



NHSSCA Athletic Director PreCon Conference

We're excited to introduce a brand-new offering at this year's NatCon—an exclusive Athletic Directors Conference, limited to just 25 Athletic Directors (ADs). This FREE four-hour PreCon event is designed to help ADs understand how to implement safe, effective strength and conditioning programs, whether by hiring a full-time strength coach or empowering certified sport coaches to take on this critical role.

This NHSSCA initiative is led by Dr. Fred Eaves, co-founder of the NHSSCA and the Assistant Head of School for Operations and Co-Curricular Programs at Battle Ground Academy. With a distinguished career in athletic administration and strength and conditioning, Fred brings invaluable expertise to this event.

Event Details



When: Friday, June 27, 2025



Where: Christian Brothers School, Memphis, TN



When: 8:00 am – 12:00 pm – Athletic Directors Conference



Lunch Break: 12:00 – 12:30 pm



Exclusive Partner Hall Walkthrough: 12:30 pm – ???

How to Register for the Athletic Directors PreCon

1. Visit: <https://nhssca.us/event/nhssca-athletic-directors-conference/>
2. **Scroll down** on the registration page until you see the ticket titled:
“2025 NHSSCA NatCon – Athletic Directors PreCon.”
3. **Click the ‘+’ sign** next to that ticket to select it. This will change the quantity to 1.
4. **Scroll down** and click the **“Get Ticket”** button.
5. **Complete your basic information:**
6. Click the **“Checkout Now”** button.
7. **Fill in the remaining required fields** and submit.

 That's it—you're officially registered!

NHSSCA Athletic Director PreCon Conference Schedule

Date: Friday, June 27th

Time: 8:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Audience: High School Athletic Directors

Location: Christian Brothers School | Memphis, TN

Format: In-Person | Speaker Presentations + Panel Q&A + Partner Walkthrough

Time	Topic	Details
8:00 – 8:15 AM	Welcome & Opening Remarks	Kick off the day with an overview of the conference goals and NHSSCA's mission to support ADs.
8:15 – 8:45 AM	Why Every School Needs a Certified Strength Coach or Strength-Certified Sport Coaches	The role of certification in injury reduction, legal protection, and program structure.
8.45-9:15 AM	Solutions for Schools with Limited Funding	How to train existing sport coaches, tap into booster support, grants, and low-cost CEU strategies.
9:15 – 9:45 AM	How to Identify & Hire the Right Strength Coach	Hiring strategies, dual-role structuring, and announcement of the new NHSSCA Jobs Posting Board.

Time	Topic	Details
9:45 – 10:00 AM	Break & Networking	Coffee and light refreshments; time to connect and recharge.
10:00 – 10:30 AM	Weight Room Design & Construction Best Practices (w/ Gary Schofield)	Layout, coach-to-athlete ratios, flooring, and working effectively with architects and contractors.
10:30 – 11:00 AM	The NHSSCA Program of Excellence & HSSCC Certification	Overview of the HSSCC path and how schools earn national recognition through the Program of Excellence.
11:00 – 11:45 AM	Panel Q&A + School Success Spotlights	Open Q&A with all speakers + insights from current and past Program of Excellence award recipients.
11:45 – 12:00 PM	Closing Remarks & Action Steps	Summary of takeaways, support resources, and implementation plans for your district.
12:00 – 12:30 PM	Lunch (During PreCon Break)	Complimentary lunch and networking with NHSSCA leadership, presenters, and fellow ADs.
12:30 PM	Exclusive Partner Hall Walkthrough	Guided introduction to NHSSCA Partners—hands-on demos, product education, and implementation insights.

NHSSCA Athletic Director PreCon - Presentations Overview

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Time: 8:00 – 8:15 AM

Speaker: Eric Cash, NHSSCA President

This jumping point will communicate the goals of the conference, the NHSSCA's mission, and how this event supports the unique role of Athletic Directors in strengthening high school sports programs.

