

WHY YOUR HIGH SCHOOL NEEDS A QUALIFIED STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING PROFESSIONAL

Benefits to the Students

1. **Reduce injuries:** A qualified strength and conditioning professional can play a pivotal role in preparing young athletes for sport and thereby minimize or offset the incidence and severity of sport-related injuries common to young athletes. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. **Improve long-term athletic development:** A qualified strength and conditioning professional understands the many variables that go into designing training-age-appropriate programs, and can produce more positive results. (6) (5) (7) (8)
3. **Improve performance:** Athletes who participate in a well-designed strength and conditioning program typically will be faster, stronger, more powerful, move more efficiently, and be more athletic than they would be without it. (1) (9) (10) (11) (12)
4. **Improve confidence:** Athletes who invest time in strength and conditioning tend to develop confidence through changes in their body composition and increased physical literacy, as well as the knowledge that the development that occurs as a result of their training can give them an advantage in competition. (13) (14) (15)
5. **Improve health:** In addition to increasing muscular strength, power, and muscular endurance, regular participation in a youth resistance training program has the potential to influence many other health- and fitness-related measures, and can play an important role in alleviating many health-related conditions. (1) (16) (12) (17)

Benefits to the School

1. **Limit liability:** A qualified strength and conditioning professional can help limit your school's liability and implement procedures that support risk-management. (16) (21) (2) (18) (4)
2. **Increase professionalism and safety:** For the same reason schools require a certified athletic trainer to work with their injured athletes or a certified lifeguard on pool decks, the same should be true for the coach who is designing and supervising the strength and conditioning program. (18) (19) (20)
3. **Extra coach on staff for all sports:** A strength coach allows the sport coach more time to focus on the day-to-day practice schedule while the strength coach oversees the strength and conditioning of the team. (16)
4. **Due diligence:** Demonstrates due diligence in properly equipping athletes for the physical and mental demands of a particular sport and establishes a greater commitment to injury prevention. (22)
5. **Gender equity:** Assists an athletic department with implementing strength and conditioning programs that are gender specific. (22)

What is a Qualified Strength and Conditioning Professional at the Secondary School Level?

1. **Certification:** A qualified strength and conditioning professional should achieve and maintain a professional certification credentialed by an independent accreditation agency—for example, the NSCA Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) certification—as well as standard first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and automated external defibrillation (AED). (18) (19) (21)
2. **Education:** A qualified strength and conditioning professional should acquire expertise, and have a degree from a regionally accredited college/ university in one or more of the “scientific foundations” for strength and conditioning (i.e. exercise/anatomy, biomechanics, pediatric exercise physiology, nutrition), or in a relevant subject (e.g., exercise/sport pedagogy, psychology, motor learning, training methodology, kinesiology). (16) (7) (22) (23) (24)

ABOUT THE NSCA

The National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) is an international nonprofit professional association dedicated to advancing the strength and conditioning profession around the world.

The NSCA advances the profession by supporting strength and conditioning professionals devoted to helping others discover and maximize their strengths. The organization disseminates research-based knowledge and its practical application by offering industry-leading certifications, research journals, career development services, and continuing education opportunities. The NSCA community is composed of more than 45,000 members and certified professionals who further industry standards as researchers, educators, strength coaches, personal trainers, and other roles in related fields.

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