

Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference
Conference Council Meeting Report
July 8, 2026

Action Items.

1. Recommendation. To approve the minutes from January 15, 2026, Conference Council Meeting.

Unanimously Approved by the Conference Council.

Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.

2. Recommendation. To approve the 2026-27 NSIC SAAC initiatives: Mental Health Awareness, utilizing the Green Bandana Project; Wellness & Belonging; It's a Slam Dunk, Don't Drive Drunk; and Life after College. Further to specify that campus SAAC groups are required to implement three of the four NSIC SAAC initiatives and one initiative is optional; institutions have the autonomy to choose which three initiatives their campus SAAC group will implement during the 2026-27 academic year.

Effective Date. 2026-27 Academic Year.

Rationale. The group agreed that all the 2025-26 SAAC initiatives (Mental Health Awareness, utilizing the Green Bandana Project; Wellness & Belonging; It's a Slam Dunk, Don't Drive Drunk; and Life After College) are still relevant topics to continue during the 2026-27 academic year. Requiring implementation for three of the four NSIC SAAC initiatives while allowing one initiative to be optional maintains the importance of the conference SAAC initiatives while also providing campus SAAC groups the flexibility to implement other campus specific initiatives. Institutions have the autonomy to choose which three initiatives their campus SAAC will implement during the academic year. The group agreed that each campus SAAC will communicate to the conference office the initiatives it will implement by the end of September.

Unanimously Approved by the Conference Council.

3. Recommendation. To implement a cap value on financial contributions that can count towards NSIC SAAC Cup points. Further to combine the NSIC SAAC Cup categories of "Make-A-Wish Participation" and "Financial Contributions to Worthy Causes" as one financial contribution Category.

Effective Date. 2026-27 Academic Year/2026-27 NSIC SAAC Cup.

Rationale. Currently points from fundraising play a significant role in SAAC Cup standings; reviewing data from the previous five years financials have accounted for 30% to over 50% of an institution's SAAC Cup points for the top three in standings for a given year. Implementing a cap on financial contributions will better align the percentage of points institutions can earn from fundraising with the other categories of the NSIC SAAC Cup that institutions can earn points through. Combining the categories of "Make-A-Wish Participation" and "Financial Contributions to Worthy Causes" will create a concise category that falls under the financial contribution cap. A variety of dollar amounts were discussed as potential cap values; however, the group felt it would be beneficial to review data further to determine the specific cap value.

Unanimously Approved by the Conference Council.

Faculty Athletic Representatives.

4. Recommendation. To amend the NSIC academic awards language as outlined in Supplement FAR-A.

Effective Date. Immediate.

Rationale. The amendments provide clarifying language for the NSIC academic awards. Specific to the Myles Brand award, the group discussed the need to add “undergraduate” to the language to assist in the implementation of the term “academic senior” to provide clarity for when a student-athlete can be nominated and receive the award.

Unanimously Approved by the Conference Council.

5. Recommendation. To create a working group of FARs and compliance administrators to develop language for an NSIC Team GPA award with the goal of implementation during the 2026-27 academic year.

Effective Date. Immediate.

Rationale. The working group allows the opportunity for compliance and FARs to work together to strengthen the details and implementation of a Team GPA award.

Unanimously Approved by the Conference Council.

College Sports Communicators.

6. Recommendation. To have football coaches share a tentative travel roster, with the most up-to-date jersey numbers, with their CSC no later than 12 p.m. on Thursday.

Effective Date. Immediate.

Rationale. The group felt that having an approved travel roster would help with statistical accuracy by removing any players that didn’t travel or have duplicate jersey numbers. The visiting CSC would share this information with opposing CSC before the end of the day on Thursday.

Approved by the Conference Council 13-1-2.

7. Recommendation. To have all school utilize the Genius Sports stats program for Baseball and Softball.

Effective Date. Immediate.

Rationale. The group felt that the Genius Sports program for baseball and softball would be the best fit for the league moving forward. The program is web based and free of charge at this time. The schools would no longer need a 32-bit computer for entering stats for baseball and softball games.

Unanimously Approved by the Conference Council.