Key Talking Points:

- **Welcome & Gratitude:**
 - Thank attendees for investing their time in professional development.
 - Acknowledge the essential role ADs play in shaping safe, structured athletic environments.
 - Recognize partners, POE recipients, and NHSSCA leadership in the room.
 - **Conference Objective:**
 - Today is about giving you clear, actionable strategies to strengthen your athletes' development—even with limited budgets, facilities, or staffing.
 - We're not just talking theory—you'll leave here with real solutions, success stories, and connections that can be put into motion back home.
 - **Why the NHSSCA Exists:**
 - Share a quick overview of the NHSSCA's founding purpose: to support high school strength coaches, sport coaches, and administrators with practical tools, professional growth, and a strong national community.
 - We believe that when coaches are educated, athletes thrive—and that success starts with the support of ADs like you.
 - **What to Expect Today:**
 - Briefly preview the morning's sessions, panels, and Partner Hall walkthrough.
 - Emphasize interaction, note-taking, and networking throughout the day.
 - You don't need to solve everything today, but you should leave knowing who can help—and how.
 - **Transition to First Speaker:**
 - Let's kick things off by diving into why every school, regardless of size or budget, needs a strength-certified coach or program...
-

Why Every School Needs a Certified Strength Coach or Strength-Certified Sport Coaches

Time: 8:15 – 8:45 AM

Speaker: Dr. Mike Martino | Educator of the Year | Senior Editor of HSSCC, Professor - Exercise Science, Georgia College

Raising the Standard for Athlete Safety, Performance, and Legal Protection

This session makes the case for why having **a certified strength and conditioning professional—or at minimum, strength-certified sport coaches—is no longer optional** in today's high school athletic landscape. Through the NHSSCA's **High School Strength & Conditioning Certification (HSSCC)**, schools can create safer, more structured programs that reduce liability and improve performance across all sports.

Key Talking Points:

- **Injury Reduction Through Certified Coaching:**
Certified coaches—whether full-time S&C professionals or HSSCC-certified sport coaches—are trained to deliver developmentally appropriate, evidence-based training programs. This dramatically reduces the risk of preventable injuries, burnout, and overtraining.
 - **Legal Protection & Risk Management:**
In today's litigious environment, schools are expected to show they've taken every reasonable step to protect student-athletes. Having certified individuals overseeing strength and conditioning adds a layer of legal protection by aligning with national best practices and duty-of-care expectations.
 - **Program Structure That Supports Every Sport:**
The HSSCC equips coaches to build and deliver **consistent, well-structured training systems**—ensuring that every athlete, in every sport, is progressing with purpose. This standardization also improves scheduling, collaboration, and accountability across departments.
 - **Budget-Friendly Professionalism:**
Even if your school cannot hire a full-time strength coach, the HSSCC allows you to **build a team of strength-certified coaches from within**. This creates long-term value by elevating the quality of training while remaining cost-effective.
 - **Recognized & Supported by the NHSSCA:**
The HSSCC isn't just a certification—it's a pathway into a **nationwide network of certified professionals, mentorship, and continuous learning**. Your coaches won't be navigating implementation alone.
-

Solutions for Schools with Limited Funding

Time: 8:45 – 9:15 AM

Speaker: Fred Eaves, Coach of the Year | Co-Founder of NHSSCA | Assistant Head of School for Operations and Co-Curricular Programs, Battle Ground Academy (TN)

How the NHSSCA and HSSCC Certification Empower Schools to Do More with Less

This session is designed specifically for Athletic Directors looking to strengthen their athletic programs without increasing their staffing budget. Through the NHSSCA and its **High School Strength & Conditioning Certification (HSSCC)**, schools can provide high-quality training and education to current sport coaches—turning existing staff into strength-certified leaders.

Key Talking Points:

- **Empower Your Current Coaching Staff:**
The **HSSCC is an accessible, fully online certification** developed by the NHSSCA to help schools build safe, effective strength programs—even when a full-time S&C coach isn't in the budget. Train your existing sport coaches to lead strength sessions confidently and competently.
- **Affordable, CEU-Eligible Professional Development:**
The HSSCC is approved for CEUs in many districts and recognized nationally. It's a **low-cost, high-impact professional development solution** that aligns with school improvement plans and helps coaches grow professionally while protecting your athletes.
- **Funded by PD Budgets or Booster Support:**
Many schools have successfully covered the cost of HSSCC certifications using **existing PD budgets, booster clubs, or school nutrition/wellness funds**. We'll show you how to position the certification as a district-wide initiative that benefits all teams and student-athletes.
- **Built-In Support from the NHSSCA:**
With the support of the NHSSCA community, your coaches don't just get certified—they gain access to **ongoing mentorship, regional networking, and implementation guidance** to make their training programs sustainable and effective.
- **Real-World Models for Success:**
You'll leave this session with templates, success stories, and a step-by-step action plan for using the **HSSCC to raise the bar for your athletes**—without raising your budget.

