







## NSCA School of Distinction Recognition Program

### For Excellence in School-Based (K-12) Strength and Conditioning

K-12 school-based strength and conditioning programs that exemplify the highest standards of excellence worldwide are recognized through the NSCA School of Distinction program. This prestigious honor is awarded to institutions that apply and meet the criteria established by the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

Recognition as an NSCA School of Distinction is granted for a three-year period, provided there is no change in the institution's verified strength and conditioning coach. Programs must renew after the three-year period expires to maintain recognition.

The application process evaluates several key components of strength and conditioning program administration, including:

- Program Supervision
- Strength and Conditioning Education
- Strength and Conditioning Program
- Facility Management

**Attention Previous Strength of America Award Winners:** Current Strength of America Awardees will remain recognized through their three-year period until their original expiration date. At that time, an application for the NSCA School of Distinction Program must be completed using the procedures outlined in this booklet.



## Steps to Apply

**Step One:** Download and save this Application Booklet.

**Step Two:** Fill in your school's information across the four major areas.

**Step Three:** Get signatures from your school supervisor, athletic director, or principal on each of the four score sheets, as noted in the application.

**Step Four:** Scan and email the completed packet with the required support materials to [SchoolofDistinction@NSCA.com](mailto:SchoolofDistinction@NSCA.com).

- **Applications are processed on a rolling basis:** Each May, the NSCA announces an annual list of K-12 schools that received recognition. Submit your application by February 15 for guaranteed review and approval by May 1 of that school year.
- You may also mail your completed application with your contact information to:  
*National Strength and Conditioning Association c/o School of Distinction  
 1885 Bob Johnson Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80906*

**Step Five:** You will receive email confirmation upon receipt of your application. Once we review your application, you will receive another email confirming or denying your School of Distinction status. As part of the program, the purchase of a championship-style banner is required to display your achievement in the gym or the weight room. Upon notification:

- The NSCA School of Distinction Banner Fee will be charged to your NSCA account. You will receive instructions to settle the charge. The fee for the banner is \$175 (shipping included). This is your only fee due, and the banner is current throughout your three-year recognition period.
- After payment is received, you will be sent your digital Certificate of Recognition. An email will be sent from NSCA's credentialing partner, Accredible. The linked certificate can be printed for display in your facility.
- You will also receive a digital badge from Accredible. Your badge can be included in your email signature, on your website, and on social media platforms to share your accomplishment. The badge includes an embedded link that verifies your active recognition.



**Recognized Programs Receive:**  
 Championship-Style Banner,  
 Certificate of Recognition, and  
 Email and Website Badge



# NSCA School of Distinction Application

## General Program Information

All applications must include the following:

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Coach \_\_\_\_\_ Coach's NSCA ID \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Supervisor/Athletic Director/Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor/AD/Principal Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor/AD/Principal Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## School of Distinction Requirements

### Program Supervision Requirements

The school's Head Strength and Conditioning Coach must meet the following requirements.

- ☐ Is a current NSCA member
- ☐ Holds a current CSCS® certification
- ☐ Has completed **ONE** of the following:
  - » Earned (current) RSCC Designation
  - OR
  - » Completion of both the **USADA Coach's Advantage Course** and the **U.S. Center for SafeSport® – "SafeSport Trained" Course**
- ☐ As part of this application, submit a full-time K-12 employment letter from a school administrator verifying the following:
  - » The CSCS must be employed or contracted full-time as a strength and conditioning coach by the school or district **AND** work on-campus for the full school day throughout the year.
  - » This verification letter should be on school letterhead, verified, and signed by a school Athletic Director, Principal, or District Official, including a contact email and phone number.





## Strength and Conditioning Education Requirements

### Orientation & Safety

- ☐ Conduct new and returning student orientation and safety meetings (document dates below)
  - » Orientation meetings that emphasize weight room safety are mandatory with new and returning participants prior to the use of the weight room each year. [NSCA Standards and Guidelines](#) can be used as an outline.

Documented Student Orientation & Safety Meeting Dates			
	Semester 1 (Fall)	Semester 2 (Spring)	Summer Programs/Other
Year 1			
Year 2			
Year 3			

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

### Strength and Conditioning Educational Programs

- ☐ Conduct at least 6 strength and conditioning educational programs for students, school staff, or parents, documented over a three-year period (use chart below). This requirement is intended to represent two school-wide educational initiatives per school year. Participation in each category listed is preferred.

Events may be documented a maximum of 2 per activity each application period. Activities must be verified using the table and topic examples included below:

Documented Strength and Conditioning Educational Programs	
<b>Category 1: School In-Services and Educational Meetings</b>	
Hold a strength and conditioning-related teacher/staff in-service (e.g., <i>Strength and Conditioning for Physical Education and Coaching</i> ).	
Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____
Present about the strength and conditioning program at a parent's night or school open house (e.g., <i>School Strength and Conditioning Program Information</i> ).	
Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____

