



Fall Meeting Recap

Oct. 5, 2016

COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS | CONFERENCE COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION | ATHLETICS DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dear NAIA Membership:

This year's fall meeting was especially rewarding to me as I continue to be encouraged by the positive engagement among the influential bodies of our association!

The efforts of our Growth Advisory Panel over the past year – including presidents, athletic directors and commissioners – laid the foundation for our new Vision 2021 Growth Strategy endorsed by the COP during this meeting.

Our focused strategy will help the NAIA maintain the momentum of this past weekend and propel us in the future as we recruit and retain members, reinforce and improve our core services and continue to expand opportunities with new growth initiatives.

As I reflect on the progress of the past few months, it's exciting to me when I see these initiatives move the NAIA towards creating a stronger 'Return on Athletics' for new and existing members and above all, our student-athletes!

I look forward to continuing the momentum as we work together in making the NAIA the best place for college athletics and the student-athletes we serve!

All the best,

Jim Carr, President and Chief Executive Officer

Joint Meeting of COP/CCA/ADA

On Monday morning (Sept. 26), members of our leadership groups presented updates and solicited comments on four important areas of study. Additional direction from those in attendance will inform further discussions ahead of the 2017 NAIA Convention.

- The Athletics Directors Association is evaluating financial aid policy and limits in the NAIA, the first such study since 1997. The ADA noted current financial aid data includes only student-athletes who played in varsity contests. The task force plans to collect additional data to ensure a complete understanding of financial aid expenditures.
- The current status of two divisions in NAIA basketball is being evaluated by an ADA task force. Current trends reflect a narrowing gap in financial aid averages between NAIA Division I and Division II programs while Division I postseason participation ratios continue to rise (now 34%).
- A task force formed by the National Administrative Council is reviewing postseason ratios and formats approved in 2007. Discussion focused on the student-athlete experience, particularly at opening-round sites, and the effect of high postseason participation ratios on travel costs.
- Postseason travel expenses have risen in recent years due to a number of factors. The COP Executive Committee has approved a study group to evaluate the financial impact on participating institutions, including options for cost containment and alternative funding strategies.

These topics are in the early stages of study. As each group continues its analysis, the membership will be updated and offered opportunities for commentary and feedback. Interrelated topics will require close collaboration throughout the process.



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Council of Presidents (COP)

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Vision 2021, presented by NAIA President and CEO Jim Carr as a result of NAIA Growth Advisory Panel discussions over the past 18 months, led the fall agenda of the Council of Presidents.

Vision 2021 highlights the NAIA and its members as experts in the business of small college athletics and positions member institutions to maximize 'Return On Athletics' and optimize the student-athlete experience.

Vision 2021 focuses on three key 'value' strategies:

1. Retain existing and recruit new NAIA members.
2. Leverage expertise in intercollegiate athletics to maximize value for student-athletes and member institutions.
3. Drive growth in non-dues revenue and provide additional financial value for membership.

A primary objective of this strategy includes articulating and implementing the 'Return on Athletics' concept by leveraging information and expertise that already exists on NAIA campuses to drive smart decisions regarding athletics on individual campuses.

Council members received information on increased activity in membership recruitment and retention. The national office anticipates applications from approximately nine institutions this year, the starting point for achieving a goal of 275 NAIA members by 2021. The COP's membership committee also approved a recommendation to move Sierra Nevada College from "associate" to "active" member status.

The COP reviewed the current status of drug education and testing, which encourages institutions to participate in NAIA drug education for all student-athletes and initiates drug testing at NAIA championships beginning in 2017-18. The council elected to co-sponsor a series of drug-testing

proposals with the National Administrative Council for the 2017 NAIA Convention, including a provision that, if adopted, will require NAIA student-athletes to receive NAIA-approved drug education either before participation in NAIA postseason play or prior to competing in the student's second season of competition, whichever comes first (effective 2018). The COP also favors a proposal that requires an institution to vacate a team championship in the event a member of the team tests positive as part of championship drug screening.