Informational Items.

1. Welcome & Opening Remarks. The group was welcomed and thanked for their time.
2. NSIC Mission, Vision & Values Statements. The Conference Council reviewed the NSIC Mission, Vision, and Value statements.
3. Approval of January 2026 Minutes. The group reviewed the minutes from January 15, 2026, Conference Council Meeting. No further discussion was had; a recommendation was made to accept the minutes.
4. NCAA Committee Updates.
 - a. Division II Management Council. Jen Flowers, Winona State, and Kevin Buisman, Minnesota State provided an update on behalf of Division II Management Council. Feedback was sought from the group on the implementation scenarios of the Division II age-based eligibility model. Feedback was also sought on a policy recommendation that is coming forward from Division II Championships Committee to require specific numbers of non-conference contests for teams to be eligible for Division II championships. The group was encouraged to share additional feedback with Jen and Kevin in advance of Management Council's upcoming meeting. A reminder was provided that on July 27th a meeting is scheduled for the Conference Council and compliance administrators to receive a Management Council update.
 - b. Division II Championships Committee. Regan McAthie, Concordia-St. Paul provided an update on behalf of Division II Championships Committee. Championships Committee's June meeting focused on the triennial budget review. Several triennial budget proposals of note: a day of rest for volleyball at regional and final site competition, a three-weekend format for men's and women's basketball, a super region format for women's soccer, and covering per diem/travel for men's and women's golf regional competition. The Championships Committee approved minimums for DII Championship ticket prices to create consistency for early round host sites. NPI dials will be ratified in August for spring sports. Lastly, the group was informed of a policy recommendation that will be considered by Management Council, reference Management Council information for more details.
 - c. Division II Athletic Directors Association. Britt Lauritsen, Bemidji State, informed the group that in June D2ADA was provided with a state of Division II report; main topics were artificial intelligence, risk management, and mental wellness for administrators.
5. 2025-26 Strategic Plan Updates. The conference wrapped up year one of the five-year plan; the group was provided highlights of the work done during the 2025-26 academic year.
 - a. Midco Sports Plus Partnership. Reminder information regarding the minimum broadcast standards and the revenue distribution plan was reviewed. Andy Price, Midco Sports Plus, joined the meeting to provide an overview of upcoming items. The NSIC Network on Midco Sports Plus will officially launch on July 16. The first of three training sessions on how to utilize the backend of the platform will take place on July 14. Specific testing for each institution will occur in August prior to the first competition.
 - b. Sports Sponsorship. The group was provided with the 2026-27 Sports Sponsorship chart. From the information that institutions submitted as part of the sports sponsorship survey, two sports – women's wrestling and women's flag football – arose with interest as potential conference emerging sports. Two zoom meetings will be held in July for institutions interested in sponsoring the two sports.
 - c. Membership Engagement & Leadership. The group was provided with the NSIC & Division II Leadership document which identifies the representatives from the NSIC that serve on NCAA Committees and as NSIC sport liaisons. Recognition was given to those

in leadership positions and members of the group were encouraged to continue to apply to serve on NCAA committees.

