



# Athletic Director

## Best Practice Manual

This manual does not provide an exhaustive list of all the requirements of a parish/school athletic director in CYO Athletics. Instead, this document lists ideas, formats, samples and things to consider for meeting the requirements of leadership at the parish or school level of CYO Athletics. As such we are reliant on the input and content from those at that level of leadership. Some of this content comes from staff and volunteer leadership at the archdiocesan level, some from your colleagues at the parish or school level. If you have an approach that has worked for your program or a topic that you feel should be added, please share with us. This manual will be edited from year to year and is intended to serve as an evolving tool for those who lead in the administration of CYO Athletics in the Archdiocese of Seattle.

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# LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE MODELS

CYO Athletics is a program that is dependent on volunteers. It is important that the responsibility and obligations at the parish or school level are shared so that an effective program is sustainable over the long term and is consistently seen as a vital part of the parish or school youth ministry with broad ownership in and participation from the community. Shared leadership and governance also ensure checks and balances and representative thinking in decision making throughout the program. Also, it may be difficult to get one individual to volunteer for the entire list of duties of the athletic director. It may be easier to recruit several volunteers to hold different areas of responsibility that meet individuals' availability and suitability. It is helpful for recruitment if these duties satisfy the required service hours.

In programs where the athletic director is paid staff, the reliance on volunteers may be lessened but a parish or school CYO Athletics board or commission to assist and support the athletic director in their duties is still encouraged.

The composition of any leadership group depends on the individual parish or school.

## BASIC OUTLINE OF STRUCTURES OF LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

- Archdiocesan CYO Athletics Leadership and Governance – see ***Administration in CYO Athletics Manual***
- Athletic Director + Board or Commission
  - Board or Commission – should be representative of the parish/school community
  - Potential positions on a board or commission:
    - Sport Coordinator for each sport – oversees sport – can be split into multiple positions – boys/girls or groupings of age groups
    - Gym Coordinator – gym schedule and gym monitors
    - Equipment Coordinator – purchase, distribution, collection, storage of uniforms
    - Secretary – manages communication of CYO Athletics board or commission
    - Treasurer – manages financial responsibilities – accounts for CYO Athletics, works with bookkeeper to make deposits, cut checks
    - Parish Liaison – works with parish staff and communicates with parish community and outreach for participation
    - Web site/communications – manages website as means for communicating about CYO Athletics as well as registration for those that do online registration
  - Additional duties of leadership that may or may not be incorporated into duties by other parish/school staff, board or commission members or simply be additional support positions in the athletics program that volunteers with a particular skill set

- Registrar – processes registrations
- Photography – coordinate team pictures and photos for website, promotional materials
- Awards and recognitions – coordinates player and coach recognitions at the local level and/or nominations to the archdiocesan awards program
- Service coordinator – connects teams with service projects in the parish or school community and beyond
- Mass coordinator – works with parish or school liturgy committee to incorporate masses for athletes/teams into the parish/school liturgy schedule

## **SUCCESSION PLAN**

It is never a good idea to leave a program without a plan for who will take over. The best way to make a seamless change in leadership is to identify a quality, organized person who understands and lives out the CYO philosophies. Usually, for the sake of consistency choosing a successor from a lower grade who will be around for a lengthy period of time is best.

- Once this person has been identified, they should shadow the existing AD in their last year so the new AD can understand and experience all that is required both from the CYO Athletics office, and what needs to take place in their individual program.

## **RECRUITING VOLUNTEER REFEREES**

### **YOUNGER GRADES**

- K-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Soccer, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Basketball and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Volleyball.
- A consistent volunteer for all home games your team plays is best.
- Recruit well in advance of the season and have the volunteer referee come to a pre-season practice to teach the kids what to expect – use this as an opportunity to scrimmage (even with another team if appropriate) and provide practice for officials as well as the players.
- Ideally, an assistant coach on the team can referee the home games, but a competent parent also can work, if you can count on them to be at every home game.
- Communicate to your coaches that they are responsible for finding a referee but be there with ideas to help them if they have trouble.
  - Contact parents to see if one of them or an older sibling or other relative can volunteer
  - Contact Coordinator of Youth Ministry to see if there is anyone needing service hours in Youth Ministry, Confirmation program, etc.
  - Contact Service Coordinator at local High School (Catholic or otherwise) to see if there are students who need volunteer/service hours

- Basic training that a volunteer referee needs:
  - Printout of applicable CYO Athletics specific rules – review with them before game day – always have a laminated copy at the scorer’s table
  - Check with CYO Athletics website/staff about JV Jamboree, 3-on-3 Jamboree or other opportunities for on court/on field learning and additional resources
  - Court/field time (ideally in practice setting) prior to game day
  - Mechanics and communication protocols for game officials on game day

#### **WHAT IF THE REFEREE DOESN’T SHOW UP?**

- Prepare all your coaches for the possibility that there won’t be a referee at the game.
- All coaches should have a whistle with them; in case they have to referee the game themselves.
- Coaches should have a plan for this ahead of game day: prepare to know which assistant coaches or parents may be able to step in to referee in an emergency, and the coach should communicate with those individuals before finding themselves in need of a referee.
- Clear communication about how game officials should be treated and accountability for those that do not do so will create an environment where individuals are more likely to step up as necessary.

## **RECRUITING COACHES**

For the most part recruiting coaches takes early identification of ideal candidates and persistence in asking them to participate. In particular, asking parents if they would like to coach. However, there are some ways in which an AD can help themselves to recruit coaches.

