- If you are not sure if you will be offered a D-II scholarship or go to a D-III school, register for the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- The Eligibility Center will send your certification/status to all D-I or D-II schools that request it.
- You cannot take an official visit at a D-I school until official transcripts and SAT/ACT scores are on the Eligibility Center. D-II schools requires only the SAT/ACT score for an official visit.

NAIA Eligibility Center

The **NAIA** Eligibility Center certifies that student-athletes hoping to play in the NAIA have met the required academic and other requirements for intercollegiate participation. The NAIA Eligibility Center is not connected or related to the NCAA Eligibility Center. If you are planning to play at an NAIA school or are even considering applying to one of these schools, you should register on the NAIA Eligibility center. It too requires the user to provide basic information

regarding address, high school, year of graduation, GPA, and SAT/ACT scores. You will also have to answer questions about your level of athletic participation to verify your amateur status.

Go to www.playnaia.org/eligibility-center to get started.

Remember, NAIA schools are typically smaller than NCAA D-I or D-II schools (similar in size to D-III schools), but they have millions to offer in athletic scholarships. Although there are no NAIA schools in New Jersey, there are currently 249 across the U.S. Find an NAIA school here: <http://www.playnaia.org/schoolsearch.php>.

National Letter of Intent

The National Letter of Intent, or NLI, is a legal binding contract that makes formal a PSA's commitment to a college institution. Any school that offers athletics awards will require a PSA to sign a NLI. This includes all NCAA D-I and D-II institutions as well as NAIA and NJCAA institutions. This document serves as an agreement with the college institution and the PSA and signifies that the PSA owes the institution one year of eligibility for the designated sport in exchange for a four-year scholarship (partial or full). PSAs can only sign ONE NLI for any NCAA institutions. If the PSA decides to transfer from the school, he or she will forfeit a year of eligibility. The NLI signing, however, is the only way to make official the commitment between the institution and the PSA. Any commitment or agreement prior to the signing of an NLI is known as a "verbal commitment". Verbal commitments are non-binding meaning that the PSA can back out of the "commitment" at any time and so can the institution.

Notes:

- A PSA can sign a NLI for one NCAA institution and also sign a letter of intent for one NAIA institution since they are not connected.
- There is no NLI for NCAA-DIII athletics.
- Colleges used to offer one-year scholarships, but this has changed and most, if not all, NCAA D-I and D-II schools have begun offering four-year guaranteed scholarships
- This four-year scholarship can also be extended to include a fifth year if you were a redshirt and will be eligible for your fifth year in school

NCAA Core Courses

The NCAA has specific core course requirements for D-I and D-II ONLY. The OCSD Guidance Department have been evaluated and approved by the NCAA. The NCAA only considers these courses and the grades achieved in these courses. Your “core GPA” is the grade point average you achieve in these core courses ONLY (on a 4.0 scale).

NCAA D-I Core Courses:

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of Mathematics (must be Algebra I or higher)
- 2 years of Social Studies
- 2 years of Natural or Physical Science
- 1 additional course in English, Math, or one of the Sciences
- 4 additional academic courses (i.e. Foreign Language, Philosophy, etc.)

NCAA D-II Core Courses:

- 3 years of English
- 2 years of Mathematics (must be Algebra I or higher)
- 2 years of Social Studies
- 2 years of Natural or Physical Science
- 3 additional course in English, Math, or one of the Sciences
- 4 additional academic courses (i.e. Foreign Language, Philosophy, etc.)

Notes:

- 10 of the 16 courses MUST be completed before beginning your senior year.
- Once senior year starts, all courses are LOCKED IN! This means all grades cannot be changed once senior year begins.
- If you have a low grade in one of these courses and need to bring it up, do this BEFORE senior year

NCAA D-I Qualifier Sliding Scale

Core GPA	SAT	ACT	Core GPA	SAT	ACT
≥3.55	400	37	2.725	730	60
3.525	410	38	2.7	740	61
3.5	420	39	2.675	750	61
3.475	430	40	2.65	760	62
3.45	440	41	2.625	770	63
3.425	450	41	2.6	780	64
3.4	460	42	2.575	790	65
3.375	470	42	2.55	800	66
3.35	480	43	2.525	810	67
3.325	490	44	2.5	820	68
3.3	500	44	2.475	830	69
3.275	510	45	2.45	840	70
3.25	520	46	2.425	850	70
3.225	530	46	2.4	860	71
3.2	540	47	2.375	870	72
3.175	550	47	2.35	880	73
3.15	560	48	2.325	890	74
3.125	570	49	2.3	900	75
3.1	580	49	GPAs below 2.3 are Academic Redshirt ONLY		
3.075	590	50	2.299	910	76
3.05	600	50	2.275	910	76
3.025	610	51	2.25	920	77
3	620	52	2.225	930	78
2.975	630	52	2.2	940	79
2.95	640	53	2.175	950	80
2.925	650	53	2.15	960	81
2.9	660	54	2.125	970	82
2.875	670	55	2.1	980	83
2.85	680	56	2.075	990	84
2.825	690	56	2.05	1000	85
2.8	700	57	2.025	1010	86
2.775	710	58	2	1020	86
2.75	720	59			

