



2023 Game Rules and Guidelines

I. TITLE

1. The league shall be known as the Greater Catholic Youth League (the "GCYL"). New league entries will not change the title.

II. MEMBER PROGRAMS

1. Each Member Program shall be designated as defined in the GCYL Regulations and Bylaws, effective March 12, 2010 or as amended in the future. All Member Programs shall be afforded all rights and obligations as defined in the aforementioned regulations and bylaws.
 - ◆ Voting Members shall meet the required obligations as stated by the league no later than January 1 beginning in 2022 or as amended in the future.
 - ◆ Member Programs shall complete all requisite paperwork as required by the league by the date published annually by the league.
 - ◆ Addendum A is a list of schools and their affiliations. Any change to this must be approved by the GCYL Board of Voting Members.
2. The Regulations and Bylaws of the GCYL shall supersede any terms, roles, or duties of Member Programs identified within these Rules of Play.
3. Each Member Program may have only one league representative.
4. A Member Program representative will be recognized upon receipt of a letter of introduction by the school or parish athletic association or its equivalent.
5. If two or more parishes or grade schools find it necessary to combine or merge to form a single Member Program in order to participate, they must submit a formal request to the league office prior to any combination or merger. Such requests must include the approval of the athletic commission of each parish or school. The final decision to permit or deny such request will rest with the GCYL Board of Voting Members. The league reserves the right to contact directly the athletic commission and/or pastor of each parish/school to review and discuss combinations or mergers.
6. Member Programs are required to field teams for the Varsity, Reserve, and Pony levels in order to be eligible in the 3rd, 5th or 7th grade football.

7. Each Member Program participating will be assessed an entry fee to cover league costs for each of its team entries. The amount of the fee will be determined by need. Any Member Program paying league fees after July 31st will be assessed a \$25.00 fine per each month late. All surplus funds will be returned to Member Programs evenly.
8. If any Member Program is not represented at two successive Board of Voting Members meetings, the Secretary will send a letter to the athletic association of the parish informing them that they are not being represented.
9. Any school that would like to explore the possibility of starting a program of their own would be welcomed by the league and given as much support as possible.
10. Prior to the start of the league competition season, each Member Program's team must be represented (preferably by the head coach) at a mandatory education and training session covering health issues, concussion protocol, and league ground rules. The league will provide multiple meeting times and locations to accommodate its Member Programs.

III. LEAGUE EXPANSION

1. Prospective Members must comply with the league's Purpose identified in Article I, Section 1.03 of the GCYL Regulations and Bylaws. Prospective Members are identified as those parishes with athletic associations within the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and other regional private Catholic grade schools.
2. Any expansion beyond the designation in Article I, Section 1.03 of the Regulations and Bylaws shall require modification to the Regulations and Bylaws passed in accordance with the voting procedures therein.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS

1. Eligibility and Enrollment:
 1. *Enrollment.* In order to be eligible to participate for a Member Program, a player must be either: (1) currently enrolled in the school or (2) must be registered in the parish of one of the schools involved in the Member Program he represents. Many schools require players to attend CCD to participate on the team, but this is not a league rule. The Board of Voting Members reserves the right to verify Member Program rosters with the parish and/or schools.
 2. *Unattached Players.* Unattached players may be assigned to play on Member Programs if school/parish and the GCYL Board of Voting Members both approve. The players assignment to a Member Program will be made through GCYL Board of Voting Members who will assess geographic alignment and competitive

balance with-in the league and the Member Programs for all prospective players who fall under this scenario.