- Check boxes on the registration of the child to see if the parent would be willing to coach.
- Advertising in the parish bulletin and the school newsletter that coaches are needed.
- Asking parents of the kids who they think would be a good coach for their kids.
- If the parish/school has a specific CYO Athletics website, advertise the need for coaches, and allow them to sign up through the website.
- At the beginning of the year meetings with parents, and end of the year celebrations announce the need for coaches for the upcoming year and take sign-ups then.
- If parents need to volunteer to achieve a certain amount of volunteer hours, offer coaching as a way to get those hours. It may be necessary to work with school administration to ensure that coaching in CYO Athletics counts.
- Speak with your outgoing 8<sup>th</sup> graders each year and ask them if they would like to be coaches in the future. This will also help them with high school volunteer hours if they need them.

- Referrals from other coaches, and word of mouth suggestions.
- At games for one sport talk to parents and ask if they would be willing to coach for the upcoming sport. EX: During soccer, ask if anyone is willing to coach basketball.
- Retention of coaches who are positive quality examples for the kids is important. Throughout the season AD's will want to support their coaches by continuing to affirm the work they are doing, why they are doing it, and be a resource for their coaches so they can continue to improve, and feel needed, and appreciated. Please see Appendix A for a sample letter which is an example of what AD's can do through the season to continue to connect with their coaches and reaffirm why they are coaching kids in CYO Athletics.

## **TRAINING COACHES**

### **COACH CERTIFICATIONS**

- Encourage coaches to explore training opportunities. Local sports organizations offer various coaching licenses for a number of sports. Soccer in particular has a vast network of licenses appropriate for coaching different age groups.
- It is not required but it would be prudent for you to require all coaches to receive First Aid and CPR training prior to coaching.
- You don't necessarily need CYO Athletics coaches to have any sort of coaching licenses, but you could consider having certain requirements for coaches coaching your oldest kids, or who have been coaching the same group of athletes for a number of years.
- If you have some coaches with no sports coaching experience/certifications, try to pair them up with assistant coaches who have experience/certifications.
- Review the Sample Summary of Coach Training Requirements on the CYO Athletics website for more information about trainings required of all CYO Athletics coaches.

## **SCREENING COACHES**

AD's will want to not only make sure they have coaches for each team, but also the right coaches. AD's will need to make sure each coach has completed the following requirement.

- Background check – this should be conducted through the parish office for all adults volunteering or working in parish programs.
- Safe Environment Training – Called to Protect sexual abuse training should also be coordinated through the parish, and must be taken within 90 days of first contact with youth in all Catholic parish programs.
- Play Like A Champion Today Training – CYO Athletics coaches trainings for all coaches who have coached at least one CYO Athletics sport. Coaches will not be allowed to coach past one season if they have not taken this training.

- In addition to all these mandatory requirements AD's will want to make sure through either personal experiences, or through word of mouth from other coaches and parents, the coaches they are choosing to understand and will live out the CYO Athletics philosophies with the kids they are coaching. A coach who is overly concerned with winning, or has the potential for questionable language, behavior, etc. with the kids, parents, other coaches, or officials should not be coaching in CYO.

## EVALUATING COACHES

There are several ways to evaluate your coaches after the season, and while they are in place to know if an AD has the right coaches in place.

- Attend a practice or two, as well as a game to see how the coach performs in both instances.
- Talk with the coach during the season to see if they need help with anything.
- Have player and parent evaluations in the middle and end of the season to gauge how things are going/went.

## PARENTS AS PARTNERS

*"The PLACT program views parents as essential partners, while recognizing the challenges and complexities of the parent-child and parent-coach relationship. Parents love their children and want the best for them. When working with parents, we can build on that love and together realize the potential of Catholic youth sports program" – PLACT manual, p. 54*

### PRE-SEASON PARENT MEETINGS –

- This is an important opportunity for coaches and parents to get on the same page and discuss the team culture in order to best serve the young athletes. There are many ways to accomplish this. This meeting can take place with or without the athletes being present. If they are going to be present, it is a good idea (depending on the age group) for them to be able to share their thoughts in some capacity about the upcoming season:
  - If time with coaches ahead of the meeting is possible, it can be effective to have players work with coaches to come up with team expectations and share with the parents the agreed upon commitments of the team;
  - Even if time advance of the meeting is not possible, with a little prompting, players can still share:
    - **Their hopes for the season:** What are you most looking forward to? What will success look like? What do you need from me as your coach?
    - **Their expectations of their parents:** What do you need from your parents on game day? What do you need from your parents on the day of practices? How can your parents' best support you and your teammates this season?
- It might be most feasible to have a large meeting at the beginning of each sport season with parents and coaches where the athletic director or other board/commission members

communicate about the overall philosophy of the program and then individual teams do break outs to discuss their individual teams

- In order to use existing events to reach parents, it may make sense to incorporate a presentation on the sports program in the parish as part of a larger back to school night or beginning of the year orientation that the school has on the calendar
- If parents are unable to attend the meeting, there should be a follow up phone call or in person conversation with a summary sent in writing to ALL parents so that everyone is on the same page
- Play Like A Champion Today ® - Resource Manual – Appendix F – Sample Pre-Season Parents Meeting