Source: NCAA.org

NCAA D-II Qualifier Sliding Scale

D-II Full Qualifier			D-II Partial Qualifier		
Core GPA	SAT	ACT	Core GPA	SAT	ACT
≥3.300	400	37	≥3.050	400	37
3.275	410	38	3.025	410	38
3.25	420	39	3	420	39
3.225	430	40	2.975	430	40
3.2	440	41	2.95	440	41
3.175	450	41	2.925	450	41
3.15	460	42	2.9	460	42
3.125	470	42	2.875	470	42
3.1	480	43	2.85	480	43
3.075	490	44	2.825	490	44
3.05	500	44	2.8	500	44
3.025	510	45	2.775	510	45
3	520	46	2.75	520	46
2.975	530	46	2.725	530	46
2.95	540	47	2.7	540	47
2.925	550	47	2.675	550	47
2.9	560	48	2.65	560	48
2.875	570	49	2.625	570	49
2.85	580	49	2.6	580	49
2.825	590	50	2.575	590	50
2.8	600	50	2.55	600	50
2.775	610	51	2.525	610	51
2.75	620	52	2.5	620	52
2.725	630	52	2.475	630	52
2.7	640	53	2.45	640	53
2.675	650	53	2.425	650	53
2.65	660	54	2.4	660	54
2.625	670	55	2.375	670	55
2.6	680	56	2.35	680	56
2.575	690	56	2.325	690	56
2.55	700	57	2.3	700	57
2.525	710	58	2.275	710	58
2.5	720	59	2.25	720	59
2.475	730	59	2.225	730	60
2.45	740	60	2.2	740	61
2.425	750	61	2.175	750	61
2.4	760	62	2.15	760	62
2.375	770	63	2.125	770	63
2.35	780	64	2.1	780	64
2.325	790	65	2.075	790	65
2.3	800	66	2.05	800	66
2.275	810	67	2.025	810	67
2.25	820	68	2	820	68
2.225	830	69			
2.2	840	70			

Source: NCAA.org

Scholarship Limits for College Sports

Look at the tables on this and the next page for your sport to find out just how many scholarships are offered at each level of college athletics. Keep in mind as you are looking at these, these are the number of scholarships offered each year. For example, the 13 you see under NCAA D-I Men’s Basketball means that the men’s basketball team has 13 scholarships to offer to ALL of its players. Remember, there could be five years-worth of student-athletes on the team (redshirt through fifth-year senior)—what this means is that each year, NCAA D-I basketball programs have 2.6 scholarships to offer to incoming freshmen!

Sport	Men			
	NCAA D-I	NCAA D-II	NCAA D-III	NAIA
Baseball	11.7	9	-	12
Basketball	13	10	-	11 or 6
Cross Country / Track & Field	12.6	12.6	-	5 / 12
Fencing	4.5	4.5	-	-
Football	85 or 63	36	-	24
Golf	4.5	3.6	-	5
Gymnastics	6.3	5.4	-	-
Ice Hockey	18	13.5	-	5
Lacrosse	12.6	10.8	-	-
Rifle (co-ed)	3.6	3.6	-	-
Skiing	6.3	6.3	-	-
Soccer	9.9	9	-	12
Swimming & Diving	9.9	8.1	-	8
Tennis	4.5	4.5	-	5
Volleyball	4.5	4.5	-	-
Water Polo	4.5	4.5	-	-
Wrestling	9.9	9	-	8
Average Athletic Scholarship Per Student-Athlete	\$14,270	\$5,548	-	\$6,603

Keep in mind, NCAA D-III schools CANNOT offer athletic scholarships, but they can provide financial support in other forms (grants, loans, and academic scholarships). For men’s and women’s basketball, the NAIA is split into Division-I and Division-II (Division-I can offer eleven scholarships whereas Division-II can only offer six). NCAA Cross Country and Track and Field have combined scholarship limits. This means only 12.6 scholarships can be awarded annually for men’s NCAA D-I Cross Country AND Track and Field combined. The NAIA has separate scholarships available for these sports as noted in the table. Also, the NCAA D-I football is broken down into two separate groups: the Football Bowl Subdivision, or FBS (which used to be referred to as NCAA D-IA), and the Football

