

Administrative Information For All Levels Of Play

I. Purpose Of Our Program

The objectives of our program are to unite the youth of our parishes and to help promote their spiritual, physical and social welfare by bringing Catholic truths, principles and ideas into their everyday life. The programs are intended to be character builders, reflecting the ideals of good sportsmanship and Christianity. Once an individual accepts the position as coach in the Diocesan Recreation Association program, he or she accepts the responsibility to implement the philosophy of the Association.

II. Prayer

After warm-ups, both teams will join on the court or on the field for a prayer. A prayer will be selected by the home team from the official prayer list, and the "Our Father". All players, coaches, parents, and spectators are encouraged to participate.

III. Affiliation

In order to participate in Diocesan play, each parish must be affiliated with the Diocesan Recreation Association office. The affiliation fee is \$25.00 per year. The year begins on July 1st and ends on June 30th.

IV. League Fees

The league fees will be \$40.00 per team plus **\$10.00 per player per sport**. Once eligibility rosters are turned in and accepted by the association, there can be no refunds. Fees that are not paid by the deadline will mean forfeiture of games until the fees are paid. The association will **NOT** accept personal checks from parents or guardians of the players participating in our programs. The **ONLY** forms of payment that are acceptable to the association are: **PARISH CHECKS, PARISH ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION CHECKS, SCHOOL CHECKS, MONEY ORDERS, and CASH.**

A forfeit fee of \$200 will be collected from each parish. If a team must forfeit a game or match, the officials will be paid from these fees. Once the fees are depleted, the parish will be asked to replenish their forfeit funds. Unused funds will carry over from sport to sport and year to year.

v. Grade and Age Eligibility

League	Maximum Grade	Maximum Age as of August 1st of current school year	Eligible Grades
Varsity	Eighth	Fourteen Years of Age	Eighth, Seventh and Sixth
Jr. Varsity	Seventh	Thirteen Years of Age	Seventh, Sixth and Fifth
Sr. Reserve	Sixth	Twelve Years of Age	Sixth, Fifth and Fourth
Reserve	Fifth	Eleven Years of Age	Fifth and Fourth
Jr. Reserve	Fourth	Eleven Years of Age	Fourth

The above levels may vary from sport to sport.

VI. **Eligibility**

All players must be members of the parish and/or attend the parish school in order to play on the parish team. No player should play in another league or tournament while playing for a parish team. **Do not ask to move a game because of club or travel ball. The answer will be no.** Beginning in November, 2011, further restrictions will be placed on children playing on travel and club teams.

The following four paragraphs will be implemented in November, 2011.

The Diocesan Recreation Association(DRA) runs a program for parish teams that intends to be developmental at early age levels, but also can incorporate a competitive dimension at the junior high level and beyond. We also believe that every participant should have the opportunity to play in each event, and that having fun in participation is fostered. We are not a training camp for AAU or club sports. Coaches will teach their players the fundamentals of the sport while also teaching the athletes the basics of good sportsmanship and responsible decision-making. The rules and regulations of the DRA are meant to support these beliefs.

Student athletes may try out or practice with a non-parish team while a member of a parish team in the same sport. However, athletes may not compete in a contest (scrimmage or game or match). The offending athlete(s) will be banned from participating in that sport for the remainder of the DRA season and must petition the Director to be reinstated for future sports.

If an athlete is participating in another sport during the same season, his or her commitment to the parish team is expected and his or her priority must be given to the DRA program over all other programs. The DRA expects the athletes to participate in the DRA games first, in all fairness to the other athletes on the team. The non-parish team coach and coordinators must be informed of the participation on both teams, as well as the expectations of the DRA. DRA games cannot and will not be changed to accommodate club sports or AAU contests.

If athletes choose to participate with a non-parish team to the extent that the DRA team must forfeit a contest, the offending athlete(s) will be banned from participating in that sport for the remainder of the DRA season and must petition the Director to be reinstated for future sports.

VII. **Player Eligibility Rosters**

- A. All participants in the Diocesan Recreation Association program must be registered members of a parish church to participate in the sports program. Students registered and attending the parish school are also eligible to participate.
- B. All players must be members of the parish and/or parish school in order to play on the parish team. Parish mergers **MUST** be approved by the Diocesan Recreation Association **BEFORE** the mergers are made. The original parish sign-up sheets **MUST** be made available upon request.
- C. A fully completed roster must be turned into the Association office before a team is eligible to play.