How to Identify & Hire the Right Strength Coach (Full-Time or Part-Time)

Time: 9:15 – 9:45 AM

Speaker: Fred Eaves, Coach of the Year | Co-Founder of NHSSCA | Assistant Head of School for Operations and Co-Curricular Programs, Battle Ground Academy (TN)

Practical Strategies to Staff Your Program with Qualified Professionals

Hiring the right strength coach can transform the safety, culture, and performance of your athletic program. Whether you're seeking a full-time specialist or a dual-role staff member, this session will walk you through the **key steps to identifying, evaluating, and hiring certified professionals** who align with your school's values, goals, and student needs.

Key Talking Points:

- **What to Look for in a Candidate:**
Learn how to evaluate resumes and interviews for the most important credentials: NSCA-CSCS, HSSCC, CPR/AED certifications, teaching certifications (where applicable), and real-world experience working with adolescents.
 - **Assessing Fit Beyond the Paperwork:**
Explore strategies for assessing a coach's ability to communicate, manage groups, work with sport coaches, and contribute to the school's overall educational mission.
 - **Structuring Dual-Role Staff When Budgets Are Tight:**
Get insights on how schools are integrating strength responsibilities into existing staff roles, especially for PE teachers or sport coaches, using the HSSCC to formalize and legitimize their training roles.
 - **Announcing the NHSSCA Jobs Posting Board (Coming Soon):**
Be among the first to learn about the **new NHSSCA Jobs Posting Board**—a national database where Athletic Directors can:
 - Post full-time and part-time strength positions
 - Filter NHSSCA-certified coaches by **state, region, gender, education level, and area of expertise**
 - **Connect directly with coaches** in your area, learn their background and reputation within the NHSSCA community, and personally invite them to apply
 - Use NHSSCA filters to build a short list of qualified, culture-aligned professionals—faster and with greater confidence
 - **Why This Matters:**
Hiring a coach without proper credentials is a risk. Hiring a great one without a network is a missed opportunity. The NHSSCA Jobs Platform bridges the gap—**connecting schools with high-quality, high-character professionals who are ready to lead.**
-

Weight Room Design & Construction Best Practices

Time: 10:00 – 10:30 AM

Speaker: Gary Schofield, 2012 NSCA High School Coach of the Year | Athletic Director | Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach | Strong Rock Christian School

Designing High-Impact Weight Rooms: Build Smart, Train Safer, and Future-Proof Your Facility

Designing or renovating a weight room is a major investment—one that should serve your athletes safely, efficiently, and for years to come. In this session, Coach Gary Schofield brings decades of hands-on experience in performance training and facility planning to help you avoid costly mistakes and create a space that truly supports student-athlete development.

Key Talking Points:

- **Optimal Space Planning:**
Learn how to plan for square footage that matches your athlete population, team rotation needs, and scheduling demands. We'll review sample layouts for both new builds and retrofits that promote flow, functionality, and safety.
- **Coach-to-Athlete Ratio Considerations:**
Discover how design affects visibility, supervision, and instruction. Gary will break down how to structure your room and equipment to maintain safe and effective coach-to-athlete ratios—even in high-volume settings.
- **Flooring Selection That Lasts:**
Understand the pros and cons of inlaid platforms vs. raised platforms, how to balance budget with durability, and how flooring impacts injury prevention, noise control, and long-term maintenance.
- **Collaborating with Architects and Contractors:**
Learn how to communicate your needs clearly with facility designers who may not understand performance training. Gary will share tips, terminology, and diagrams to help bridge the gap and advocate for your athletes.
- **Building for the Future—Not Just the Season:**
Whether you're building from scratch or modifying an existing space, this session will help you create a facility that grows with your program, supports all sports, and reflects the educational mission of your school.

The NHSSCA Program of Excellence & HSSCC Certification

Time: 9:15 – 9:45 AM

Speaker: Mike Bewley, NHSSCA Administrative Assistant | Assistant Editor of HSSCC | 20-Year Division Collegiate Strength & Conditioning Coach | Founder of Critical Reload

Building a Gold Standard for High School Strength & Conditioning

This session introduces Athletic Directors to the NHSSCA's two most impactful initiatives:

1. The **High School Strength & Conditioning Certification (HSSCC)** – a professional development pathway designed specifically for high school coaches, and
2. The **Program of Excellence** – national recognition for schools that exemplify the highest standards in safety, structure, and athlete development.