3. ***In-season Transfers.*** In the case of an in-season transfer, the player has the option of playing for either team, as long as the transfer occurs prior to the 3rd week of the season.
Unattached Players. Unattached players may be assigned to play on Member Programs if school/parish and the GCYL Board of Voting Members both approve. The player's assignment to a Member Program will be made through the GCYL Board of Voting Members who will assess geographic alignment and competitive balance within the league and the Member Programs for all prospective players who fall under this scenario.
4. ***Multiple Memberships.*** If a family is registered at more than one parish, they are eligible to play with only one Member Program. Their choice of Member Program becomes permanent to the extent that membership at multiple parishes continues and remains permanent for the duration of the affected individual's involvement in the league athletics. If a family is registered to a parish and attends school associated with a different parish, they are eligible to play with either their parish or their school's Member Program. Their choice of Member Program participation becomes permanent to the extent that this situation continues for the duration of the affected individual's involvement in the league. Any deviations from this rule will require approval from the GCYL Board of Voting Members.
5. ***Out-of-season transfers.*** Any player that played for a Member Program but did not attend that parish school or an affiliate parish school and the next year decides to move to a different parish program will lose one year of eligibility and must sit out that year. The only exception to this would be if that player attends the parish school to which he is transferring. The transferring player must sit out that season (calendar year of play). A player must petition the governance committee for exception due to extenuating circumstances.
6. ***Length of Eligibility.*** Once a player begins play in the sixth grade, that player will have only three total seasons of eligibility. If a player begins play in the seventh grade, that player will have only two seasons of eligibility. If a player begins play in the eighth grade, that player will only have one season of eligibility. These eligibility rules will apply regardless of the league in which the player plays any of those school years.

7. **Expulsion.** Any player that is expelled from school is immediately ineligible for the remainder of the season and post-season.

2. **Age:**
Due to safety considerations for all GCYL participants, players must fall within the following age ranges to be eligible for play;

- i. 8th grade - could not turn 15 in the year playing.
- ii. 7th grade - could not turn 14 in the year playing unless the player is playing on a 7th & 8th grade team and would not be able to play his 8th grade year.
- iii. 6th grade - could not turn 13 in the year playing
- iv. 5th grade - could not turn 12 in the year playing unless the player is playing on a 5th & 6th grade team and would not to be able to be on the same team the following year.
- v. 4th grade - could not turn 11 in the year playing.
- vi. 3rd grade - could not turn 10 in the year playing unless he is playing on a 3rd & 4th grade team and would not be able to be on the same team the following year.

3. **Grade:**

Bandit: A player to be eligible to play in any league game must be enrolled in the second grade or under.

Pony: A player to be eligible to play in any league game must be enrolled in the second grade, third grade, or fourth grade.

Reserve: A player to be eligible to play in any league game must be enrolled in the fourth grade, fifth grade, or sixth grade.

Varsity: A player to be eligible to play in any league game must be enrolled in the sixth grade, seventh grade, or eighth grade.

4. **Weight:**

Bandit: Please see the Bandit rules and guidelines form for information

Pony: A player to be eligible to play in any league game must not exceed 125 pounds.

Reserve: A player to be eligible to play in any league game must not exceed 145 pounds.

Varsity: A player to be eligible may not exceed 180 pounds.

1. *Backfield and end-of-line exception.* Any player who plays a backfield or an end of line position may not exceed 170 pounds (no tape).
2. *Lineman exception.* Any player between 171 and 180 pounds shall have a minimum 2-inch "X" in red or black tape, on the back of their helmet. Each team will be allowed to use up to two (2) "X" players on the offensive line to start each play, but they must play the position of either center, guard or tackle, and there must be a "non-X" player between the two "X" players and that player must be on the line of scrimmage. Prior to the start of the game, the head coach and player(s) must present themselves to the officials so they can list the player's number on the game card. Each team will also be allowed one (1) "X" player on the defensive line on each play. The "X" player must line up between the tackles (no further than the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle) and be within one yard of the line of scrimmage.
 - a. No "X" player may be considered to be an eligible receiver.
 - b. If more than the allotted quantity of "X" players or rules to the "X" participation are not followed, a 15-yard penalty will be enforced against the offending team.
 - c. Any player with an "X" who gains control and possession of the ball on offense or defense may not cause the ball to be advanced. At the time of control and possession the ball will be declared down.

The weight restrictions shall be increased two (2) lbs. in each class at the beginning of the play-offs.

1. ALL players MUST be weighed prior to each game by the opposing team's coach or representative. All players must have their jersey with them. Players will not be allowed to weigh in with no clothing in order to make weight. The opposing team's head coach, or representative, will act as the final judge. The home team must furnish a calibrated scale approved by the league. All teams must

use a beam type scale (aka detecto). If prior to the start of the game a player makes body weight for his respective division, with or without football equipment, he will be eligible to play. To participate in the game, all players must wear all required football equipment as listed in Article VIII of these Rules of Play.