- D. Eligibility rosters **MUST** be signed by the proper authority.
 - 1. For teams having students not attending the parish school, the form **MUST be signed by the PASTOR.**
 - 2. For teams having only students of the school on the team, the form may be signed by **either the PASTOR or the school PRINCIPAL.**
 - 3. For teams having students from multiple schools, **each PASTOR must sign the form.**
- E. Players may be added to a team roster until midpoint of the season
 - 1. The association office must be notified of any roster additions **BEFORE** the athlete is eligible to participate.
 - 2. All added players must complete a parent consent card, and get the **PASTOR'S** signature, and deliver all necessary **forms and fees** to the association office **BEFORE** the athlete is eligible to participate.
 - 3. These rules also apply to Intra-Diocesan transfers.
 - 4. A non-Catholic student who withdraws from a Catholic school and enrolls in a Non-Diocesan school (or home school) becomes immediately ineligible upon withdrawal.
- F. Beginning with the 2011-2012 basketball season (Nov. 2011) all sports rosters must have a minimum of 2 extra players above minimum required player number for that sport. Basketball requires 5 so the roster size must be 7 or more. Volleyball requires 6 so the roster size must be 8 or more. Football requires 11 so the roster size must be 13 or more. Baseball requires 9 so the roster size must be 11. Softball requires 9, so the roster size must be 11. Soccer for 4th, 5th and 6th requires 8 so the roster size must be 10. Soccer for 7th and 8th requires 11, so the roster size would be 13. Teams that feel they may short of these numbers should combine grades, merge with other parishes, or contact the Diocesan Office for assistance on mergers.

VIII. Roster Changes

- A. A player may be permanently moved up to a higher level at any time after gaining approval of the league commissioner. To complete this procedure you must contact the Diocesan Recreation Office or league commissioner by phone or email. (i.e. JV to Varsity, Jr. Reserve to Reserve.) If the move is designated as permanent the player may not return to the lower level at anytime during the season.
- B. Temporary, lateral permanent moves are permitted only at the Jr. Reserve and Reserve levels only, with the approval of the league commissioner or the diocesan office. A completed form must be sent to the diocesan office.
- C. Players may be temporarily moved up in extreme cases, in order to prevent **forfeiture** of the contest or to bring the number of players to the **optimal number** in a particular sport. (i.e. to meet the 5 players needed in basketball, a 9 person team in softball, etc.) **A Roster Amendment Form must be completed each time a temporary or permanent move is made.**
 - 1. All temporary moves must be reported to the league commissioner prior to the game or no later than 24 hours after the game.
 - 2. The league commissioner reserves the right to limit the amount of times a particular player may be temporarily moved up. If a team needs to move up a player more than two times, a permanent move must be made.
 - 3. Lateral temporary moves are permitted at the Jr. Reserve and Reserve level with the approval of the league commissioner.

4. In some sports, players moved up may be restricted in positions they are able to play. (i.e. baseball not used as a pitcher)
5. In some sports players may be restricted as to how many contests they may participate in one day.
6. League commissioners may approve an additional player—no more than 1 beyond the minimum—on a case by case basis. Said player is not required to meet the minimum playing time requirements. The majority of the playing time must go to the original players on the roster.

D. **NEVER** will a player be permitted to drop down to a lower level.

IX. **Protests**

The only protests that will be accepted must involve the eligibility of players. Our state certified officials are in complete charge of all games. The **OFFICIALS DECISION IS FINAL**. All discrepancies involving rules' interpretations must be settled during the game. If necessary, a coach will need to take a "time out" to clarify any rule. Use of an ineligible player will result in forfeiture and possible additional penalties.

X. **Information Sheets**

- A. The association has experienced **SERIOUS** difficulties with Athletic Directors submitting inaccurate information sheets.
- B. The practice of turning in an information sheet with a given number of teams and then changing that number of teams has reached epidemic proportions.
- C. Hours of schedule retyping, schedule reprinting, paper costs, mailing costs, to say nothing of the rescheduling of officials and a general hardship to many people are the result.
- D. Therefore, the association is enforcing the rule of **CHARGING THOSE PARISHES** that make changes to their information sheets after the sheets have been submitted to the Diocese or dropping a team after the league has started, **INCLUDING** tournaments.
 1. A flat fee of \$100.00 will be charged to the parish to cover the above expenses.
 2. Any team that forfeits a game must pay the officials for **BOTH** teams. For double elimination tournaments the fees for TWO games must be paid.
 3. These fees must be paid **BEFORE** the parish will be permitted to enter a team in another league or another sport.