Key Talking Points:

- **The HSSCC – Certification Built for High Schools:**
Developed by and for high school coaches, the **HSSCC** equips strength and sport coaches with evidence-based knowledge to lead safe, age-appropriate training programs. It's 100% online, CEU-approved, and affordable enough to scale across an entire coaching staff.
- **Why Certification Matters:**
Certification isn't about a title—it's about creating consistency, reducing risk, and establishing a clear training standard across all sports. The HSSCC provides that structure, empowering your coaches with tools to build stronger, safer athletes.
- **Program of Excellence – National Recognition for Doing it Right:**
The **NHSSCA Program of Excellence** honors schools that exemplify professionalism, safety, and results in strength & conditioning. This designation is more than an award—it's a reflection of your school's investment in athlete health and development. Schools are evaluated on key criteria such as:
 - Certified staff leadership
 - Facility safety and design
 - Integration with sport coaching staff
 - Long-term athlete development philosophy
- **Professional Growth + School Credibility:**
Whether you're building a new program or elevating an existing one, these NHSSCA initiatives provide a pathway toward excellence, with **peer recognition, community trust, and athlete outcomes** to match.
- **The Support Doesn't Stop at Certification:**
NHSSCA members gain access to **ongoing mentorship, networking, educational events, and leadership opportunities**—making this more than a course, but a career-altering commitment to growth.

11:00 – 11:45 AM – Panel Q&A + School Success Spotlights

Bringing the Playbook to Life: Real Schools. Real Solutions.

This session brings together all speakers for an open-floor Q&A and concludes the conference by highlighting **real success stories from schools that have implemented the strategies discussed**—proving these aren't just ideas, but replicable solutions already making a difference.

Key Features:

- **Live Q&A with Presenters:**
Athletic Directors will have the opportunity to ask follow-up questions to any session presenter—clarifying details, requesting real-world examples, or digging deeper into specific challenges.
- **School Spotlights – Powered by the Program of Excellence:**
We'll hear directly from **current and past Program of Excellence award recipients**—Athletic Directors and coaches who've:
 - Implemented the HSSCC certification across coaching staffs
 - Hired or developed qualified strength professionals
 - Transformed outdated or underfunded weight rooms into safe, efficient training environments
 - Created professional development pipelines aligned with school improvement plans
- **Why It Matters:**
These leaders represent what's possible when schools commit to elevating strength and conditioning with the support of the NHSSCA. Their insights will help attendees **see the path forward** for their own schools—no matter their current size, budget, or staffing model.
- **Optional Participation for POE Recipients:**
We plan to invite current and past POE awardees to join this panel. Participation will be coordinated to ensure it does not interfere with their own PreCon responsibilities. Panelists will be prepped to share 2–3 actionable takeaways and be available for questions from fellow ADs.

11:45 – 12:00 PM – Closing Remarks & Action Steps

Bringing It Home: What To Do With What You Learned

To close out the NHSSCA AD PreCon, we'll recap the day's key insights and provide attendees with a **clear, actionable roadmap** for taking the next steps in their districts.

Key Talking Points:

- **Top 5 Takeaways from Today:**
A rapid-fire recap of the most important insights from each session—framed through the

lens of what Athletic Directors can implement immediately, and what should be part of longer-term planning.

- **NHSSCA Support Resources Available:**

We'll outline key NHSSCA tools and benefits available to attendees, including:

- The HSSCC Certification for coaching staff
- The upcoming NHSSCA Jobs Board
- Mentorship and networking opportunities
- Templates for facilities planning and funding strategies
- Direct access to POE recipients and regional directors

- **Take-Back Toolkit:**

Each attendee will receive (physically or digitally) a **"Take-Back Toolkit"** with:

- Slide decks or summaries of each session
- Contact info for all presenters
- Implementation checklist for their school
- NHSSCA follow-up contacts and onboarding resources

- **Final Encouragement:**

We'll end with a brief, motivating message that emphasizes the influence ADs have in shaping not just athletic outcomes, but school culture, safety, and student success through structured, evidence-based strength and conditioning.

12:00 – 12:30 PM – Lunch (During PreCon Break)

Refuel, Connect, and Reflect

Attendees will enjoy a complimentary lunch while networking with fellow Athletic Directors, NHSSCA leadership, and session presenters. This is a great time to:

- Reflect on the morning's sessions
- Exchange implementation ideas with peers
- Set up follow-up conversations with speakers or NHSSCA reps
- Explore printed resources or certification handouts

12:30 PM – Exclusive Partner Hall Walkthrough

Get Hands-On With the Solutions That Support Your Program

Following lunch, attendees will receive a guided walkthrough of the **NHSSCA Partner Hall**, where they'll meet trusted organizations and vendors who align with the values and needs of high school athletic programs.

What to expect:

- **Live demonstrations** of equipment, technology, and services
- Opportunities to **ask questions** and gather implementation ideas
- First access to **exclusive PreCon promotions or resources** from NHSSCA partners
- A deeper look into **how our partners can support your budget, staff, and student-athletes**

