



COACHES TOOLKIT

PlayNAIA Student-Athlete
Eligibility Guide

NAIA
THE *RIGHT WAY* TO
PLAY

NAIA.org | PlayNAIA.org



NAIA Coaches Checklist

- ☐ **Get Your Athletes to Register**
Encourage your athletes to kick-start their eligibility journey by visiting playnaia.org.
 - ☐ **Collect ECID Numbers & Add Athletes to Your Short List**
Once your students are registered, ask them for their ECID numbers. This will let you add them to your shortlist, giving you access to track their eligibility progress.
 - ☐ **Have Athletes Approve Your Short List Access**
Remind students to log in to their PlayNAIA profile and approve your Short List access request. They'll find it under their "Current Tasks" list when they are logged in.
 - ☐ **Help Athletes Complete All "Current Tasks"**
Encourage your students to complete all the tasks in their "Current Tasks" list. Completing these is essential to keep moving forward in the review process.
 - ▶ Remember, with your Short List access, you can click on the "Student Dashboard" and see what's left on their Current Tasks list!
 - ☐ **Monitor the Review Stage**
Once your students reach the review stage, it's essential that they stay up to date with their profiles. If the review team has any follow-up questions, they'll post a 'Reply to Questions' task on their PlayNAIA profile. Staying on top of this will help expedite the review process!
 - ☐ **Receive Final Eligibility Decision**
Once the eligibility review is complete, students will receive their eligibility center decision. They can check the official determination under the "Decision Details" tab of their student dashboard.
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Best Practices Guide for Coaches

1. Start the PlayNAIA Registration Process EARLY

- The sooner a student-athlete creates their PlayNAIA.org account, the less likely they are to miss games. Summer delays (counselor availability, transcript timing) are common—encourage registration no later than the spring of senior year.

2. Immediately Retrieve the Student's Eligibility Center ID (ECID#) After Registration

- As soon as the student completes initial registration, have them send you their 7-digit ECID#. Students can locate this number in the top left-hand corner of their profile.
- Log in to your institution's portal at PlayNAIA.org → "Institutional Dashboard" → "Add to Short List" and enter the ECID#. Once added, you'll receive real-time eligibility updates and can click "Student Dashboard" to monitor progress on transcripts, test scores, etc.

3. Proactively Review Academic Credentials During the Recruiting Process

For Incoming Freshmen:

- Confirm the student is on track to meet the [entering freshman requirements](#).
- [Mid-year eligibility](#) is an option available for students who did not meet eligibility requirements during their initial PlayNAIA registration! A freshman who meets just ONE requirement would need to pass 12 credit hours with a "C" or better during their first term with your institution.

For Transfer Student-Athletes:

- Identify early if the student will need non-term (winter/interim/summer) coursework to gain eligibility. Click [here](#) to see how credit hours earned during non-terms may affect a student's eligibility.
- Ensure that students request their transcripts from all institutions they have been enrolled at. If their previous institution does not use the [NAIA Registrar's Portal](#), students can check whether their school uses one of our approved third-party transcript vendors.
- **Option 1: National Student Clearinghouse** Visit: studentclearinghouse.org
 - Select "Employer/Other" as the recipient type.
 - Enter "NAIA Eligibility Center" as the recipient name.
 - Choose "Other" as the reason.
 - Recipient Email: documents@naia.org

Option 2: Parchment Visit: parchment.com

- Select: NAIA Eligibility Center – Accepting College/GED Transcripts Only

Option 3: Physical Mail (only if your school doesn't offer electronic delivery) Mail official transcript(s) in a sealed school envelope to:

- NAIA Eligibility Center – Mailroom
120 W 12th Street – Level S1 (Suite 700 if Level S1 does not appear)
Kansas City, MO 64105

Tip: Search online for “[Your College/University Name] + transcript” to locate how a school can send official transcripts.

For International Student-Athletes:

- Encourage your prospective international student-athletes to register and start their InCred evaluation as soon as possible, by visiting incredevals.org.
- Students who graduate from an international secondary/high school, or have enrollment at an international university, are required to receive an InCred evaluation. Student-athletes must complete the InCred and PlayNAIA processes to receive an eligibility determination.

4. Help Home-Schooled and GED Students Plan Ahead

- [Eligibility requirements](#) are a bit different for home school/GED graduates, as GPA and class rank are not factored in. Direct them to free/low-cost test-preparation resources (free practice tests available at [CollegeBoard](#) and [ACT.org](#)) and encourage early attempts at the SAT or ACT. Verify dual-enrollment transcripts are sent directly from the college to the NAIA Eligibility Center if they are enrolled in college-level coursework.