XI. **Coaches And Spectator Conduct And Responsibilities**

Coaches must be in complete control of their players, assistant coaches and spectators at all times and are expected to conduct themselves as Christian ladies and gentlemen. Use of profanity will NOT be tolerated. The penalty for use of profanity by any coach or spectator will be ejection from the game with the possibility of suspension from the Diocesan League. Any coach or spectator guilty of un - sportsman like conduct will be penalized under the direction of the Diocesan Athletic Director. This includes damage to property, misconduct before a game, misconduct during a game or misconduct after a game. A suspension or permanent expulsion from the league may result after a review of the incident.

XII. Coaches Conduct Towards Player

In accordance with Diocesan Policy, the head coach must be at least 21 years of age. All coaches must have Protecting God's Children training and a BCI report on file with the parish office.

In accordance with Diocesan Policy, parishes must follow a strategy of "two- deep" ministry with adolescents, where at least two adults are present at all athletic activities and situations wherever possible.

Where a one-to-one activity is required, such activities should take place in an open environment. Special attention should be given to provide a safe and confidential forum while following standards of prudence.

Physical, sexual, or romantic relationships between a coach and an adolescent are unethical and are prohibited.

The coaching staff shall not make derogatory or humiliating remarks toward their own players or opponents. Constructive criticism can be made without embarrassing players. When addressing players who have made mistakes, coaches should maintain their composure and use it as a positive learning experience. Coaches who do not follow this policy are subject to the suspension rule.

XIII. Player Conduct

Any player guilty of un - sportsmanlike conduct will be penalized under the direction of the league commissioner. This includes any damage to property, misconduct before a game, misconduct during a game or misconduct after a game. Any player participating in any form of fighting including pushing, shoving, kicking, etc. will be ejected immediately. Players will also automatically be suspended for one additional game. A greater penalty may be assessed following a review of the incident.

XIV. Sportsmanship

No player, coach, spectator or cheerleader may in any way distract an opponent during play. This includes, but is not limited to, free throws in basketball, a pitch in baseball or softball, a serve in volleyball, a penalty kick in soccer, or a snap in football. These are merely common instances, distraction are **PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES**. Distractions include, but are not limited to, waving arms (primarily on free throws), kicking of bleachers, booing, doing cheers (during actions listed above), intentionally coughing/sneezing, talking to an opponent, making loud noises (including bells, horns, etc.) and any other act that the official deems to be distracting for a player. Violation of this rule will result in an ejection (suspension rule applies). The official may opt for a warning prior to ejection, but the warning is **NOT** required.

xv. Conduct Towards Officials

No player, coach, spectator or cheerleader may make a derogatory comment directed at an official. This rule applies to ALL levels of play; however **NO** leniency should be expected at the Reserve or Jr. Reserve levels. A key objective of our program is an emphasis on good sportsmanship. Comments to officials should be limited to **COACHES** asking for a call clarification to facilitate the coaching of a player. Violations of this rule shall result in a warning against the offender. In sports where penalties may be assessed (technical fouls in basketball, yellow cards in soccer, or penalties in football) these penalties will be assessed and considered to be the warning. A second violation shall result in ejection (suspension rule applies). An individual guilty of a flagrant violation may be ejected without warning.

xvi. Suspension Rule

Any player, coach, or cheerleader ejected from a game/facility will automatically be suspended for at least the next game. Spectators will be suspended for at least the next two games. The suspension shall apply to players, coaches, spectators and cheerleaders guilty of misconduct **AFTER** a game has concluded that would have resulted in an ejection had the incident occurred during play. The suspended individual is **NOT** permitted to attend/view a game from which he or she is suspended. In addition to the suspension, a letter will be sent to the pastor of the parish notifying him of the suspension of the parishioner. Additional penalties may be assessed following a review of the incident by the league commissioner. Non-compliance will cause forfeiture of the game as well as possible additional penalties. Ejection of a coach, player or spectator, must be reported by the coach of the offending team.