6. NSIC SAAC Business Meeting. Two recommendations were brought forward from the conference SAAC; both were approved by the Conference Council. The group was informed that National SAAC is seeking feedback from student-athletes on the Division II age-based eligibility model. Connor Fournier, NSIC National SAAC Representative, will be sending an email in the coming days to the student-athletes that attended SAAC Summit to solicit feedback.
7. NSIC Hall of Fame Committee Update. The NSIC Hall of Fame committee is working on creating a rubric to assist the committee in the initial review of Hall of Fame nominations. The rubric will be a guiding tool to help the committee evaluate and select the best of the best understanding fifteen institutions are eligible to submit nominations while only eight spots are available for NSIC Hall of Fame induction each year.
8. Summer Meeting Reviews.
 - a. Faculty Athletic Representatives. A recap of the Faculty Athletic Representative (FARs) meeting was provided. Two recommendations were brought forward, one to amend language in the NSIC academic awards criteria, and one to form a working group of FARs and compliance personnel to work on the development of an NSIC Team GPA award.
 - b. College Sports Communicators. A recap of the CSC meeting was provided. Two recommendations were brought forward and approved.
 - c. Compliance Administrators. A recap of the compliance administrators' meeting was provided. Of note, the group engaged in healthy discussion regarding the implementation of legislative and potential eligibility changes.
9. Standing Business Items.
 - a. 2025-26 Year in Review. The 2025-26 Year in Review document was provided to the group, which highlights the success of member institutions and student-athletes.
 - b. NSIC Marketing & Corporate Partnerships Update. The group was provided with the NSIC Marketing & Media document, which provides information on the external communication platforms the NSIC utilizes. The group was provided with a document that highlights the top partners of the league and were encouraged to utilize them, when possible, on their campuses.
 - c. NSIC Points of Pride & Academic Accomplishments. The NSIC Points of Pride and Academic Accomplishments were provided.
 - d. 2026-27 NSIC Organizational Chart. The group was provided with the 2026-27 NSIC Organizational Chart. There are current positions that need to be filled, and solicitations will be communicated in the coming weeks.
 - e. Future Meeting Schedule. The group was provided with the future meeting schedule for the 2026-27 academic year. Of note, during the NCAA Convention the NSIC Conference Council and Athletic Administrators Council meetings will take place on the morning of January 14th.

Participants.**Unable to attend*

Name, Title	Institution
Dr. Heather Bart, Faculty Athletic Representative	Augustana University
Dr. Marcia Entwistle, Faculty Athletic Representative	Augustana University
Josh Morton, Director of Athletics	Augustana University
Dr. Kimberly Miller, Senior Woman Administrator	Augustana University
Dr. Shannon Norman, Faculty Athletic Representative	Bemidji State University
Britt Lauritsen, Director of Athletics	Bemidji State University
Erin Mykleby, Senior Woman Administrator	Bemidji State University
Jennifer Myers, Faculty Athletic Representative	Concordia University, St. Paul
Regan McAthie, Director of Athletics	Concordia University, St. Paul
Allison Meadows, Senior Woman Administrator	Concordia University, St. Paul
Karen Crane, Faculty Athletic Representative	University of Jamestown
Brian Mistro, Director of Athletics	University of Jamestown
Hannah Griffin, Senior Woman Administrator	University of Jamestown
Dr. Carmen Cain, Faculty Athletic Representative	University of Mary
Marcus Wagner, Director of Athletics	University of Mary
Jeni Walsh, Senior Woman Administrator	University of Mary
Dr. Tim Dudley, Faculty Athletic Representative	University of Minnesota Crookston
Stephanie Helgeson, Director of Athletics*	University of Minnesota Crookston
Bridget Steffes, Senior Woman Administrator	University of Minnesota Crookston
Dr. Katie Schofield, Faculty Athletic Representative	University of Minnesota Duluth
Forrest Karr, Director of Athletics	University of Minnesota Duluth
Abbey Strong, Senior Woman Administrator	University of Minnesota Duluth
Dr. Jeffrey Pribyl, Faculty Athletic Representative	Minnesota State University, Mankato
Kevin Buisman, Director of Athletics	Minnesota State University, Mankato
Morgan Goedken, Senior Woman Administrator	Minnesota State University, Mankato
Dr. Ellen Fagerstrom, Faculty Athletic Representative	Minnesota State University Moorhead
Dr. Julia Poplin, Faculty Athletic Representative	Minnesota State University Moorhead
Chad Markuson, Director of Athletics	Minnesota State University Moorhead
Shannon Curtin, Senior Woman Administrator	Minnesota State University Moorhead
Dr. Kristi Berg, Faculty Athletic Representative*	Minot State University
Kevin Harmon, Director of Athletics	Minot State University
Jordan Boisner, Senior Woman Administrator	Minot State University
Dr. Chelsee Shortt, Faculty Athletic Representative	Northern State University
Nate Davis, Director of Athletics	Northern State University
Terri Holmes, Senior Woman Administrator	Northern State University
Ashley Gauer, Senior Associate Athletic Director	Northern State University
Mike Thompson, Faculty Athletic Representative	University of Sioux Falls
Jon Hart, Director of Athletics	University of Sioux Falls
Carley Neumann, Senior Woman Administrator	University of Sioux Falls
Dr. Sonya Vierstraete, Faculty Athletic Representative	Southwest Minnesota State University
Travis Whipple, Director of Athletics*	Southwest Minnesota State University
Allison Monson, Senior Woman Administrator	Southwest Minnesota State University
Devin Gorter, Associate Athletic Director	Southwest Minnesota State University
Dr. William Hudson, Faculty Athletic Representative	St. Cloud State University
Holly Schreiner, Director of Athletics	St. Cloud State University
Abby Rittenhouse, Interim Senior Woman Administrator	St. Cloud State University
Dr. Charles Parker, Faculty Athletic Representative*	Wayne State College
Mike Powicki, Director of Athletics	Wayne State College
Jadin Wagner, Senior Woman Administrator	Wayne State College

