

On the Issue of Financial Sustainability of Escalating Costs Without Expense Restraints...

As Congress deliberates the future of the PCSA, it is doing so “in the dark” – without basic knowledge of the impact of the *House v. NCAA* settlement on the financial status of Division institutions.

- Few if any public schools are responding to FOIA requests for 2025-26 financial data
- NCAA Member Financial Reporting System (MFRS-audited financials) reports for 2025-26 are not due until January 15, 2027
- 2025-26 Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) reports are not available until the end of October, 2026
 - institution reports must be available to students and the public by October 15 of each year
 - the online data survey for the U.S. Department of Education must then be submitted within 15 days, but will not be posted on the [EADA searchable database](#) until March or April of 2027
 - we do not know whether institutions will report their NIL/Revenue Share pool expenses as student financial assistance
- We are not aware of The College Sports Commission or NIL Go issuing public reports of College Athlete Payment System (CAPS) data

Yet we believe there is sufficient evidence based on expert certified accountant analysis of 2024-25 data to conclude that, entering the first year under the Settlement, few if any institutions were in a financial position to afford the \$21.5 first year expense of the NIL/Revenue Share pool they were about to spend. We believe Congress ignores this evidence at the peril of institutions of higher education receiving its direct financial assistance. We share the following factual analysis and estimates of Thomas O’Rourke, CPA:

Average Power Conference 2026 Football Roster will exceed \$ 23 million:

We estimate Power Conference football teams will have a *median* roster cost of \$ 23 million for the 2026 season, with half of SEC teams above \$ 30 million. Players are paid via a combination of revenue sharing and third-party NIL:

Median FBS Roster Costs by Conference 2026-27	Total Payments to Players (\$)	Paid by School via Revenue Sharing	Paid via Third-Party Commercial NIL *
SEC	30,161,000	15,600,000	14,561,000
Big Ten	24,408,000	15,600,000	8,808,000
Big 12	21,607,000	15,600,000	6,007,000
ACC	21,240,000	15,600,000	5,640,000
Power 4 Median (\$)	\$ 23,147,000	\$ 15,600,000	\$ 7,547,000

Estimated 2026 Football Roster Costs for all 68 Power Conference teams:

Estimated Roster Costs P4 Football Teams 2026 *	Conference	Roster Cost Estimate (\$)
Texas	SEC	46,485,000
Oregon	Big Ten	43,405,000
Louisiana State	SEC	40,966,000
Ohio State	Big Ten	40,421,000
Miami	ACC	38,629,000
Notre Dame	Independent	38,448,000
Texas A&M	SEC	36,797,000
Alabama	SEC	36,490,000
Georgia	SEC	35,173,000
Southern Cal	Big Ten	34,728,000
Tennessee	SEC	33,696,000
Texas Tech	Big 12	33,320,000
Michigan	Big Ten	32,964,000
Mississippi	SEC	31,815,000
Oklahoma	SEC	31,470,000
Penn State	Big Ten	29,208,000
Auburn	SEC	28,852,000
Florida	SEC	28,524,000
Clemson	ACC	27,786,000
Missouri	SEC	27,505,000
Nebraska	Big Ten	27,440,000
South Carolina	SEC	27,355,000
Indiana	Big Ten	27,253,000
Florida State	ACC	26,391,000
Washington	Big Ten	26,357,000
Vanderbilt	SEC	25,457,000
Kentucky	SEC	24,538,000
Wisconsin	Big Ten	24,484,000
Houston	Big 12	24,456,000
UCLA	Big Ten	24,332,000
Arkansas	SEC	23,935,000
Maryland	Big Ten	23,720,000
Iowa	Big Ten	23,649,000
Colorado	Big 12	23,179,000