2. For early weigh-in needs, there shall be two host sites, designated by the GCYL each week (one on the East side of town and one on the West side). **Any player that needs an early weigh in regardless of hosting that day, must send players to the central locations.** There is to be a GCYL Executive Committee member or assigned representative present at each of the sites at a specific time to be designated by the GCYL to administer early weigh-ins for all teams for the weekend. Participant players are required to wear their official numbered game jersey to the weigh in. **If a player makes weight at the early weigh in, he does not have to weigh in again with the rest of the players. If a player doesn't attend the early weigh in, he should weigh in with the rest of his teammates at the home field prior to the game. Coaches or Coordinators should work directly with each other prior to game day to facilitate the smooth operation of the early weigh in process and in the best interest of the players involved so that the maximum game participation can be achieved.**
3. No team or any of its representatives may waive the weight limit for any player.
4. All players must be presented for weigh-ins.
5. The GCYL recognizes that some players may have the need to have an early weigh-in to allow a player close to the weight limit the chance to see if they are eligible to play in their upcoming scheduled contest for general health considerations. All teams hosting games are required to provide a time for an early weigh.
6. The early weigh-in time shall take place no later than one (1) hour prior to the start of the Pony football game on Saturdays and Sundays and last for a time period of no longer than 30 minutes from the start of the early weigh-in period.
7. Players reporting for early weigh-in **MUST** have their uniform jersey with them and can weigh-in with just their shorts on if they choose. No player will be recognized as passing early weigh-in without their official jersey.
8. A coach or coordinator from both programs must be on hand to witness and certify the early weigh-in. Teams are responsible for passing along the information to the appropriate head coaches of the players involved in the early weigh-in and the results. Names of

the respective players and the results should be exchanged by both programs.

9. If a player makes weight at the early weigh-in, they DO NOT have to weigh in again with the rest of the players.
10. In the event that a Member Program has a team that is playing on a different field than the other squads, they may contact a representative of the team at the field where the odd team is playing and make arrangements to have a coach or coordinator of the visiting program at that field to certify their players early weigh-in results (i.e., If Team A is playing at Team B, but Team A's varsity squad is playing at Team C's field, they can make arrangements with Team C or D to have their varsity players attend the weigh-in at Team C's field and assign a designated representative from that program to observe the weigh-in.).
11. Coordinators or Coaches should work directly with each other prior to game day in order to facilitate the smooth operation of the early weigh-in process and in the best interests of the players involved so that maximum game participation can be achieved.

5. Participation

- a. A player can only play for one team (Bandit, Pony, Reserve or Varsity) per day. Any roster changes must be submitted to the GCYL's Board of Voting Members prior to the third game of the season. At the start of third game of the season, all rosters are final through the remainder of the season and playoffs. During the first two weeks of the regular season, overweight players can either practice with their age group team while trying to lose weight or play up with the next age group. (Coaches should limit contact of overweight players if they are practicing with their age group.)
- b. Prior to the beginning of the third week of games, all rosters must be final and turned into the league's Board of Voting Members. At this time, overweight players must choose which team they will play with for the remainder of the season. If a player is overweight for his age group and wishes to move up, the change must be before the roster is final (start of game #3). Players who have started the season playing up due to weight may also move down during this 3 week period. Any changes/additions, etc. to the roster after the third game must be approved by the league's Board of Voting Members.
- c. THE GCYL IS A COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL CONFERENCE. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO GUARANTEE OF PLAYING TIME.

6. Roster and Contract

- a. Each team will receive a roster of players that were in their program during each of the last two years. All the players on these rosters will only have to fill out a release form to be eligible to play. If a program wants to add any player not on these rosters, the player must go to the GCYL website and fill out a new player registration form in order for the league to determine whether or not this player is eligible.
- b. All rosters must be submitted on the standard form provided by the league. Any roster sent in any other format will not be accepted. All rosters must be submitted by July 1st. Players may be added to the roster until the third game of the season; however any additions to the roster after July 1st must be made on the GCYL website. The league must approve all players that are added or registered on the web site.