Marcy Faircloth, Faculty Athletic Representative	Winona State University
Jen Flowers, Director of Athletics	Winona State University
Melanie Brunsdon, Senior Woman Administrator*	Winona State University
Joey Mueller, Director of Athletic Communications	Winona State University
Erin Lind, Commissioner	Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference
Nick Kornder, Assistant Commissioner	Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference
Allison Cordes, Assistant Commissioner	Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference
Andy Sailer, Assistant Commissioner	Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference
Andrea Palmen, Assistant Commissioner	Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference

NSIC Academic Awards

3.3.5 Dr. Britton Scholar-Athlete Award for Academic Excellence and the Willis R. Kelly Scholar-Athlete Award for Academic Excellence.

3.3.5.1 Each full member institution selects its single male nominee from a conference sponsored sport based on the criteria listed below. The nominees shall comprise the men's NSIC Honor Student-Athlete Award winners. The award is named for Dr. William Britton who was the Institutional Representative for Bemidji State University.

3.3.5.2 Each full member institution selects its single female nominee from a conference sponsored sport based on the criteria listed below. The nominees shall comprise the women's NSIC Honor Student-Athlete Award winners. The award is named for Willis R. Kelly who was the Athletic Director at the University of Minnesota-Morris.

3.3.5.3 The NSIC Subcommittee, empowered by the Conference Council to make the NSIC award selections, shall be made up of the Faculty Athletic Representatives Council.

3.3.5.4 The committee shall select one recipient for each award. There shall not be co-recipients.

3.3.5.5 Timeline.

3.3.5.5.1 By March 10, the conference office initiates the process by emailing FARs the forms for nominating individuals.

3.3.5.5.2 By April 1, FARs will submit to the conference office the nominations.

3.3.5.5.3 Within five business days of April 1, the conference office will send out the nominations to the FARs.

3.3.5.5.4 On April 13, the conference office will send a reminder to those FARs who have not sent in their votes.

3.3.5.5.5 By April 15, FARs will submit their vote electronically to the conference office.

3.3.5.5.6 Within two business days, the conference office will send the results to the FARs and others.

3.3.5.6 Processes.

3.3.5.6.1 The FAR may not vote for a student-athlete from their own institution.

3.3.5.6.2 FARs will vote electronically for three candidates for each award. These will be numbered 1 for top choice, 2 for second choice and 3 for third choice. No ties are allowed.

3.3.5.6.3 Conference office will convert the votes from a 1, 2, 3 ranking to a 3, 2, 1 ranking. The votes will then be tallied.