Estimated Roster Costs P4 Football Teams 2026 *	Conference	Roster Cost Estimate (\$)
Michigan State	Big Ten	23,115,000
Brigham Young	Big 12	23,041,000
Mississippi State	SEC	22,942,000
Texas Christian	Big 12	22,683,000
Minnesota	Big Ten	22,575,000
Oklahoma State	Big 12	22,146,000
Southern Methodist	ACC	22,044,000
Utah	Big 12	21,947,000
Virginia Tech	ACC	21,908,000
Louisville	ACC	21,906,000
North Carolina	ACC	21,876,000
Illinois	Big Ten	21,854,000
Georgia Tech	ACC	21,750,000
Kansas State	Big 12	21,690,000
Arizona State	Big 12	21,524,000
Rutgers	Big Ten	21,321,000
Pittsburgh	ACC	21,240,000
Virginia	ACC	21,084,000
Northwestern	Big Ten	21,035,000
Baylor	Big 12	20,967,000
West Virginia	Big 12	20,925,000
Duke	ACC	20,492,000
North Carolina State	ACC	20,456,000
Arizona	Big 12	20,401,000
California	ACC	20,378,000
Purdue	Big Ten	20,367,000
Stanford	ACC	20,324,000
Iowa State	Big 12	20,098,000
Syracuse	ACC	20,074,000
Cincinnati	Big 12	20,049,000
Wake Forest	ACC	20,022,000
Kansas	Big 12	19,900,000
Central Florida	Big 12	19,800,000
Boston College	ACC	18,797,000

O'Rourke notes:

- “Data on third-party NIL is private... However, we believe these estimates are reasonably accurate and likely on the conservative side.”
- “Alabama’s General Manager has stated that some schools are spending over \$ 40 million to assemble championship contending teams, and that most SEC teams are above \$ 30 million which is consistent with our data.”
- “There is some unsupported speculation about possible current season \$ 60 million football rosters.”
- “We currently do not have 2026 estimates for Group of 6 football teams solid enough to post. But best indications are that most G6 football team roster costs are likely in the range of \$ 1 million to \$ 3 million (virtually all revenue sharing) which is consistent with the 22% of athletic revenue benchmark arrived at in the *House v NCAA* settlement. However, there are a handful of CFP aspiring G6 schools clearly paying *much* higher than this.”

We believe O'Rourke's [methodology](#) is credible.

Average FBS Football Staff Payrolls

O'Rourke believes “Disparities in compensation aren’t limited to just player rosters, per NCAA reporting there is also a wide difference in coaching and support staff payrolls. For the 2026 football season, some schools will have combined player, coaching and support staff payrolls exceeding \$ 70 million, while other FBS schools will be below \$ 4 million” and offers the following estimates for the 2026 season:

Football Staff Average Payroll	Average per team	Head Coach	Assistant Coaches	Support Staff	Severance Payments
SEC	26,931,774	9,244,319	9,782,757	6,755,549	1,149,149
Big Ten	24,205,387	7,953,219	9,237,918	6,211,297	802,952
ACC	22,082,473	6,259,669	8,325,283	6,291,013	1,206,508
Big 12	16,541,521	5,688,492	6,084,153	3,652,589	1,116,288
Pac-12	8,259,208	2,098,798	4,191,549	1,648,592	320,269
American	7,392,211	1,933,504	3,112,460	1,526,996	819,252
Mountain West	5,086,308	1,330,989	2,597,580	1,117,293	40,446
Sun Belt	4,613,206	1,044,215	2,261,675	1,096,231	211,085
Mid-American	3,817,671	1,040,250	2,018,379	598,582	160,460
Conference USA	3,475,314	998,215	1,780,657	499,121	197,322
P4 Average (\$)	22,440,289	7,286,425	8,357,528	5,727,612	1,068,724
G6 Average (\$)	5,440,653	1,407,662	2,660,383	1,081,136	291,472

2025 Financial results for FBS Conference Schools Based on NCAA MFRS Audited Financials

Further, O'Rourke reports that "based on NCAA financial reporting, Power 4 conference schools collectively averaged almost \$63 million in net operating losses in 2025. These losses were funded by booster contributions averaging \$44 million per school, student fees and school support averaging \$15 million per school, and endowment / investment income averaging \$4 million per school. And these losses are *before* Revenue Sharing and additional scholarships (see tables below) add another \$ 30 million in additional costs this year to many, if not most P4 athletic budgets. Consequently, many Power conference schools will be looking at eye-popping net operating losses of over \$ 100 million this year."