New Player Registration for 2021 Season EXAMPLE (online questionnaire)

Players Name: John Doe
 What Parish do you belong to? St. PIOX GCYL Program Name:
 St. Jude Level of play / participation: Varsity
 Family Email Address: ron.k@fuse.net
 Phone Number: 5125555555
 What School did you attend in 2020: Dulles
 What School will you attend in 2021: St. Jude
 Who did you play football for in 2020: Highlanders
 Players Age: 12/29/CCCC

2021 If you played for a different team or attended a different school in compared to 2020, why did the change occur? Family Move to Area

- c. 3rd-grade players will not be required to register on the GCYL website per the above rule.
- d. The Governance Committee and Executive Committee will review all “new” players for eligibility and affiliation.
- e. A player not enrolled in the school or registered with the parish can *petition the governance committee pending the signature of the parish pastor* or the player will not be eligible.
- f. Any changes in the roster must be submitted in writing to the league Board before any player’s eligibility to play will be considered.

Each team’s roster must include all coaches listing names and phone numbers on the team roster form. **THIS RULE WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.**

7. Violation of Roster Rules

Any team having a player or players that are ineligible due to age and or school affiliation will face disciplinary action up to and including forfeit of games from the league. The league will hold a meeting to discuss the roster violation to determine the appropriate penalty. In most cases, forfeiture of all games in which the illegal player participated will be imposed. All Voting Member Programs (except for the team involved) will vote on the appropriate action.

V. PLAYING RULES: FEDERATION RULES PREVAIL

All coaches and players must remain inside the coaching areas, no further than the 25 yard line in each direction. COACHES MUST STAY OFF THE FIELD EXCEPT DURING TIME OUTS OR INJURIES.

1. There will be no limit to substitutions.
2. All teams will play four 8-minute stop and go quarters.
3. All divisions will be allowed three (3) time outs per half. Time outs not used in the first half cannot be carried over to the second half. Two coaches from each team may join the team on the field regardless of which team called the time out. Water will be made available to both teams during an injury time out at the time of the injury.
4. Beginning with the 2016 year and thereafter, kickoffs are eliminated at all levels.

After a score and try, the football is awarded to the opposing team at the 35 yard line for all levels. In the event of a safety, the football is awarded to the opposing team 25 yards beyond what normally would be the “kicking” team’s 20 yard line, which would be the 45 yard line. The opposing team would snap the ball at the +45 yard line (they only have 45 yards to score). *Voted in 3/2016*

*** A two-minute break will be given after all scores before the play begins for the next play.**

5. **OVERTIME**
Regular season overtime shall consist of two periods (if needed). One period constitutes each team possessing the ball for one offensive possession. The ball will be placed at the 10 yard line and the offensive team shall have 4 attempts to score. Each team will be provided 1 attempt from the 3 yard line for extra point conversion. If still tied after the 1st overtime period, a second overtime period shall be played. To start the second overtime (if needed), the team who began on Defense to start the first overtime period, shall now begin on offense. The same end of the playing field shall be used for both overtime periods.
If the score remains tied after two periods, the game will end in a tie.

Playoff overtime shall consist of multiple periods until the score dictates a winner.

Overtime shall begin immediately after the scheduled contest. Officials will allow 1 minute between the regular contest and subsequent periods in playoff overtime. A coin flip will decide possession and direction of play. The winner of the coin toss shall have first choice of possession or direction of play. Direction of play shall not change in an overtime period. Each additional period in play off overtime will continue to alternate possession (same as regular season Overtime).

6. An unlimited number of captains are permitted on the field for the coin toss.
7. **Pony No Punt Rule:**
No punts will be allowed at the pony level. Instead, a 20-yard walk-off will take place anytime a team chooses to punt. This is an untimed down. No punt can be advanced inside the opponent's 20-yard line.
8. **Bandit rules:** Handout will be made at Bandit meeting to be held prior to the commencement of each season.

1.

9. **Sportsmanship-Rule:**

- The Sportsmanship rule will be implemented when a team is trailing by 20 or more points at ANY TIME during the 4th quarter. At this point in the game, the current score freezes and will become the officially recorded score of the contest and accordingly reported to the GCYL league at the end of the game. The remainder of the game will still be played per usual rules, except additional scoring will not be counted for either team (neither on the field scoreboard, nor on the league website). This is automatic and not at the discretion of the coaches.