## **COMMUNICATION – EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPATION**

- One of the most important pieces of information that parents need is the expectations of their child's participation. CYO Athletics has guaranteed minimum playing time requirements for each player who meets the requirements of the team community. Some of the key things to keep in mind:
  - These expectations must be communicated in writing and applied consistently across the entire team community;
  - It would be best if the expectations are consistent across the program for your entire parish/school instead of subjective to each team's coach. However, if individual team's have the authority in your program to determine these expectations, they should be submitted in writing to the parish/school athletic director and approved by the AD or the Parish/school CYO Athletics board/commission prior to communication to the team;
  - CYO Athletics is a sports program informed by the values of the Catholic Church. The important lessons of commitment, sacrifice and choosing among good choices are part of the experience;
  - Knowledge of your community and how expectations will affect the viability of your teams as well as how to maximize the opportunity for development, community and fun for your athletes;
- Example: how select players are addressed within your team communities can significantly impact the team culture as well as the quality of the experience for your individual athletes (and families).
  - Different communities deal with this differently based on their individual dynamics – teams may be in a place where not having all players on their roster compete on game day results in not having a viable team. It can be a delicate balancing act.
  - As a general policy in CYO Athletics, ALL players must play in 3 of 7 or 4 of 8 games to be eligible to compete in playoffs.
  - Some examples of how different communities address. Once again, the key would be to be consistent with how you deal with a select player with a player who misses for a different conflict:

- “This is getting tougher. Because our turn-out numbers are strong, we don't "need" the select players as much in some sports. Still they have to commit to attending at least 1/2 of our practices and 1/2 of the games to be on the team. Still though, overuse injuries come into play. As an AD, I find that I am encouraging the select players to choose one or the other.”
- “Each individual coach manages their select players differently. Personally, I've instituted a policy - if you miss 1 practice in a week, you will not start the first half/game. If you miss both practices, will not start the first nor second half/game but will play at least the minimum amount of required playing time.”
- “Select players are required to attend one of the two practices per week in order to play in the upcoming weekend game.”
- “In soccer, they must attend at least one practice and the CYO requirement for playoffs to be eligible. In varsity sports (like basketball & volleyball) they must attend both practices to be on the varsity squad, otherwise they can play on our JV or second tier team. This works the majority of the time but still needs to be finessed.”
- “All who are interested can play. We typically don't have enough players to suspend players for missing practices.”
- “We stress the 3/7 or 4/8 rule. Most coaches want the player there even if their ‘select’ team's practice schedule doesn't allow them to attend practice for the CYO team. Coach just wants them there to make it for game only if that's all they can do.”
- “We ask ‘select’ players to attend as many practices as they are able to make, and if it becomes a problem with these kids not attending practice and only sporadically making it to games--and not clearly communicating this absentee rate to their respective CYO coaches--they may be asked not to play. This is really handled on a team-by-team basis by individual coaches because some are more OK with it than others.”
- “We try to work with them as far as their schedule. At times they can't play for CYO because schedule is too busy so we don't always have our best athletes playing CYO.”

### **PLAY LIKE A CHAMPION TODAY ®**

- Parent Like A Champion Today ® Workshops – this program covering the PLACT materials is designed to fit within a 60 minute presentation time to educate parents to the same general principles as the coaches training, but from a parent's perspective.

### **PARENT LETTERS**

It is important for both coaches and administrators to communicate with parents about expectations, philosophy and logistics in writing, even if a pre-season parents meeting has taken place. Ensuring that parents understand the team culture and what is expected of them and their child will reduce the opportunity for conflict and reinforce what has been discussed at the pre-season meeting or individual conversations.

- Sample Communication About Commitment – Appendix C

- Sample Communication About Deadlines – Appendix D
- Sample Communication About Sportsmanship – Appendix E
- Appendix E of the Play Like A Champion Today ® - Coaches Resource Manual

## **SURVEYS – PROCESS FOR PARENT (AND ATHLETE) FEEDBACK**

The opportunity to give feedback is an important part of evaluation of the program of CYO Athletics at the archdiocesan level. While we cannot give AD's specific details about replies we get from parents in our end of season surveys (condition of anonymity), we can certainly communicate trends of feedback that affect the local level of CYO Athletics.

It is believed that the trends we see can be an important way for gaining valuable insight in how to adapt the program to better serve the CYO Athletics community. This is true at the local parish or school level as well.

# **REGISTRATION**

## **INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION**

Make sure ALL of your individual parish registration deadlines are prior to the CYO Athletics team registration deadlines so you know what your team numbers look like when you register your teams. This way you have time to recruit more kids for teams you do need numbers for. Also, it allows you know what requests you can ask of CYO for combining teams. Having deadlines after the CYO Athletics office deadline will create issues for you and the program, and may cause drops after the schedule has been made or leave you needing an extra team with no promise these teams will be added.

- Registration fees can be included in the tuition or collected separately. This will depend on how your parish wants to handle payment.
- What you charge for individual registration fees may be uniform across sports or may vary depending on the team fees for each sport. There are a number of things to consider when charging fees at the parish/school level (SEE THE FINANCE SECTION FOR DETAILS):
  - Uniforms
  - Practice facility costs
  - Covering PLACT training costs for coaches and parents
  - Team/coach awards
  - Do the fees from one sport subsidize another more costly one?
- Use an online registration program such as Team Sideline. If you are interested in hearing more about Team Sideline, please contact Carlos Nunez.

## **DEADLINES**

- The CYO Athletics office has two deadlines during the registration process. The initial team registration deadline, and the drop deadline.

- No teams are allowed to register after the team registration deadline. Any team who attempts to do so will only be added to the waitlist for their particular grade/gender. If a team drops between the registration deadline and the drop deadline, in the waitlisted team's grade/gender, on a first come first serve basis, the teams on the waitlist will be given the option of being added to the schedule.
- So AD's have a better idea of their numbers, what teams to register, and if they will need to drop a team or two going in, make sure to have as early a registration for these sports as possible. This will reduce over registering, or dropping teams after the drop deadline, and being financially responsible for those teams.
- Spring soccer and cross country registrations should take place at all programs and well-advertised so parents have the opportunity to sign up for their children. This will reduce the rush at the beginning of the year for an AD.