xvii. Any, player, coach or spectator who is ejected from a Diocesan Recreation sponsored game, match or meet cannot attend any other Diocesan Recreation games, matches, or meets until the suspensions for such ejection is served at the level in which the ejection occurred. (I.E. if spectator is ejected from their 5th grade son's basketball game, they may NOT attend their 7th grade daughter's games until the suspension is served at the 5th grade boys' level). Penalty also applies to those who are ejected and also officiate in the Diocesan Recreation Association program. They may not officiate Diocesan Recreation Association contests until the suspension is served. If the ejection occurs in the final contest of the season the Diocesan Recreation Association Director will determine the terms of the carry-over suspension.

xviii. Damage At Playing Site

Coaches are responsible for their teams at all times. The coach or a responsible adult **MUST** accompany a team to a locker room. Damage to any building or field will be invoiced to the athletic association of the team or teams found responsible for such damage. If the guilty party is not found, then all teams present at the site will be charged equally for the damage.

xix. Sunday Games and Practice

No athletic related activities are to begin before 12:00 noon on Sunday. Under NO circumstances are games, scrimmages or practice to start before 12:00 noon on Sunday. Coaches can be suspended and games forfeit if this rule is broken.

xx. Alcohol, Tobacco & Drug Policy

- A. No athletic director, coach, player, spectator, cheerleader, contest official, scorekeeper, timer, gym supervisor, league coordinator, etc., may engage in any form of alcohol, drug or tobacco use at a Diocesan sponsored contest.
- B. The Diocesan Recreation Association strongly urges that this policy be enforced during practices and scrimmages.
- C. The facility supervisor and contest officials shall ensure enforcement during contests.
- D. The penalty for violation of this rule during a contest shall be immediate ejection (see suspension rule) with possible additional penalties (see penalties for rules violations) pending a review by the League Commissioner.

xxi. Evenly Divided Teams

At the sr. reserve, reserve and jr. reserve levels multiple teams must be as evenly divided as possible. This does not apply to split grade teams. (i.e. a 5-6 team does not have to be equal to an all 6 team) The League commissioner reserves the right to review team breakdowns and resolve the situation if the need arises.

xxii. Competitive and Recreation Divisions (some sports)

All parishes entering One Jr. Varsity and/ or One Varsity Team will play in leagues using Competitive rules. If a parish enters 2 or more teams at the JV Level or 2 or more teams at the Varsity Level the additional teams can be placed in Recreation or Competitive leagues.

Recreation leagues are designed for parishes with multiple teams. The league is primarily for less advanced players who can continue to develop their skills in a less competitive atmosphere. Though participation is required in both levels more playing time is mandated in recreation leagues.

xxiii. Tournaments

- A. Post season tournaments will only be conducted in Varsity, Jr. Varsity and Sr. Reserve and Reserve levels.
- B. No post season tournaments will be conducted for the Jr. Reserve level. Extra games will be added to the regular season schedule for these levels.
- C. No teams from the same parish are permitted to meet in the finals of the post season tournament and a co-championship will be declared by directive of the Diocesan Recreation Board of Control, June 22, 2009.
- D. If the teams are scheduled to meet in an earlier round, the games will be played as scheduled.

xxiv. Parents/Guardians

- A. Parents/guardians must attend the mandatory Parent Meeting held at each parish prior to the start of the season. Attendance will be taken and kept on file at the parish.
- B. Both parents/guardians must sign a Parent Code of Conduct. The signed copy will be kept on file at the Parish.

xxv. Physicals and Concussion Policy

- A. Preseason physicals are strongly recommended.
- B. Concussions, which cause short and long term negative health issues, remain at the top of our concerns for our young athletes. Adolescent athletes are particularly vulnerable to the effects of concussion. A concussion is a brain injury that disrupts normal brain function. Most concussed athletes do not lose consciousness. Common symptoms include headache, fogginess, difficulty concentrating, confusion, nausea, poor balance, mood changes and thought/thinking difficulty.
- C. In accordance with OHSAA rules, "Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared **with written authorization** by an appropriate health care professional. In Ohio, an "appropriate health care professional" shall be a **physician**, (MD or DO) and an **athletic trainer, licensed**.