Following joint sessions with the CCA and ADA board, COP members agreed to add representatives of the council to groups studying financial aid limitations, postseason expenses, direct qualification and basketball divisions. The council also approved communication to these groups advocating for "cost neutrality."

After considerable discussion from many leadership perspectives, the COP voted to relocate the 2016 Cross Country National Championships from Charlotte, North Carolina. The Council of Presidents made this decision out of concern that the state's HB2 legislation created an atmosphere where discrimination potentially exists for some NAIA student-athletes and personnel.

The revised SAT test and its published concordance tables were discussed in relation to NAIA initial-eligibility requirements. The COP agreed to co-sponsor with the NAIA National Eligibility Committee proposed legislation for the 2017 convention to establish minimum 860 SAT and 16 ACT scores for eligibility determinations for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 academic years.

Current and out-going chair, John Reynders, Morningside College (Iowa), was recognized for his service. Newly-elected chair, Kent Henning, Grand View University (Iowa), will begin his term in January 2017.



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Conference Commissioners Association (CCA)



The topic 'Return on Athletics' (ROA), which is one of the primary concepts coming out of the NAIA's newly adopted Vision 2021 strategic philosophy, was at the forefront during day one.

The CCA concluded that the student-athlete experience is the core of the NAIA and should be a focal point throughout the development of the ROA metric. The group was nearly unanimous that a strong student-athlete experience directly correlates to better student retention and graduation rates, which leads to increased institutional revenue and a stronger association.

The CCA voted to approve a series of recommended changes proposed by the Conference Review Committee (CRC) – the group tasked with holding conferences accountable to the requirements found in the NAIA bylaws and an NAIA conference white paper – to the current conference evaluation process.

The bulk of the changes occurred in the sections on Champions of Character/Conduct in Competition and in marketing, communications, and sports information.

The CCA executive committee gathered feedback from the full body on how Arbiter revenues should be redistributed. A few major considerations that came out of the weekend's discussion:

- Use additional funds to bring conference personnel to the annual NAIA Convention.
- Reinvest revenues to develop a marketing plan tailored to recruit new officials.
- Develop an officiating educational curriculum for schools to implement on campus or to be distributed through the NAIA Academy platform, creating a future pipeline of young officials.

Similar to past years, the CCA ended the weekend with a conversation around 'current topics' and variety of professional development workshops and roundtables.

ADA Board of Directors (ADA-BOD)



Fifteen members of the board gathered for the second meeting in conjunction with scheduled leadership meetings of the COP and CCA. The agenda covered a range

of topics designed to move the ADA forward with planning and purpose, and just as importantly, to utilize the ADA voice in decision-making with the CCA and COP.

The meeting began with NAIA President Jim Carr presenting the new NAIA Vision 2021, which was fully supported by the COP. This strategy grew out of the work completed by the NAIA Growth Advisory Panel, with athletics director representation from Darin Wilson, Kevin Steele, Bruce Parker and Jim Abbott, along with six presidents and two conference commissioners. Input from the Growth Advisory Panel served as the basis for Vision 2021 to position the NAIA for future growth. ADA National Office Liaison Lynn Meredith gathered opinions of what 'Return on Athletics' means to athletics directors.

Two task forces led by athletics directors were also discussed: evaluation of scholarship maximums (led by Jim Abbott) and a review of one division of basketball (led by Joe Glover). Both groups will continue to meet and evaluate what is best for our association.

ADA board members also discussed the possibility of a dues structure within the ADA and a variety of topics including the AD mentor program, an ADA Communications Tool, FLSA impact and drug testing.

The board determined to continue the NACDA partnership, and the ADA will look for ways to engage the NAIA athletics directors to join NACDA and attend the annual NACDA Convention. Jim Abbott and Jeff Bain continue to serve as key NAIA representatives as members of the NACDA Board and work to include more NAIA topics for professional development at the NACDA Convention.