## **TRYOUTS**

- Tryouts in any situation should be done by an outside non-partisan person who will be assessing talent only, and not be connected to the kids, coaches, or parents in the program. This will reduce the perception of bias.

## **COMBINING TEAMS WITH NEIGHBORING PARISHES**

- Early numbers will allow ADs to understand if they need to combine with other parishes to make teams viable.
- Combining with another parish for a team is only allowed after a request has been sent into CYO Athletics. This request must have both ADs on the email with which the request comes in.
- Make sure these requests come in early so they can be reviewed at the CYO Athletics sport commission meetings before each sport begins.
- Once a request comes in after these meetings, response time can take awhile as communication will be limited to group emails rather than face to face conversations.

## **PLAYER AVAILABILITY**

- Have an idea of what players will be able to attend what practices and games.
  - If most of the players cannot commit to games each weekend, or a limited amount, you may want to recruit more kids if possible or reach out to another parish.
  - This is also helpful if you have multiple teams at the same grade/gender to determine viability of the multiple teams you have and could affect the composition of teams as well.
  - So, it is known at registration please ask the parents on their form what games, if any, their child will be missing. This will help you gauge your need to combine grades, combine with another program, or recruit more kids.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO WAIVERS**

- CYO Athletics will sometimes have photographers or videographers on site at competitions to document and for use in promoting the program. It will be helpful in such instances to know that each of the participating parishes has received ok through the registration process for image/likeness of participants to be used for promotional purposes. If this is something that you do not use on your registration or if you have individuals who have not granted this right, please notify the CYO Athletics office.
- This is also helpful at the local parish/school level. If you plan on taking pictures for a website, or for any other program needs, make sure to include a form a check box in the registration process for parents to sign off on allowing their child to be filmed or photographed for program purposes.

## TEAM REGISTRATION

- Calendars: Conflicts will not be avoided by the CYO Athletics office when scheduling, or after the scheduling process if parish or school conflicts are not communicated at the time of registration. Please make sure at the beginning of each program year, cross reference the CYO Athletics Calendar with the following calendars at the parish/school level. Only parish and school conflicts will be worked around by the CYO Athletics office when scheduling.
  - Parish Calendar: Check with your parish office for a copy of all the events taking place at the parish during the program year.
  - School Calendar: Check with your school office for a copy of all the events taking place at the school during the program year.
  - Compare both calendars to the events on the CYO Athletics Calendar, so it will be known in advance what conflicts must be avoided when scheduling.
  - Communicate both calendar and process with parish and school staff who have some responsibility over events/programs that will impact the families/youth participating in CYO Athletics so that they can be proactive and seek out the AD if potential issues come up throughout the year.
- Eligibility Requests: There are multiple types of eligibility requests. However, these can be difficult to sort out if it is not in an organized process. The following will assist AD's in receiving not only a quick response from CYO but also assist in knowing exactly what a parish needs to ask for.
  - Make sure registration deadlines are early so it will be known exactly what grades to combine, or what teams will need to combine with other parishes.
  - Reach out to other AD's as soon as possible so people know what the needs are for the combinations that may need to take place.
  - Making sure these requests are made early, and prior to CYO's sport committee's preseason meeting for each sport will guarantee the response will be quick and efficient. Requests after this meeting may take some time to receive a response on, as all the dialogue between the committees will be via email rather than in person.

- Team Combinations: If there are not enough numbers in a particular grade/gender for one team, an AD may combine two full grades together to make a team. Some pitfalls to be aware of are:
  - Younger kids are forced to play up one grade, and maybe to a skill level that is above them.
  - Older kids are forced to play with younger kids, and thus might alter the experience, and reduce the quality of the experience for them.
  - These reasons might create a desire to combine with another parish so the kids can play within their own grade level. Keep in mind combining with another parish for this reason may create issues of their own.
    - For example, in a tryout situation if kids from one program get selected for a varsity team, over kids from another program, there may be complaints from parents.
    - Accessibility of practice time is another consideration
    - Community identity is also something to consider
  - ADs will want to weigh their options when making this decision to decide what is best for the kids involved, and what issues they are willing to deal with.

## ROSTERS

### MEETING THE CYO ATHLETICS ROSTER DEADLINE

- Include all necessary roster information on your player registration form, so you don't have to track down that information later.
- Give yourself plenty of time to assemble rosters, aiming to have individual child registration deadlines prior to the CYO Athletics Team Registration deadline.
- For Soccer, Spring registration is ideal. Keep in mind, there may be new students to your parish/school in the Fall, and you should try to have room on teams to be inclusive of these new players.
- Online Registration may be an option for your parish/school, and may save you time having to work through paperwork. Again, make sure the information gathered during the online registration process matches the information needed on the Roster submission.
  - When using Online Registration, you should consider the following in regard to the legal acceptance of Electronic Signatures:
    - (1) The terms of the agreement are not obscured or hidden on the web page by a separate link; they should be in a scroll box or appear on the page in full,
    - (2) The party can't proceed without accepting the terms,
    - (3) Acceptance is unambiguous (i.e. something like "By clicking this box I hereby accept the terms of the agreement" and the box says "I accept" or "I agree"); and

(4) There is a record that can be produced if the agreement has to be enforced.

- If you have a parish/school policy specifically against any of the roster information required of CYO Athletics, share that policy with the staff of CYO Athletics. It is better to be proactive than to submit an incomplete Roster form.