3.3.5.6.4 The student-athlete with the highest total will be the award winner.

3.3.5.6.5 If there is a tie for top spot, the student-athletes (in the tie) with the most number of 3's after conversion will be the award winner. If a tie still exists, the FARs will

- vote again only for those student-athletes in the tied position. Voting will be concluded within one week.
- 3.3.5.7** The Britton Award for Academic Excellence and the Kelly Award for Academic Excellence includes an appropriate plaques (one for school and one for award winner).
- 3.3.5.8** The minimum qualifications for these awards are:
- 3.3.5.8.1** Minimum GPA of 3.5 in undergraduate at the NSIC institution through the most recent academic period, and 3.75 graduate GPA. If graduate, must include both graduate and undergraduate GPA. The student must have at least completed their academic junior year, at the end of the spring term as required by the member institution. *(Revised: 7/12/2023)*
 - 3.3.5.8.2** Transfer students must have completed at least one year at the NSIC institution.
 - 3.3.5.8.3** Evidence of academic excellence beyond the GPA (scholarships, prizes and recognition).
 - 3.3.5.8.4** Evidence of participation in the life of the institution (all post-secondary schools attended) other than athletics.
 - 3.3.5.8.5** Evidence of athletic performance.
 - 3.3.5.8.6** Participation in at least 2/3 of the varsity events of the student's primary sport in the previous season, whether or not that season is completed.
 - 3.3.5.8.7** Other evidence that might support the nomination (active in the life of the non-university community, etc.).
- 3.3.5.9** In the selection process, more weight will be given to academic performance (60%) than to the other combined criteria (40%); athletic accomplishments to be given no more than 20% of the weight.
- 3.3.5.10** The award can only be won one time in a student-athlete's career.

- 3.3.6 NSIC/Myles Brand All-Academic with Distinction Award.** The NSIC/Myles Brand All-Academic with Distinction Award ~~is an undergraduate award that is~~ will be awarded to academic senior student-athletes. They must have a cumulative ~~undergraduate~~ GPA of 3.75 or higher at the point of nomination. Award recipients will receive a certificate and a watch from the NSIC. The award will be presented annually each spring (including associate members). A student-athlete can only receive the Myles Brand Award once in their career. *(Revised: 7/12/2023)*
- 3.3.6.1** Academically the student-athlete must have completed at least one full academic year ~~of undergraduate work~~ at their current institution (student must be in at least their 3rd academic-year-semester at their institution). *(Adopted: 7/12/2023)*
 - 3.3.6.2** Athletically the student-athlete is in at least their second year of competition at their current institution. *(Adopted: 7/12/2023)*

3.3.7 NSIC Elite 18 Award. The NSIC Elite 18 Award recognizes outstanding student-athletes in the conference. These student-athletes have achieved at the championship level in the classroom and in their sport. The NSIC Elite 18 Award is presented to the student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade point average in each sponsored sport according to the following criteria. *Note: The award description will be automatically updated in the NSIC Operational Standards for the Conduct of Sports to reflect any changes to the number of sports sponsored by the conference.*

3.3.7.1 Selection Criteria.

- 3.3.7.1.1** Academically the student-athlete ~~has achieved at least sophomore status as defined by their own institution.~~ must have completed at least one full academic year at their current institution (student must be in at least their 3rd academic-year-semester at their institution).
- 3.3.7.1.2** Athletically the student-athlete is in their second year of competition at their current institution.
- 3.3.7.1.3** Athletically the student-athlete is an active member on the roster and a member of the designated squad size for the sport at the championship site.
- 3.3.7.1.4** A student-athlete may win the award only once per academic year even if they participate in more than one sport.
- 3.3.7.1.5** Grade point average is based on the cumulative undergraduate grade point average at the time of nomination as calculated by each institution. Grade point average calculations will be based on a 4.00 scale and will be reported to two decimal places. Graduate-students are eligible, based on their undergraduate GPA.
- 3.3.7.1.6** In the event of a tie based on grade point average, the award is presented to the student-athlete with the highest total number of undergraduate credit hours earned as calculated by each institution. *(Revised: 7/15/21)*
- 3.3.7.1.7** If a tie still exists after looking at the total number of credit hours earned, all student-athletes who are tied shall be presented with the NSIC Elite 18 Award.
- 3.3.7.2** The following table indicates who is eligible for the NSIC Elite 18 Award. For team-oriented sports, student-athletes who are an active member on the roster and a member of the designated squad size for the sport at the conference championship site will be eligible for the award. For individual sports, student-athletes who participate at the conference meet will be eligible for the award. For football, student-athletes who are members of the North Division Champion team(s), the South Division Champion team(s) and Overall Conference Championship team(s) are eligible. For wrestling, student-athletes who are members of the Overall Conference Championship team(s) and those named to first or second team all-conference are eligible. Each institution is limited to one nomination per sport. Affiliate members are eligible for the NSIC Elite 18 Award.