5. Leverage Your Campus Compliance Team

- Do not guess complicated cases (international credits, transferable hours, 24/36-Hour Rule, seasons of competition issues, etc.). Loop in your compliance officer, faculty athletics representative (FAR), and registrar as early as possible. They can help interpret NAIA Bylaws and assist when complicated eligibility situations arise.

6. Understand the Difference Between PlayNAIA and NAIA Connect Logins

- PlayNAIA.org (NAIA Eligibility Center) and NAIAConnect.org (new membership training & roster platform) are separate systems with separate logins.
- Tip: When logging into NAIA Connect, you must type the “.naia” extension after your institutional email (e.g., coach@school.edu.naia).

By treating eligibility registration as part of your normal recruiting and onboarding process — you dramatically reduce the risk of student-athletes missing competition dates and administrative stress when certifying your students.

[PlayNAIA.org](https://playnaia.org) – Where Eligibility Starts.



NAIA RECRUITING TIMELINE

Recommended Registration Windows for PlayNAIA Eligibility

HIGH SCHOOL PROSPECTS



**REGISTER WITH
PlayNAIA® by End
of Junior Year**

TRANSFER PROSPECTS



**REGISTER
IMMEDIATELY
UPON INTEREST**

INTERNATIONAL PROSPECTS



**REGISTER 2-3
MONTHS BEFORE
CAMPUS ARRIVAL**

Early registration helps ensure timely eligibility decisions and full participation from Day One.



NAIA.org | #PlayNAIA #TheRightWayToPlay | PlayNAIA.org

For more information about NAIA recruiting practices, click [here](#).

Reapplication of Student PlayNAIA Profile

Reapplication is the process that institutions and students use to have the NAIA Eligibility Center provide an eligibility determination for a new term. If a student registered with the eligibility center in a previous term and the following describes that student's situation, then the NAIA school and the student-athlete will need to take steps to [reapply](#).

1. Currently not eligible: A currently enrolled student previously received an eligibility center decision of 'Not Eligible' and has made up the academic work necessary to become eligible for a subsequent term.
2. Never received a decision: A student never received an eligibility center decision for a variety of reasons, including not having provided all required information.
3. Eligible but never enrolled: A student received an eligible determination, never enrolled at an NAIA institution (OR has not maintained continuous identification at the same NAIA institution), never competed and now plans to compete.

Please refer to the [Situation Analysis](#) for additional descriptions of when students need to reapply.

Let's Get You Registered with PlayNAIA

Sample Email Templates

General Registration Email



Hello [Student Name],

We're excited for you to take the first step towards becoming an NAIA student-athlete!

To compete in the NAIA, you must register with the NAIA Eligibility Center and receive your eligibility decision. Follow these steps to get started:

To complete the registration process, you will need the following things:

- Computer or phone
- Personal email address
- Payment methods available for registration fee (credit/debit card, Google Pay, [fee waiver](#))
- High school/secondary and post-secondary enrollment history (if applicable)

Steps to Register:

1. Go to www.playnaia.org and click "Register Student" using your email address.
2. Fill out your profile and submit the "Register to Play" task.

For additional questions, please let us know or contact the NAIA Eligibility Center at ecinfo@naia.org.

Best,





Let's Get You Registered with PlayNAIA!

Hello [Student Name],

We're excited to welcome you to the #Insert Team and Sport# program! Your journey as a student-athlete is about to begin, and we look forward to seeing all that you will accomplish.

Before you can compete in the NAIA, you need to register with the NAIA Eligibility Center and receive your eligibility decision. Here's how to get started:

Steps to Register:

1. Visit www.playnaia.org, enter an email address for your profile, and click "Register Student".
2. Complete your profile and the "Register to Play" task.
3. Ask your high school to upload your official transcript via their school's PlayNAIA High School Portal. [NAIA High School Portal Guide](#)
4. If you've taken the ACT or SAT, send your scores directly to the NAIA using code **9876**.
5. Monitor your PlayNAIA account for updates and tasks.

Freshman Eligibility Reminder: The eligibility center can only accept your high school transcript through your high school's PlayNAIA portal. Click on the transcript task to see who at your high school has access to upload your official transcript.

For more details, refer to the [Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete](#)

Best,





Hello [Student Name],

We're excited to welcome you to the #Insert Team and Sport# program! We can't wait to see the impact you will have on the team.

To compete in the NAIA, you must register with the NAIA Eligibility Center and receive your eligibility decision. Follow these steps to get started:

Steps to Register:

1. Go to www.playnaia.org and click "Register Student" using your email address.
2. Fill out your profile and submit the "Register to Play" task.
3. Request Transcripts: Order official transcripts from all colleges/universities you've attended. You can find how to send transcripts by searching online for your institution (e.g., "university name + transcript service").