## **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

- Rosters must be signed off and approved by the Pastor/Principal at your Parish/School. Use the Roster Signature Sheet found on the Forms page of the website to approve the players on the rosters.
- If you receive players from a neighboring parish/school, submit the request to CYO Athletics as early as possible (preferably with the Team Registration Form).
- Make sure the request to share players is approved by both the parish/school receiving the players, but also the parish/school the players are coming from.
- For playoff eligibility, make sure coaches communicate with you if there are any potential players who may not meet the 3 of 7 or 4 of 8 required regular season games to be eligible for playoffs. In the event of an injury, it is your decision as to whether or not the athlete would have completed the 3 of 7 or 4 of 8 requirement had the injury not occurred. If you believe the athlete would have met the requirement, the coach can include the player on the Playoff Roster Eligibility Verification Form and sign off on the player.
- Any request to move a JV player (or AA to AAA) up for playoffs must be submitted for approval prior to the athlete being allowed to play in playoffs. It is good to consider how moving a player between teams for the playoffs will be perceived by your team community, and how adding the player to the playoff roster will impact the playing time of all the players.

# **FINANCE**

## **CYO ATHLETICS ACCOUNT**

- ADs should have a separate CYO Athletics account for their programs. This account is used to pay for uniforms, facility upgrades, facility rentals, registration fees, equipment costs, etc.

## **PARISH/SCHOOL FEE STRUCTURES**

Programs have several different ways of establishing fee structures within their own program, to pay for their needs as well as what is owed to the CYO Athletics office. Here are some.

- Once all participants have signed up, the tally for all the team fees is taken. A percentage is then added for parish costs. This number is then divided by the number of players, and this is how the team fee is set.
- Some sports, due to participation tend to fund other sports which do not have strong participation. Extra money is tacked on to these sports to fund others. This money can also be used for facility improvements, or to purchase new equipment or uniforms for the program.

- What you charge for individual registration fees may be uniform across sports or may vary depending on the team fees for each sport. There are a number of things to consider when charging fees at the parish/school level (SEE THE FINANCE SECTION FOR DETAILS):
  - a. Uniforms
  - b. Equipment
  - c. Practice facility costs
  - d. Covering PLACT training costs for coaches and parents
  - e. Team/coach awards
  - f. Do the fees from one sport subsidize another more costly one?
- Discounts for early registration
- Late fees for late registrations, if those are accepted.
- Financial aid can be given if asked for.

## **PURCHASES**

AD's, based on their registration fee structure, should have a surplus at all times in their CYO Athletics account to pay for uniforms and equipment when needed. Uniforms or equipment generally should not need to be purchased each year, unless there are lost or stolen items. To limit the stress on your account, all lost uniforms can be refunded by the child's family.

- Once a year a program fee may also be charged to help support the needs of the program.
- AD's will want to make sure uniforms and equipment are ordered well in advance of the season, so they can be received in time.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

ADs should make sure to have a treasurer on their board, or their program. They should also make sure there are multiple people involved in deposits and writing checks so as to have controls on all money going in and out of the program.

- Multiple signers on checks.
- More than one person involved in deposits.
- Weekly, or bi-weekly meetings with AD, program treasurer, and parish treasurer or administrator to go over books, and discuss program expenses.
- Create as much financial transparency as possible.

## **MICROSOFT MATCHING OF VOLUNTEER HOURS**

If you have volunteers who are Microsoft employees, the company will match their volunteer hours with a financial contribution. Volunteers who work for Microsoft will have more information.

## **STIPENDS FOR COACHES**

Some parishes/schools do pay their coaches a stipend to coach teams. It is completely up to each individual program if they would like to pay their coaches. However, it is important to keep in mind if this is affordable within each program's budget. If it is not and private funding by parents is offered for a specific coach is important to keep in mind the ramifications of paying some coaches and not all.

## **FUND RAISING**

Check to see if your program is allowed to fund raise with your pastor first and foremost. If so here are some options for this.

- Bake Sales
- Car Washes
- Auctions
- Italian Dinners w/auctions.
- Concessions at games
- Program T-Shirt, and sweatshirts.
- Eastbay Discount program – contact CYO Athletics office for more details.

# **USE OF CYO ATHLETICS LOGO**

- Contact the CYO Athletics office for access to the logo, and please following the guidelines as explained in the CYO Athletics manual: Logo size – 2 ¼”

# **FACILITIES**

## **PROCURING PRACTICE FACILITIES**

For parishes with gyms or fields practices tend to be within their facility primarily, or exclusively.

- For those who do not have a facility.
  1. Renting City facilities or public-school gyms.
  2. Getting in touch with these schools or the school district early is the key.
  3. Renting space from other Catholic or program parishes which might have gym space available.
  4. Through the City of Seattle as they have a joint use agreement with the Seattle Public Schools

## **DIVIDING TIME AND SPACE**

Finding practice time for all of a parish or school's teams can be difficult. Here are some ways.

- Run some of the grades in conjunction with PE, so the kids are getting their practice time during the day.
- Depending on how late practices go, make sure the younger kids start earlier, and the older kids later.

- Have the older kids overlap with the younger kids, and have the older kids help coach the younger grades to maximize time, and field/gym space.
- Manage the number of practices based on the time available for the number of teams being served.
- Have a spreadsheet of all the times and dates for when each team practices so the coaches and parents can easily see it.
- Coaches who have taken all the trainings, and accomplished all the necessary requirements, get first pick at the practice times. This will help also with getting coaches compliant.