Note: The selection criteria will be automatically updated in the NSIC Operational Standards for the Conduct of Sports to reflect any changes to the championship formats.

Fall Sports	NSIC Finals Site Format	NSIC Elite 18 Award Eligibility
(M) Cross Country	Conference Meet (15 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible
(W) Cross Country	Conference Meet (16 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible
Football	North Champion(s), South Champion(s), Overall champion(s)	Only participants on north/south division and overall conference championship team(s) eligible
(W) Soccer	Conference Tournament (4 teams)	Only participants on four teams at conference tournament finals site eligible
Volleyball	Conference Tournament (4 teams)	Only participants on four teams at conference tournament finals site eligible
Winter Sports	NSIC Finals Site Format	NSIC Elite 18 Award Eligibility
(M) Basketball	Conference Tournament (8 teams)	Only participants on eight teams at conference tournament finals site eligible
(W) Basketball	Conference Tournament (8 teams)	Only participants on eight teams at conference tournament finals site eligible
(W) Swimming & Diving	Conference Meet (10 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible
(M) Indoor T&F	Conference Meet (13 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible
(W) Indoor T&F	Conference Meet (16 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible
Wrestling	Overall champion(s)	Only participants on the overall conference championship team(s) and individuals named as first or second team all-conference eligible
Spring Sports	NSIC Finals Site Format	NSIC Elite 18 Award Eligibility
Baseball	Conference Tournament (8 teams)	All participants at conference tournament eligible
Softball	Conference Tournament (10 teams)	All participants at conference tournament eligible
(W) Tennis	Conference Tournament (6 teams)	All participants at conference tournament eligible
(M) Outdoor T&F	Conference Meet (13 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible
(W) Outdoor T&F	Conference Meet (16 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible
(M) Golf	Conference Meet (11 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible
(W) Golf	Conference Meet (14 teams)	All participants at conference meet eligible

3.3.8 All-Academic Team of Excellence and All-Academic Team.

3.3.8.1 An All-Academic Team of Excellence, along with an All-Academic Team will be recognized in each conference sponsored sport with the size of the team to be unlimited.

3.3.8.2 Criteria. The following criteria shall be used:

3.3.8.2.1 The student-athlete must be a member of the varsity ~~traveling~~ team roster.

3.3.8.2.2 To be named to the All-Academic Team of Excellence, student-athletes must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.60 or higher (4.0 scale).

3.3.8.2.3 To be named to the All-Academic Team, the student-athlete must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.20-3.59 (4.0 scale).

3.3.8.2.4 Academically the student-athlete must have completed at least one full academic year at their current institution (student must be in at least their 3rd academic-year-semester at their institution). *(Revised: 7/15/21)*

3.3.8.2.5 Athletically the student-athlete is in at least their second year of competition at their current institution (true freshman, red-shirt freshmen and ineligible athletic transfers are not eligible). *(Revised: 7/15/21)*

3.3.8.2.6 Graduate students are eligible. Their cumulative undergraduate GPA must meet criteria. Their nomination is based upon cumulative graduate GPA at that institution if they have earned at least 8 graduate credits, otherwise their cumulative undergraduate GPA will be used. Must be in at least their second season of NSIC competition. *(Adopted: 7/15/21)*

3.3.8.3 The Assistant Commissioner for Media Relations shall send a form to each CSC requesting the names of qualifying student-athletes for each of the all-academic teams from the current sports season on October 1, January 15 and April 1 of each year.

3.3.8.4 The CSCs shall send a list of qualifiers to the Assistant Commissioner.

3.3.8.5 The teams shall be announced 2-4 weeks after the conclusion of the NSIC season for each sport.

3.3.8.6 All members of the men's and women's NSIC All-Academic Teams shall receive a merit certificate. The conference office shall send out the certificates.