2. **Sportsmanship Rule Game Play Requirements:**

1. Referee(s) are to communicate with both Head Coaches that the Sportsmanship Rule is in effect. If the Referee(s) fails to do so, the Head Coaches will communicate with each other and the Referee(s).
2. The Home team will communicate directly to the score board keeper that the score is frozen but normal clock operation is in effect.
3. The Game announcer will state over the PA that the Sportsmanship Rule is in effect and that the score is frozen with normal clock operations.
4. Both teams are required to remove their starters and play their non-starters (2nds, 3rds, etc.) If a team is unable to make a complete change due to players numbers, then "skilled" position players (QB, RB, WR, LB, etc.) must be removed from their positions for player safety.
5. The Referee(s) will stop game play and allow both teams to make substitutions as soon as the Sportsmanship Rule goes into effect. Play will not resume until both teams are satisfied with the substitutions.
 - It should be everyone's goal to proceed with the game playing as many kids as possible. The rule of a 30-

point running clock will be eliminated in league play. This is a regular season rule only.

VI. EQUIPMENT

1. All players will be required to wear a mouth guard, shoulder pads, helmet with face mask, football pants, jersey with numbers front and back, thigh pads, kneepads, and hip pads.
2. Pony and Reserve players will be permitted to wear molded cleat football or soccer shoes or gym shoes. No street shoes will be allowed. Varsity players will be permitted to wear regulation football shoes, as prescribed in Federation rules, or the shoes mentioned above. No metal tip or metal cleats of any kind will be allowed.
3. All teams must only use one of the officially approved league balls described below. All footballs noted below must be “traditional leather”. “Composite Leather” is not an approved football.

	RAWLINGS	RAWLINGS	WILSON	WILSON
7/8 Varsity Youth	ST5 YB	PRO5 YB	TDY GST	TDY
5/6 Reserve Junior	ST5 JB	PRO5 JRB	TDJ GST	TDJ
3/4 Pony Pee Wee	ST5 PWB	PRO5 PWB	K2 GST	K2
Bandit	ST5 PWB	PRO5 PWB	K2 GST	K2

4. All jerseys must be numbered front and back. (if any team does not meet this criteria they will be grandfathered in until such time that they replenish or replace jerseys)

VII. GAME TIMES

Games will be played on Saturday or Sunday. Each participating program will provide specific game day and time information to the league on a yearly basis. All games must be played on the designated time and location as outlined by the league schedule. Any deviation of the schedule must have prior approval of the league executive committee members.

VIII. POSTPONED GAMES

1. Games will be played at the time set up by league President and Vice President with the approval of the coaches.
2. Teams that fail to make up postponed games prior to the playoffs will be ineligible for post-season play.
3. All postponed games must be played within 72 hours from date of postponement.

4. Any postponed game scheduled and not made up will result in a loss. If the league officers determine that one of the teams from a postponed game is earnestly trying to schedule and play the game and other team is trying to avoid the game, the team trying to avoid the game may be assessed with a forfeit.

IX. PROTESTS

No game protests will be allowed. This is consistent with Ohio High School Athletic Association guidelines. All rulings on the field are final. Only player eligibility may be protested by the designated program coordinator.

X. LEAGUE STANDINGS

1. Both teams must report the scores of all games to the designated league official within 24 hours of game time.

XI. HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The home team must supply chains, down markers, marked coaching areas (25-25), and yard markers.
2. The entire perimeter of the field should be roped off from end zone to end zone; 10 yards back from the playing field, where feasible.
3. Each team is responsible for crowd control on their side of the field, including ensuring that spectators are at a safe distance away from the sidelines.
4. Coordinators can have fans removed from the game site due to inappropriate behavior.
5. Officials will be paid in accordance with procedures determined by the league.
6. Home team shall be responsible for supplying chain crew volunteers and clock operator.
*** Game officials have the discretion to keep time on the field should concerns arise regarding clock operations. This choice is at the sole discretion of the game officials.
7. Overall game day guidelines would be reviewed by each member program as outlined on our league form posted on the website.
8. Chain crews must be on the home field side of the field.