## **GYM AND FIELD MONITORS**

### **GYM MONITOR RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE THE GAME/MATCH**

- Ensure lighting, heating and scoreboard are functional and in working order.
- Open gym about 25-30 minutes before the start of the first game of the day. Allow for proper warm-up to within 5 minutes of each game start time.
- Be sure to designate who will be operating the scoreboard, 6<sup>th</sup> graders and up works best. Basketball scoreboard operators should be competent, as the game moves fast in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. [Remember: Home team runs the scoreboard for basketball and volleyball games. Visiting team provides scorer.]
- Explain to visiting team coach, where bathrooms are located and what bench they will occupy.
- Ensure only players and coaches are seated on the designated bench or chairs provided, allowing non-coach parents on the bench is not a good policy to follow. No strollers, baby carriers or young kids with toys.
- Once referee(s) has arrived, introduce yourself and introduce them to the opposing coaches. At this point explain to coaches & referees that you will end warm-ups 5 minutes before game time to handle the CYO pre-game statement and the pre-game prayer. Do this for every game/match.
- Let the referee know that they are in charge of the game/match and any interference, threatening language or abusive fans should be reported at the next convenient stoppage in play. One of the monitor's responsibilities is to be there if someone needs to be asked to leave the site.

### **GYM MONITOR RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE GAME/MATCH**

- Maintain a safe environment for the participants and coaches. Keep non-game balls out of the way or in a secure area away from the court. Use racks or coaches ball bags.
- Respect the game being played. Several kids shooting balls at side baskets during halftime is usually okay. Allowing this at quarter breaks and during timeouts is disrespectful to the competitors, not to mention dangerous.

- Arriving teams should not be bouncing balls in the gym during game/match play, ask their coaches to tell them to stop or send them to the vestibule/lobby area or outside.
- Try to adhere to the game schedule as best you can. End warm-ups 5 minutes before each game.
- If the game/match is going to run long or go into overtime and cause a late start for the following game, try to alert the arriving coaches as soon as you can. Overtime games and late starts will really mess up a game schedule once 3-4 games have been played. Telling them beforehand can lessen their stress level. Suggest either an empty locker room or an open space outside, weather permitting, to lessen crowding. [A good idea during volleyball when gyms get loud and full.]
- Only if your gym is running “on time” should volleyball teams play scrimmages once their official match has ended. If there is not at least 25 minutes left before the next game, the recommendation would be to just let the kids for the next match properly warm-up. This can adversely impact your schedule.

### **GYM MONITOR RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE LAST GAME/MATCH**

- Unless the gym is being used for another event...put 10-15 minutes on the game clock. Count down to 2 minutes, turn off half the gym lights. At zero when the buzzer sounds, ask everyone to depart.

### **GYM MONITOR GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Before the season begins make sure that your heater is set to run on weekends. Try to have the boiler or system on about 30-45 minutes before the first scheduled match of the day. Your system can be turned down to a lower temperature once the gym is open several hours. Know how to locate and use the thermostat.
- Make sure fire exits are not blocked or locked. Make sure you know where fire extinguisher and alarms are located.
- Locate first aid kit and have it easily accessible. This may also include automatic defibrillators if available.
- Call 911, if an emergency/fire/significant medical emergency presents itself. Contact 911 if a belligerent parent/coach is uncontrollable and refuses to leave of his/her own accord.
- Enforce gym/school rules on food & beverages, pets in the gym, if applicable. This is usually the discretion of the home site.

### **FIELD MONITOR GUIDELINES**

- Ensure the field is ready about 25-30 minutes before the start of the first game of the day. Allow for proper warm-up to within 5 minutes of each game/match start time.
- Explain to the visiting team coach, where bathrooms are located and what sideline they will occupy.
- Once referee(s) has arrived, introduce yourself and introduce them to the opposing coaches. At this point explain to coaches & referees that you will end warm-ups 5 minutes before

game time to handle the CYO pre-game statement and the pre-game prayer. Do this for every game/match.

- Let the referee know that they are in charge of the game/match and any interference, threatening language or abusive fans should be reported at the next convenient stoppage in play. One of the monitor's responsibilities is to be there if someone needs to be asked to leave the site.
- Try to adhere to the game schedule as best you can. End warm-ups 5 minutes before each game.
- If the game is going to run long and cause a late start for the following game, try to alert the arriving coaches as soon as you can. Late starts will really mess up a game schedule once 3-4 games have been played. Telling them before hand can lessen their stress level.
- Locate first aid kit and have it easily accessible.
- Call 911, if an emergency/fire/significant medical emergency presents itself. Contact 911 if a belligerent parent/coach is uncontrollable and refuses to leave of his/her own accord.
- If field size changes between games, work with the coaches to find volunteers to help set up cones and goals for the mini/micro/modified games. Modified soccer matches should not be played on full-size fields.

## **INCREASING PARTICIPATION**

**One of the hallmarks of CYO Athletics is participation; providing an inclusive opportunity for members of the parish and/or school to be part of a team environment of development, fun and community. In addition to recruiting families in the school to participate, one of the primary challenges in a parish program is to incorporate parishioners who do not attend the school.**

**For any parish program, it is important to reach out to families who do not attend the school as this provides an opportunity for integration between the two different populations of the parish. For smaller parishes, it is imperative in order to increase the viability of teams to reach out beyond just those parishioners who attend the school.**

### **ENVIRONMENT OF DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY AND FUN!**

- Passionate parents making the sport fun
- Invite teachers and staff to cheer at Athletics events
- Sell "CYO" philosophy: you can play, there are no cuts, and you may never get another chance to try this sport once you get to HS or older
- Emphasize: Faith, Fun, Friendship, Fundamentals
- Build partnerships to participate with and in a community rec league (ie Pee Wees) when CYO Athletics is not able to offer sport for that grade