Host a Weight Room Volunteer In-Service (e.g., <i>Fundamentals of School Weight Room Safety</i> ).	
Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____
Host an informative meeting, workshop, or lesson for students on the topic of preventing performance enhancing drugs (e.g., <i>Performance Enhancing Drug Prevention for Health and Safety</i> ).	
Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____
Provide a presentation recap to school faculty, staff, and/or students after attending an NSCA State, Regional, or National Conference (e.g., <i>NSCA Conference Recap: Trends, Tools, and Takeaways</i> ).	
Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____
<b>Category 2: Education and Curriculum Support</b>	
Serve as a lead Strength and Conditioning Course/Class Instructor – Lead as the primary instructor for a quarter- or semester-long class on weight training or strength and conditioning.	
Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____
Support Physical Education Curriculum – Collaborate with a non-CSCS school physical education teacher to provide a unit or workshop that includes hands-on strength and conditioning instruction (e.g., resistance training, plyometrics, speed and agility drills, conditioning, and fitness activities).	
Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____
Support STEM curriculum and the application of STEM concepts through strength and conditioning – Collaborate with school science faculty (e.g., biology, anatomy and physiology, or physics) to deliver a STEM-related unit or workshop related to strength and conditioning or sport science.	
Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____

Provide Support for Student Career Development – Collaborate with school guidance or career counselors on student-career pathways related to strength and conditioning. Additional ways to meet this requirement include participating in school career fairs, contributing to related career and technical education (CTE) programs, providing NSCA materials and related career information to students, or promoting CASCE-accredited and ERP institutions as part of college preparatory units.

Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____

### **Category 3: Coaching and Educational Outreach**

Teach the NSCA Foundations of Coaching Lifts (FCL) Course – Teach the FCL Course at your school. This requires becoming an NSCA FCL Instructor.

Date:	Date:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____

Mentor through the NSCA Foundation Assistantship Program as an RSCC – Host an intern/assistant as part of the Foundation Assistantship program. Learn more at [NSCA.com/Assistantship](https://www.nsca.com/Assistantship).

Date Range:	Date Range:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____

Manage a weightlifting/strength and conditioning club before or after school – This may include but is not exclusive to student-athletes.

Date Range:	Date Range:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____

Contribute strength and conditioning services and education to school JROTC programs or other student initiatives related to tactical strength and conditioning (i.e., military, law enforcement, fire, and rescue). For additional support in this area, connect with the [NSCA Tactical Strength and Conditioning Professional Development Group](#) (PDG).

Date Range:	Date Range:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____

Contribute strength and conditioning services and education to school drama or arts programs, including dancers, musicians, vocalists, and others. For additional support in this area, connect with the [NSCA Performing Arts Special Interest Group](#) (SIG).

Date Range:	Date Range:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____

Middle and Elementary School Outreach – For high school strength and conditioning coaches, this can include offering middle school workshops/programs. For middle school strength and conditioning coaches, this may include offering elementary school workshops/programs.	
Date Range:	Date Range:
Description:	Description:
School Administrator Initial: _____	School Administrator Initial: _____
<b>OTHER</b>	
Additional related areas may be considered. To submit, full details must be provided with the application.	

## Additional Program Requirements

- ☐ Attach a separate cover letter with your School of Distinction application explaining your program philosophy that emphasizes introductory programs for new participants, including the use of developmentally appropriate periodization and exercise technique instruction. Training program examples may be attached with your application and must follow the basic principles of training and technique progression as described by the NSCA. Include affirmation that this letter was shared with your school administrator.

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Participate in the **NSCA All-American Athlete Program** - Nominate a minimum of two student-athletes from your program over in the last three years. Annual participation (6 athletes) is preferred. Include names of nominated athletes and years:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Provide affirmation of over 50% school participation in strength and conditioning programs within the previous school year (i.e., Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters; Includes athletes and non-athletes, team training sessions, strength and conditioning classes, camps, and/or related programs).

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_



## Facility Management Requirements

- ☐ Attach 2-3 photos of your weight room facility demonstrating:
  - » Appropriate weight room safety equipment and equipment spacing.
  - » Appropriate weight room signage.
  - » Appropriate access for students with disabilities.
  - » Weight room cleanliness and organization.

Refer to the current NSCA Strength Training and Conditioning textbook as a reference. Include affirmation that these photos were shared with your school administrator. Do not include pictures of students and any individuals not granting permission to be photographed.

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ **Affirmation:** Emergency procedures **and** weight room rules (emphasizing safety) are posted with appropriate signage in each strength and conditioning facility before any activity.

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ **Affirmation:** All weight room equipment is well maintained by staff, including scheduled inspection, regular maintenance, and cleaning according to NSCA standards. Evidence of this may include cleaning and maintenance charts or other documentation to be shared with your school administrator.

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ **Affirmation:** The temperature of the weight room is between 68 to 78 degrees Fahrenheit (20-26 degrees Celsius), and humidity is maintained at less than 60%.

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ **Affirmation:** The facility contains a variety of lifting bars to accommodate different ages and strength levels (e.g., 11 lbs, 33 lbs, and standard), collars, safety bars, and/or lifting platforms (or a designated area) with bumper plates for Olympic-style lifting.

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ **Affirmation:** It is strongly recommended that anyone using this facility outside of the normal physical education classroom should have a current physical or waiver on file prior to participation as per NSCA strength and conditioning professional standards and guidelines.

School Administrator Initial \_\_\_\_\_

## Final Affirmation and Signatures

By signing below, I affirm that the information contained in this application for the NSCA School of Distinction Recognition Program is true and accurate.

School Administrator Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Administrator Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

CSCS Supervisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

CSCS Supervisor Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