XII. DIVISIONS (See Structure Tab)

XIII. SCHEDULE (See Structure Tab)

XVI. Playoff and Regular Season considerations: (See Structure Tab)

XVII. CANCELLATIONS

- 1. When severe weather conditions exist at a particular site, the game may be cancelled and rescheduled by the involved coordinators with the consent of the referee. If all games at particular site need to be cancelled due to field conditions or other circumstances, league officials must be involved in the process. The league President and Vice President will help reschedule the game. Once a game has begun the referee can postpone or cancel the game due to unsafe weather conditions.**

XVIII. GAME DAY COMPLIANCE EXPECTATIONS - SCOUTING

Coaches and parents may attend any GCYL game during the preseason, regular season, or post-season/playoffs. But no recording of any kind of information regarding teams other than your own is permitted. This includes film, video, cell phones recording, handwritten or electronic note taking, pictures, or computers. Anything other than personal memory is prohibited. Attendance to observe practices of any GCYL team other than one's own program is absolutely prohibited. Any violation of the scouting rule will result in the program associated with the person violating the rule to be penalized, including suspension of coaches, depending upon the severity of the violation. Such penalty will be determined by the appropriate committee or Executive Committee, except the alleged offending member.

XIX. PRACTICE START DATES & PRESEASON CONDITIONING / WORKOUTS

- 1. There shall be no interaction by the coaching staff or any others that are part of the football program prior to the 30 days before the first regular season scheduled game. This prohibition includes conditioning camps run by former players. Every player must have a minimum of two (2) days of acclimation with helmets only followed by three (3) days of shoulder pads and helmets only before full equipment is allowed to be worn.**

REVISED: August 29, 2023 governance committee

Addendum (A)

Program	Combination / Mergers Consists of:
All Saints	St. Vincent /Good ShepherdHoly Trinity / St. Johns DP / Nativity / St. Clements / St Peter & Paul, St. Nicholas (school closed) - Tether Affiliation with SASEAS
Covington Catholic	St. Puis/All Saints/St. Agnes/Blessed Sacrament/St. Joe's/Mary QofH/IHM/St. Paul / St. Timothy/St. Thomas/ St. Henry/ St. Cecilia/ Prince of Peace - KY
CPS / ST. Marys	Cardinal Paccelli, St. Mary's, Ursula Villa, St Frances De Sales/ St. Cecelia - Tether Affiliation with Summit
Guardian Angels	St. John Fisher / St. Rose - Tether Affiliation with IHM
IHM	Single parish / school - Tether Affiliation with GA
Queen of Peace	St. Joseph's / St. Aloysius / St. Julie Billiard - Hamilton/Sacred Heart-Varsity only
SMOY/St. Columban	St. Phillips Morrow - (merged in 2019)
St. Ann/Pete/Sacred Heart	St. Peter in Chains - Hamilton /Sacred Heart
St. Antoninus	St. Teresa / St. Al's on the River
SASEAS/St. Gertrude	St. Ann Eliz. Seton/ St Andrew/ St Louis/ St. Phillip the Apostle - Tether Affiliation with All Saints
St. Ignatius	St. Bernard
St. James	OLG, Assumption/ Little Flower/ St Anns/ St Margaret Mary/St. Barts / St. Vivian / St. James Wyoming/ Annunciation/ Our Lady of the Rosary/St Boniface/ St Clare/ St Francis Sariff/ St. John DR (2019)/ Corpus Christi/ ST. John Harr/St. John Neumann
St. Jude/Lourdes	St. Al's Bridgetown/Lourdes/St Martins/St. Catherines - (merged in 2019)
St. Michaels	St. Gabe's Cons. / Mother Teresa / St. John WC / St. Max / Bethany / St. John 23rd / Our Lady of Sorrow
St. Susanna	Royalmount / St. Francis DeSales / Marrs Hill
Summit Country Day	St. Joesph - Tether Affiliation with CPS
Veronica / Thomas More	Veronica / St Bernadette / Thomas More
Victory	St. Williams / St. Lawrence, St. Dominic / Holy Family / Resurrection
Visitation	Single parish / school