## **OVERALL COMMUNICATION/STRUCTURE**

- Maintain e-mail database for reminders
- Keep the website updated
- Communicate regularly with fellow AD's
- Surveys to parents and athletes
- AD should get to know the parents, annual parent meetings
- To have Sports Coordinators for each sport, to assist AD, increase sustainability of program as well as more leadership able to communicate about the program and extend personal invitations

## **SCHOOL RECRUITMENT**

- Incentives for participation: i.e. pizza party for grade level with the most participants
- Have an adult presence in the classrooms, leaders promoting programs to students, getting them to register in class
- Communicate regularly with the school administration
- Parent Volunteer Service Hours covered in full for coaching
- Send out registration forms weekly for the next sport, school/parish bulletins and school weekly packets.
- CYO updates at lunch, recess and during "traffic" with a bull horn, if AD is on staff
- Scholar/athlete awards for 8<sup>th</sup> graders (must have participated in 2+ sports and maintain GPA from 6-8<sup>th</sup> grades)
- Add Athletics schedule to school calendar
- PE teachers promoting CYO Athletics, if the school has PE
- Personal Invitation – identify ambassadors (faculty, staff, older grades with younger grades) who can talk with kids in the hallways and encourage participation

## **PARISH RECRUITMENT**

- Include announcements in the Parish bulletin especially inserts that will draw people's attention – perhaps the color of the uniforms, eye catching graphics, invitation to participate, WE NEED YOU!
- Regular section of CYO Athletics in the Youth Ministry area of the Parish Bulletin
- Have announcements from the pulpit to reinforce that parishioners do NOT have to attend the school to participate in CYO Athletics, especially powerful from the pastor during weeks leading up to registration deadlines
- Have the Coordinator of Youth Ministry and/or Director of Religious Education invite youth ministry/faith formation participants and families to attend;

- Regular announcements, speaking opportunities at/after Mass, present in foyer and in social hall –
  - Not all parishioners read the bulletin nor respond to that information – have an announcement read at the end of Mass that representatives of CYO Athletics will be in the foyer/social hall that can answer questions about CYO Athletics
  - Not all parishioners are at mass every week, so having a regular presence is important.
  - Not all parishioners go to the social hall for coffee and donuts after Mass, so having a presence in the foyer as people exit the building (multiple exits) at least once a month.

## **COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**

### **OPENING UP REGISTRATION AND RECRUITING PLAYERS**

- Announcements at Mass
- Family Folders
- Bulletin Announcements
- Pamphlet for New Families to the Parish

### **MANAGING THE WEBSITE**

- The website should have its own CYO Athletics section and include the calendar of game schedules and general team/sport info.
- If your policies at the parish/school level mirror the general CYO Athletics policies, it can be helpful to link to the Archdiocese from the Parish website, and provide links to CYO athletics web pages in e-mails to coaches and parents.
- Try to centralize all CYO Athletics content on either the parish website or the school website. Do not try to keep updates on both. It is better if people have one place to look for information.
- It works best to send information to the people who keep the CYO Athletics calendar on both the parish and school website, and work to avoid scheduling conflicts with both calendars.

## **FAITH AND RECOGNITION IN THE COMMUNITY OF CYO ATHLETICS**

For CYO Athletics, our efforts of sports as youth ministry are rooted in the Latin “ministerium” which means service. We are fortunate to have so many people who give of themselves in service to our young people through CYO Athletics. It is important to root our sporting efforts in the most important gathering of our Catholic community – the Mass – and to ensure that our young people are blessed in their experience of athletics through CYO – both figuratively and literally.

It is a reminder of sports as youth ministry and CYO Athletics as a vital part of the community of the Catholic Church. Therefore, it is suggested that one or more of the following take place in each parish/school that participates in CYO Athletics:

- Mass for CYO Athletics Community;
- Blessing of the Athletes at Mass;
- Recognition of Athletes before/during/after Mass for their participation and especially for those that reflect the principles of the Play Like A Champion Today ® program, good sportsmanship and the spirit of CYO Athletics;
- Collaboration with Youth Minister/Faith Formation/Religious Education/Pastoral Staff to raise the level of Catholic identity within the CYO Athletics program;

## **SPORTS ASSEMBLIES AND SEASON END GATHERINGS**

- Regular school-wide assemblies. We honor the 'sportsmanship award winner' for each team in an assembly & with a certificate after each season. End of year school wide slide show assembly (put together by the parents).
- We have a season-end dinner in the school cafeteria for each of the sports where awards are distributed to the kids who played or ran.
- Each team will have their own banquet.
- The individual teams have pizza parties. At the end of basketball season, we encourage the parties to be at the school spaghetti feed which coincides with Catholic Schools Week. Teams get a discount.
- We also strongly encourage no trophies, but collect money for hurricane relief, Red Cross, Catholic Community Services, Cocoon House, or Nothing But Nets.
- We have three Sports Awards Assemblies each year. These are only about 15 minutes long - usually a slide show of at least the team photos. Then a brief description of each sports season. The kids usually help the AD plan and run this. We give two awards per team - a spirit award and a sportsmanship award, chosen by the coaches each season.
- End of year BBQ for all sports recognition; have awards for coaches and players.
- We have team parties at the end of the season and sometimes hand out participation awards. There are typically no achievement awards.
- End of the year sports banquet and pep rally. This year we were able to have UW great Greg Lewis as our guest speaker for our pep rally.

## **MASSSES AND BLESSINGS**

- We celebrate with the blessing of athletes before sports season begins. Usually just soccer/cross country as it's too hard to get players of older grades to attend mass.

