



# news

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEDIA CONTENT

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **New Collaborative Effort Seeks to Increase Student-Athlete NCAA Eligibility**

*Pittsburgh Public Schools and Pittsburgh Steelers to Hold Family Information Nights featuring NCAA Eligibility Center to Help Student-Athletes Meet Requirements for College Sports*

PITTSBURGH, PA April 22, 2024- A new collaborative initiative between Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) and the Pittsburgh Steelers aims to increase the number of area student-athletes eligible to play at the collegiate level. In 2022, Pennsylvania ranked sixth in the nation for nonqualifiers (student-athletes who do not meet the NCAA's requirements to play at the collegiate level), with Pittsburgh accounting for 5.71 percent of the state's nonqualifiers. To combat this trend, two Family Information Nights featuring the NCAA Eligibility Center have been organized to educate 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students and their families on the critical requirements necessary to pursue college sports.

"We are grateful for the collaboration between the Pittsburgh Steelers, NCAA, and Pittsburgh Public Schools that will raise awareness about the academic prerequisites for college sports," said Superintendent Wayne N. Walters. "By beginning this process as early as middle school, we aim to positively impact the future trajectories of our student athletes, ensuring they are well-equipped to meet NCAA requirements upon graduation."

The NFL and NCAA are working to impact student outcomes by increasing relationships with school districts across the country in an effort to increase awareness of the academic requirements to play college sports. Earlier education on NCAA requirements reduces risk of nonqualifier status, provides greater support for counselors, coaches, and administrators, and increases community awareness regarding the joy of sports. PPS is the first school district nationwide to officially collaborate with the NFL and NCAA to bring this important information directly to families.

"We are excited to launch these efforts with Pittsburgh Public Schools and the NCAA to help interested student-athletes pursue their goal of competing in college athletics, said Dan Rooney, Pittsburgh Steelers Director of Business Development & Strategy. "Awareness of opportunities and the overall eligibility process will benefit athletes, parents, and administrators to help provide a path to follow for athletes in every sport to get to the next level."

Both Family Information Nights are designed to educate families about academic requirements for NCAA eligibility, foster aspirations for college-level athletic participation, and promote sports as a means of social interaction and enjoyment. Student-athletes will be encouraged to create a free NCAA Eligibility Center account to help them achieve success and avoid missed opportunities due to the lack of planning.



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“We’re excited to align with the Pittsburgh Steelers to educate Pittsburgh Public Schools’ staff, student-athletes, and families, as they plan a path toward a college education while participating in the sport they love. Our goal is to ensure that all student-athletes that desire a scholarship won’t miss out on the opportunity,” said Glenn Terry, NCAA Eligibility Center Director for Outreach and Strategic Partnerships.

Families are encouraged to register to attend one of the Family Information Nights taking place on Wednesday, April 24, at Pittsburgh Allderdice High School, or Thursday, April 25, at Pittsburgh Brashear High School at [pghschools.org/familyinfonight](http://pghschools.org/familyinfonight). Both information sessions begin at 6:00 PM. These events promise to be informative and beneficial for families aiming to support their students in pursuing college sports opportunities.

**Members of the media are invited to attend.**

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