- Using Parchment:

Select recipient: NAIA Eligibility Center – Accepting College/GED Transcripts Only.

- Using National Student Clearinghouse:

1. Choose "Employer/Other" as the recipient type.
2. Enter "NAIA Eligibility Center" as the recipient.
3. Select "Other" as the reason for sending your transcript.
4. Use documents@naia.org as the recipient email address.

- Mail Transcripts Directly:

NAIA Eligibility Center – Mailroom
120 W 12th Street – Level S1
Kansas City, MO 64105

Once the eligibility center receives all transcripts, your application will be reviewed.

Monitor Your Profile:

Keep track of your PlayNAIA profile for updates and tasks. Remember to save your login credentials to avoid creating multiple profiles.

For more details, refer to the [Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete](#)

Best,





Let's Get You Registered with PlayNAIA

Hello [Student Name],

We're excited to welcome you to the [Insert Team and Sport#] program! We can't wait to see the impact you will have on the team.

Before you can compete in the NAIA, you'll need to register with the NAIA Eligibility Center and receive your eligibility decision. Here's how to get started:

Steps to Register for Home School Students:

1. Visit www.playnaia.org, enter an email address for your profile, and click "Register Student."
2. Complete your profile and the Register to Play task.
3. Upload your official home school transcript through the "Provide Home School Transcript" task in your PlayNAIA account.
 - Your transcript must include:
 - Student name and date of birth
 - Course titles and final grades
 - Academic years enrolled in home school program
 - Graduation date listed on transcript (mm/dd/yyyy or mm/yyyy)
 - Signature of home school administrator or parent/guardian
4. Monitor your PlayNAIA account for updates and tasks.

[Home School Student Eligibility Guide](#)

Best,





Hello [Student Name],

We're excited to welcome you to the #Insert Team and Sport# program! Your journey as a student-athlete is about to begin, and we're looking forward to seeing all that you'll accomplish.

To be eligible to compete in the NAIA, you'll need to register with the NAIA Eligibility Center and complete an InCred evaluation for your international academic records.

Steps to Register:

1. Visit www.playnaia.org, enter the email address for your profile, and click "Register Student"
2. Complete your profile and submit the Register to Play task.
3. Begin your InCred evaluation at <https://www.incredevals.org/students>.
 - Submit all required international academic records
4. Monitor your PlayNAIA and InCred profiles for updates and tasks.

InCred Evaluation Types:

High School Comparability Evaluation:

- Only for students who have attended two or more full-time semesters of U.S. university/post-secondary and no post-secondary enrollment outside of the U.S.

Basic High School Evaluation:

- For students who haven't attended university or post-secondary school and who don't plan on receiving credit abroad.

Course by Course Evaluation:

- For students who have attended university or post-secondary school outside of the United States

[Submitting Records to InCred](#)

Best,



Helpful Links

1. [Eligibility Requirements](#)
2. [The Attic/Interp Library](#)
3. [24/36 Hour Rule vs. Progress Rule](#)
4. [Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete](#)
5. [Guide for the International Student-Athlete](#)
6. [Home School Student Guide](#)
7. [NAIA Handbook](#)
8. [Fee Waiver Information](#)
9. [Practice Start Dates](#)

Tip: Bookmark or add these resources to your browser's Favorites for quick access to information!

NAIA Connect Resources

1. [What is the NAIA Eligibility Center?](#)
2. [Get Access to PlayNAIA](#)
3. [ECP Basics](#)
4. [How to navigate PlayNAIA](#)
5. [Manage Shortlist](#)
6. [Documents Required for Eligibility](#)
7. [Home School Student Eligibility](#)
8. [Understanding an EC Determination](#)
9. [Updated Decisions](#)
10. [Appellate Requests](#)
11. [Reapplication and How it Works](#)

PlayNAIA Onboarding Courses Now Live in the Learning Hub

Essential eligibility training is now available for athletics directors, coaches, registrars, FARs, compliance administrators, and all eligibility staff — perfect for new members, new hires, or anyone wanting a refresher. To access the courses, please follow these steps:

1. Log in to [NAIA Connect](#).
2. Navigate to the "The Learning Hub" (found on the main page or under the "Training & Support" tab).
3. Click the tile labeled "PlayNAIA."
4. Select the applicable role (athletics directors, coaches, registrars, or faculty athletics representatives/athletics compliance administrators/other eligibility personnel).

Start training today → NAIA Connect → The Learning Hub → PlayNAIA!

Contact Information:

Department	Email	Phone
Eligibility Center	Ecinfo@naia.org	816.595.8300
InCred	Incred@naia.org	816.595.8390
Legislative Services	Legislative@naia.org	816.595.8180