# INCIDENT REPORT PROCESSES

## WHAT IS AN INCIDENT?

- An incident is an occurrence within CYO Athletics that results in an injury or conflict.
- See Incident Report Form on the CYO Athletics Website

## WHAT SHOULD COME TO ATTENTION OF CYO ATHLETICS?

- Because the initial incident report will be directed to the Athletic Director of the individual filling out the online form, the AD will have to determine if the incident report can be addressed without forwarding on to CYO Athletics;
- If it is a medical issue that has no bearing on CYO Athletics, it does not need to be forwarded – (i.e. if injury were possibly related to condition of facility, it would be important to forward);
- If it is an internal issue for the parish or school, CYO Athletics does not need to be involved other than as a support system to the parish or school leadership involved. **Please note:** parent issues with their coach should be redirected to the coach unless the parent is uncomfortable with the situation or has already attempted and not received satisfaction. In that case, the AD will need to work with other leadership (at the parish, school or archdiocesan levels as appropriate) to resolve the issue;
- If it is an issue where a parent, coach or other individual does not understand the relevant policies, consequences or real impact of the issue at hand, and the AD can educate the individuals involved as to the misunderstanding, the incident does not need to be forwarded;
- If an individual has mistakenly used an incident report form – instead of the online referee evaluation, or lopsided score forms, for example – the individual should be redirected by the AD to use the appropriate form and submit to CYO Athletics;
- If it is an issue that can be resolved by the AD reaching out to their peer AD at the involved program(s), it is encouraged that they do so via conversation instead of email but it is understood that email may be necessary. If email is used, the Director of CYO Athletics can be cc'ed if appropriate. It may also be important to get other parish/school leadership in the loop depending on the circumstances;
- If the incident involves other programs and there is a need for accountability according to CYO Athletics policies and processes, the incident report should be forwarded on to the Director of CYO Athletics;

## INTERNAL PROCESS – INCIDENTS REGARDING BEHAVIOR

- Coaches email or complete incident report form with AD, then AD forwards to MS Director/Principal and further on if needed.
- We just have our coaches communicate with AD of any incidents who reports them to CYO. They must type something up with regards to the incident.
- Individuals are asked to contact AD directly who will handle it from there.
- Parents are told to go through their coaches unless it involves their coach. Then, the sports coordinator is supposed to get involved and they pass it onto the AD.
- Parents who have an issue will start with their coach. If the coach is unable to resolve, the sport's coordinator and AD will be included to determine if a CYO incident report form needs to be filed.
- AD fills out a standardized form and it goes to all the people that need to know. (principal, business office, etc). I also contact the principal directly if I think the incident warrants that much attention.

#### **INTERNAL PROCESSES REGARDING MEDICAL**

- Permission slip/medical release/authorization for participation (required at parish/school level)
- Emergency medical form and authorization (required – coaches need to have on hand)
- Physical prior to participation (recommended)
- Lystedt paperwork from parents and athletes (required – AD should have copy on file)
- Lystedt requirements met by coach (required)
- First Aid/CPR training (recommended)
- First Aid kit (required – coach should have at practice and games)

#### **WHAT IS DONE AT THE LOCAL PARISH OR SCHOOL?**

- Form that is completed and sent to the risk management group and business office
- We require a physical form completed and signed by a doctor every two years – it is kept on file with the AD. Also, concussion form signed each year.
- Athletic Department keeps the doctor's physical and this is required before one can participate.
- Our PE teacher is really involved with our kids and educates them in nutrition, proper diet, and the importance of physical activity in their life. This also includes safety, i.e., the Lystedt concussion law.
- We require a medical release form for each athlete to be on file with coach in case of emergency.
- We always remind the kids to be competitive within reason. All coaches receive first aid kits as part of their equipment, and the Gym Monitor has access to these as well during

basketball/volleyball. The Parish Office keeps the Lystedt forms. Most times an athlete is injured during a practice or game we will submit a CYO incident form.

- All parents and athletes must sign the concussion form which is kept in the coach's binder. We do not require a physical. The public middle schools do. Their immunizations have to be current to attend school.
- All coaches have their First Aid/CPR training plus they need to have watched the concussion film. If a student receives an injury at practice or a game, they turn in an accident report which I forward to the school.
- Transportation Policies must be followed – See Appendix F for Archdiocesan Youth Ministry Transportation Policy Forms

## **CYO ATHLETICS PROCESS**

- Incident Reports can be submitted online using the online form found on the CYO Athletics website.
- Please be advised that the Incident Report Form should go directly to your parish/school athletic director (AD).
- He or she will review your submission and determine whether or not action or response from CYO Athletics is necessary. Unless requiring action due to facility issues, incident reports regarding injuries will be utilized by the individual parish/school and will not be forwarded on to CYO Athletics.
- If forwarding on to CYO Athletics is warranted, as per policy, your AD will do so.
- Depending on the nature of the incident, you (and the witnesses listed) may or may not be contacted by a CYO Athletics representative in the process.
- Representatives of CYO Athletics may contact any and all parties to the issue to determine the appropriate course of action.
- This may include but is not limited to: incident report writer and witnesses, individual or team who are the focus of the incident report, coaches and ADs of parishes/schools involved, game officials, unbiased observers.
- A decision will be made in consultation with the appropriate Sports Committee, taking into account current policy and practice as well as historical precedent. Once a decision has been reached, CYO Athletics will communicate that decision to the AD's of the parishes/schools involved.
- It is the responsibility of the ADs of parishes/schools involved to follow up with the parties from their parish/school community that are involved, except in the case of citations against an individual which will be directly communicated by CYO Athletics and cc'ed to ADs of parishes/schools involved.