

# Homeschoolers and College Sports

**Good news for homeschooled students** who want to participate in college sports! Homeschoolers have finally been recognized as high school graduates by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Initially, the NCAA classified homeschoolers as high school dropouts, who are prohibited from joining. Then Home School Legal Defense Association helped create the waiver process: homeschoolers could seek an eligibility waiver as non-high school graduates, and then submit documentation about their homeschool program. Through this process, the NCAA approved the academic eligibility of an average of 75–100 homeschooled students per year to receive college scholarships in basketball, baseball, volleyball, football, wrestling, and track.

Meanwhile, the NCAA continued working with HSLDA to establish clear guidelines and procedures for home-schooled students.

## What is the NCAA?

Founded in 1906, the National Collegiate Athletic Association sponsors 87 championships in 22 sports. It comprises approximately 1024 schools, classified into three divisions. Schools in Division I and Division II offer athletic scholarships, while Division III schools do not. Member colleges and universities pay the NCAA to establish and execute standards for determining individual students' academic eligibility. A student's academic eligibility determines whether he is able to receive athletic scholarships and participate in NCAA sports.

In early 2004, as a result of homeschoolers' excellent performance in collegiate sports and academics, the NCAA streamlined the application process for homeschoolers, eliminating the waiver requirement. Gone are the old time-consuming, often confusing waiver requirements that homeschoolers provide a description of the

homeschool teaching environment, copies of textbook tables of contents, or samples of completed work. Homeschoolers now follow the same process as other high school graduates.

## Old NCAA requirements vs. new

*Under the old requirements. . .*

- ✘ Homeschool students could not establish eligibility until after they had been accepted at a college or university.

- ✘ Homeschooled athletes were certified through an initial-eligibility waiver process.

- ✘ In addition to the documentation listed below, the waiver process required homeschoolers to send evidence of outside assessment, a detailed description of the home teaching environment, copies of a sampling of textbook tables of contents, and samples of schoolwork.

*Under the new requirements. . .*

- ✓ Homeschool students can now begin the initial-eligibility process after their junior year of high school is completed.

- ✓ Homeschooled athletes are certified through the Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse, just like athletes from traditional schools.

- ✓ Homeschoolers now need only send a transcript, ACT/SAT score, proof of high school graduation, list of textbooks used, and proof that homeschooling was conducted in accordance with state law.

## Becoming involved in college sports

Before or when you start high school, begin investigating colleges. Find out what the academic requirements, course standards, and core course requirements are at the specific colleges you'd like to attend. By asking these questions early in the game, you can ensure that your transcript reflects the necessary core course requirements.

Also check out the college's specific athletic requirements for your particular sport. Attending a summer camp at the college is a great way to check out the facility and the coach. Be sure to document your skills through outside sources, and remember to get advice from your current coach or mentor.

Is the college a member of an athletic association, such as the NCAA or the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)? Ask the financial aid office for the paperwork you'll need to begin the association's eligibility determination process.

## NCAA Division I and Division II sports: The eligibility process

1. Consult the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse website, [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net), to find out what core courses you should take during high school. When determining your eligibility, the clearinghouse will evaluate your core courses and will compare your ACT/SAT score and core-course GPA with a qualifier index. It's important that you plan ahead to adequately fulfill these requirements.
2. Take the ACT or SAT. When registering for either test, be sure to select the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse (code 9999) as a recipient of the test score. The test must be taken on a national testing date under standard testing conditions; however, students with documented learning disabilities may take a nonstandard test.
3. Register with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. Online registration can be completed at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net). From the homepage, click on "Prospective Student Athletes," then "Domestic Student-Release Form." The registration fee is \$30. (Although students may register at any time after their junior year, homeschoolers may find it more convenient to register after they have graduated from high school, when all of their required documentation will be available.)
4. Upon graduation, provide the clearinghouse with the following items:
  - Transcript (include course titles, course grades, units of credits for courses, and grading scale);
  - Proof of high school graduation (you may list this on the transcript, or provide a separate document such as a diploma; show specific date of graduation);
  - List of texts used in core courses throughout

home instruction (include title, publisher, and related course title for each text); and

- Proof that the homeschool was conducted in accordance with state law (provide copies of state required forms, if applicable, or a statement from the homeschool teacher that the homeschooling was conducted in accordance with state law).

### For more information

Christopher J. Klicka, "College sports: Game on for homeschoolers," *The Home School Court Report*, March/April 2004, <http://www.hslda.org/courtreport/V20N2/V20N206.asp>.

Letter from the NCAA to HSLDA (January 16, 2004) detailing the policy change for homeschool students, <http://www.hslda.org/docs/news/hslda/200402/200402090NCAA.pdf>.

NCAA, "Frequently Asked Questions about Home Schooling," [http://www1.ncaa.org/membership/membership\\_svcs/eligibility-recruiting/faqs/homeschooling](http://www1.ncaa.org/membership/membership_svcs/eligibility-recruiting/faqs/homeschooling).

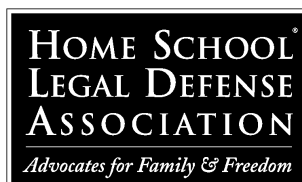


### To contact the NCAA

National Collegiate Athletic Association  
P.O. Box 6222  
Indianapolis, IN 46206-6222  
317-917-6222  
[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

*(Please note that, at the time of this fact sheet's publication, not all of the NCAA's documents and web pages had been updated to reflect the homeschool policy change.)*

*This fact sheet was compiled from various HSLDA publications as well as information available on the NCAA website.*



ONE PATRICK HENRY CIRCLE, PURCELLVILLE, VA 20132  
540.338.5600 • [INFO@HSLDA.ORG](mailto:INFO@HSLDA.ORG) • [WWW.HSLDA.ORG](http://WWW.HSLDA.ORG)