Championship Subdivision, or FCS (which used to be called the NCAA D-IAA). You can see that the eighty-five and sixty-three scholarships offered in the FBS and FCS, respectively, are far more than every other sport. With the introduction of Title IX, NCAA and NAIA institutions that receive federal funds have made the availability of scholarships equal for both men and women. That being said, you can see that the number of sports in which scholarships are offered for women outweigh those offered to men. Sports like Equestrian, Rowing, and Rugby, which do not award athletic scholarships to men, provide a total of 47 scholarships at each NCAA D-I institution!

Women				
Sport	NCAA D-I	NCAA D-II	NCAA D-III	NAIA
Basketball	15	10	-	11 or 6
Beach Volleyball	6	5	-	-
Bowling	5	5	-	-
Cross Country / Track & Field	18	12.6	-	5 / 12
Equestrian	15	15	-	-
Fencing	5	4.5	-	-
Field Hockey	12	6.3	-	-
Golf	6	5.4	-	5
Gymnastics	12	6	-	-
Ice Hockey	18	18	-	-
Lacrosse	12	9.9	-	-
Rowing	20	20	-	-
Rugby	12	12	-	-
Skiing	7	6.3	-	-
Softball	14	9.9	-	12
Soccer	12	7.2	-	10
Swimming & Diving	14	8.1	-	8
Tennis	8	6	-	5
Triathlon	6.5	5	-	-
Volleyball	12	8	-	8
Water Polo	8	8	-	-
Average Athletic Scholarship Per Student-Athlete	\$15,162	\$6,814	-	\$6,964

Sources: NCAA.org and NAIA.org

Look beyond the traditional team sports (football, soccer, basketball, baseball, and softball) to see where scholarships are awarded. Also, consider that across the board, the average athletic scholarship awarded to women are slightly higher than those awarded to men. In other words, female athletes that have the skills, drive, and attitude may get an opportunity to play the sport they love in college and earn a degree for free (or almost free)!

Likelihood of Playing NCAA Athletics

Let's get realistic! The NCAA has made available some data on the likelihood of a high school student-athlete making the leap to the college ranks. Check out the table below for your sport:

Men						
Sport	High School Participants	NCAA Participants	Overall % HS to NCAA	% HS to NCAA Division I	% HS to NCAA Division II	% HS to NCAA Division III
Baseball	488,815	34,554	7.10%	2.10%	2.20%	2.80%
Basketball	546,428	18,684	3.40%	1.00%	1.00%	1.40%
Cross Country	257,691	14,412	5.60%	1.90%	1.40%	2.30%
Football	1,083,308	73,660	6.80%	2.60%	1.80%	2.40%
Golf	146,677	8,676	5.90%	2.00%	1.70%	2.20%
Ice Hockey	35,155	4,102	11.70%	4.60%	0.50%	6.50%
Lacrosse	109,522	13,446	12.30%	2.90%	2.30%	7.10%
Soccer	440,322	24,803	5.60%	1.30%	1.50%	2.80%
Swimming	133,470	9,455	7.10%	2.80%	1.10%	3.20%
Tennis	157,201	8,092	5.10%	1.70%	1.10%	2.40%
Track & Field	591,133	28,334	4.80%	1.90%	1.20%	1.70%
Volleyball	55,417	1,899	3.40%	0.70%	0.80%	1.90%
Water Polo	21,857	1,014	4.60%	2.60%	0.70%	1.30%
Wrestling	250,653	7,075	2.80%	1.00%	0.80%	1.00%

Women						
Sport	High School Participants	NCAA Participants	Overall % HS to NCAA	% HS to NCAA Division I	% HS to NCAA Division II	% HS to NCAA Division III
Basketball	429,380	16,593	3.90%	1.20%	1.10%	1.60%
Cross Country	222,516	15,958	7.20%	2.70%	1.80%	2.70%
Field Hockey	59,793	6,032	10.10%	3.00%	1.20%	5.80%
Golf	74,762	5,293	7.10%	2.90%	2.10%	2.10%
Ice Hockey	9,514	2,289	24.10%	9.00%	1.00%	14.00%
Lacrosse	88,050	11,375	12.90%	3.80%	2.60%	6.50%
Soccer	381,529	27,358	7.20%	2.40%	1.90%	2.90%
Softball	366,685	19,680	5.40%	1.60%	1.60%	2.10%
Swimming	166,747	12,356	7.40%	3.30%	1.10%	3.00%
Tennis	183,800	8,933	4.90%	1.60%	1.10%	2.20%
Track & Field	485,969	29,048	6.00%	2.70%	1.50%	1.80%
Volleyball	436,309	17,119	3.90%	1.20%	1.10%	1.60%
Water Polo	20,230	1,136	5.60%	3.30%	1.00%	1.30%

Source: NCAA.org

Suggested Time Line

Below is a sample timeline laying out when to take your standardized tests, when to take your visits, etc.