2025 Operating Results (\$) FBS Conference Averages	Operating Revenue	Operating Expenses	Net Loss from Operations (\$)	Booster Contributions	School Support & Student Fees	Endowment & Investments	Net Surplus (Deficit) **	% of expenses paid by School & Student Fees
SEC	146,844,302	224,947,226	- 78,102,924	65,842,515	8,037,633	4,566,251	343,475	4%
Big Ten	146,041,873	194,248,880	- 48,207,007	36,045,471	9,185,690	3,623,092	647,246	5%
ACC	97,639,846	169,270,445	- 71,630,599	38,091,667	23,751,097	6,425,340	- 3,362,495	14%
Big 12	74,250,529	131,669,516	- 57,418,987	34,806,296	22,875,734	1,440,402	1,703,445	17%
Pac-12	35,840,369	76,619,213	- 40,778,844	14,711,934	29,869,377	458,928	4,261,395	39%
American	19,781,528	63,666,350	- 43,884,822	7,774,888	37,616,118	282,386	1,788,570	59%
Mountain West	19,662,027	51,090,956	- 31,428,929	5,527,785	25,297,462	923,492	319,810	50%
Sun Belt	10,850,443	46,169,525	- 35,319,082	5,240,123	27,637,516	91,275	- 2,350,168	60%
Mid-American	9,645,542	41,970,787	- 32,325,245	2,335,113	28,375,273	202,893	- 1,411,966	68%
Conference USA	9,817,522	41,283,623	- 31,466,101	2,503,917	29,473,075	429,878	940,769	71%
P4 Average (\$)	120,011,476	182,947,702	- 62,936,226	44,405,481	14,773,288	3,929,692	172,235	8%
G6 Average (\$)	16,770,435	52,689,175	- 35,918,740	6,125,056	29,642,173	400,042	248,531	56%

O'Rourke's analysis contains further insights that should be considered – see <https://nil-ncaa.com/>.

Insights on the Use of the NIL/Revenue Pool by P-4 Institutions with Regard to Individual Athlete Payments

There is no individual athlete compensation limit for use of the NIL/Revenue Share Pool. Privacy rules most likely will prevent the examination of individual athlete contracts absent court cases in which they are subject to discovery as in the complaint filed in the [Duke v. Darian Mehshah](#) case (Exhibit A contains the actual Mehshah contract). That being said, we believe that the vast majority of Year One individual athlete payments have been spent on star athletes recruited from both high school and the transfer portal and 80-90% on athletes participating in men's football and basketball. Congress does have the power to subpoena such data and draw its own conclusions.

For example, we share what we consider to be a reputable investigative media report of an annual survey of athletic department general managers on football recruits by position:

College football: How much does each position cost? (ESPN college P-4 GM survey)

By Max Alson

2025: https://www.espn.com/college-football/story/_/id/46050629/college-football-2025-position-cost-transfers#rb

2026: https://www.espn.com/college-football/story/_/id/49568548/college-football-2026-position-cost-transfer-portal

"I can tell you right now, with NIL rising 20%, 30%, 40% a year, it's not sustainable if we stay on the path we're on right now," Michigan coach Kyle Whittingham said.

GM Responses re: going rate re: NIL/revenue share payment to top high school or transfer football players to attend a P-4 school

	2025-26	2026-27
Quarterback	\$1-2 million	\$1-3 million
Running back	\$300,000-\$700,000	\$300,000-\$800,000
Wide receiver	\$400,000-\$800,000	\$400,000-\$1 million
Tight end	\$200,000-\$400,000	\$300,000-\$600,000
Offensive tackle	\$500,000-\$1 million	\$600,000-\$1.2 million
Offensive guard	\$300,000-700,000	\$300,000-700,000
Edge rushers	\$500,000-\$1 million	\$500,000-\$1.2 million
Defensive tackles	\$300,000-\$800,000	\$500,000-\$1 million
Linebackers	\$200,000-\$500,000	\$300,000-\$700,000
Cornerbacks	\$300,000-\$800,000	\$400,000-\$900,000
<u>Safeties</u>	\$300,000-\$700,000	\$300,000-\$900,000