Appalachian State University's athletics feasibility study committee convened for the second time on Monday, Feb. 14 at the Appalachian Athletics Center.

During Monday's meeting, committee members received reports from three forums held with select focus groups on Friday, Feb. 11. The initial focus groups, which met with representatives from Collegiate Consulting LLC and ASU athletics, were comprised of campus and community leaders, student leaders and the Yosef Club Advisory Board.

The purpose of forming focus groups is to inform key ASU athletics stakeholders about the data being collected and receive feedback from those constituents to share with the committee. Additional focus groups will be assembled as the study moves forward in the coming months.

Subcommittees also met on Monday and shared updates with the entire committee. Five subcommittees have been formed to delve deeper into the issues most critical to the athletics feasibility study — revenue, expenses, facilities, NCAA matters and effects and desires of the ASU family.

"Monday's meeting was a productive one and I feel like we are making great progress in collecting and analyzing data to make the best recommendation possible to Chancellor Peacock," committee co-chairman G.A. Sywassink said.

"It was especially valuable to hear reports from the focus groups and receive their feedback," Sywassink continued. "A primary concern of members of the focus groups was the notion that financial investments in athletics can negatively affect the University as a whole. No matter what the final recommendation of this committee is, it is critical that stakeholders understand that athletics receives no state funding. We look forward to hearing reports from additional focus groups in the future and continue to address the concerns of the Appalachian family during this critical junction in the history of the University."

Appalachian's athletics feasibility study committee convened for the first time on January 18 and is charged with analyzing data collected by Collegiate Consulting LLC (formerly NACDA Consulting), developing a final report based on the analysis and making a recommendation to

ASU Chancellor Dr. Kenneth E. Peacock. The recommendation is expected to be presented to Chancellor Peacock this summer. The Chancellor will then make his own recommendation to ASU's Board of Trustees, who must approve any change in Appalachian's conference or football subdivision affiliations.

A member of NCAA Division I since 1971, the Mountaineers currently participate the Southern Conference. In football, ASU and the SoCon compete in the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS — formerly Division I-AA).

The feasibility study committee is co-chaired by Sywassink, Chairman and retired CEO of Standard Holding Corporation, and Larry Stone, President and COO of Lowe's Corporation. Other members include John Blackburn (President, Linville Resorts, Inc.), Mark Harrill (President, Foscoe Companies), Jay Howard (President, JHE Production Group), Derek Jenkins (Senior Vice President, Target Stores), Doug Johnson (CEO, Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation), Jeffrey A. Shepard (Retired CEO, Footstar), Tommy Sofield (CEO, U.S. Buildings) and Brad Wilson (CEO, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of North Carolina).