9th Grade:

- Take the required core courses (take rigorous courses whenever possible)
- Any courses not taken at OCHS, verify that they meet the NCAA/NAIA requirements
- Work hard on and off the playing surface!
- Become a good teammate – D-I and D-II schools will want to see this
- Your attitude will get you noticed
- Let the Athletic Department and Guidance Department know you are hoping to/intend to play sports in college
- Take a few “unofficial visits” (one D-I and one D-III is suggested)

10th Grade:

- Continue taking the required core courses (keep up with the rigorous courses whenever possible—remember the core GPA is what matters)
- Take the PSAT in October
- Figure out what major you may want to study
- Register for the NCAA and/or NAIA Eligibility Center
- Take a few more unofficial visits
- Identify your level of play
 - How did you compare to those student-athletes during your D-I and D-III unofficial visits in 9th grade?
 - How did you compare to those student-athletes you saw during this year’s unofficial visits?
- Determine where you may want to play your sports. Take into consideration:
 - The size of the school
 - The geographic location
 - Does the college offer a program that interests you?
 - What is the college’s student/faculty ratio?
 - Are their student or academic support services?
 - Other extracurricular opportunities
 - Scholarship offered
- Start putting together your highlights and a scrapbook/accolade book
- Keep working hard and being a great teammate!

11th Grade:

- Continue taking the required core courses (keep up with the rigorous courses whenever possible—remember the core GPA is what matters) – Do NOT slack on this!
- Register for the NCAA and/or NAIA Eligibility Center if you haven't already done so
- Take the SAT/ACT in the Fall or winter. Use the NCAA eligibility Center code 9999 as a score recipient
- Check your test scores on the sliding scale
- Continue visiting colleges
- Update your online highlight video and scrapbook
- Update your resume and cover letter
- Start building a collection of recommendation letters and/or references
- Get your core course grades up before senior year begins!

Summer before 12th Grade:

- Send out your cover letter, resume, current highlight video, schedule of games, and athletic resume

12th Grade:

- If you haven't already received an offer, maintain contact with the potential coaches—out of sight, out of mind!
- Re-take the SAT or ACT
- Take your official visits
- Keep those grades up!
- Narrow your list of colleges
- Thank all coaches that provided you with opportunities
- Receive offer(s) and notify all coaches of your choice
- Sign your NLI
- Maintain contact with your selected school (unlimited contact allowed after signing) and prepare yourself for college athletics!

Do not forget along the way to follow all requirements needed to maintain your amateur status.

Marketing Yourself

Consider yourself a salesperson and your product...is you! You are trying to grab the attention of colleges in hopes of getting an athletic scholarship.

How do I do this?

Some sports are much easier to accomplish this task. In individual sports such as Track, Swimming, Golf, and Tennis, college institutions and their coaches may hear about you if you are a state champion or are breaking records. In team sports, however, you may need to promote yourself. Here are some ways to market yourself:

- Reach out to college coaches through postal mail, email, Twitter, or by using a reputable recruiting company like Next College Student Athlete (NCSA).
- Use your network—see what college coaches your high school or club coaches know, reach out to former teammates in college to get info, etc.
- Put together your highlight video online and make sure it is shared/public.
- Visit college campuses and ask for a brief meeting (unofficial visit)
- Keep it clean! Your social media, your school record, and your communications.
- Get out there! Attend camps, combines, off-season clubs, etc.

What else should I do?

Put together a letter of introduction for your sport. Let the coach and school know who you are. Tell them about your athletic AND academic achievements (not just for your desired sport, but for ALL your sports). Tell them what program you are interested in, when you will be graduating, and a request for further communication. It may also help to provide a copy of your upcoming schedule along with newspaper articles that discuss your accomplishments, your highlight video, and your athletic resume.

My “athletic resume”?

Yes! Put together a resume letting the coach and school know your current school, graduation date and GPA, SAT scores, height, weight, stats (goals, assists, etc.), abilities (bench press, squat, etc.), honors, other sports played, and a list of references.

Remember these are sample suggestions, now it's your turn!



@OCRedRaiders

OCEAN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

