

ATHLETICS

Purpose and Philosophy

The Office for Catholic Youth Ministry's Athletic Program is an important component of the comprehensive approach to youth ministry in the Diocese of Wilmington. The purpose of these programs is to promote Christian attitudes while encouraging healthy physical activity. These activities should foster:

1. Cooperation
2. Respect
3. Sportsmanship
4. Responsibility
5. Leadership
6. Maturity
7. Competitiveness
8. Fairness
9. Courtesy
10. Self-Control

CYM Director of Youth Sports

The Director of Youth Sports is responsible for coordinating all CYM athletic programs and ensuring compliance with the Diocesan Safe Environments standards. This position is employed by the Diocese of Wilmington and accountable to the Director of Religious Education for the Diocese of Wilmington.

The primary functions of the CYM Director of Youth Sports are:

1. Act as a liaison to leaders of the CYM parish/school-based athletic programs, addressing,
2. Govern any and all disciplinary issues with regard to athletic competitions, practices, tryouts, etc
3. Appoint members to the Athletic Advisory Committee
4. Provide support to the Athletic Associations from all parishes/schools
5. Update the athletic handbook
6. Contract, retain and oversee individual sport coordinators
7. Manage finances for all Sports programs
8. Establish rules and policies pertaining to each individual sport and the overall sports program with guidance from the Athletic Advisory Committee as needed.

While it is likely that the Director of Youth Sports will defer to the Athletic Associations of individual parishes/schools, CYM reserves the right to overrule any Athletic Association on any decision that in the opinion of the Director of Youth Sports is not made in the best interest of the overall program.

Athletic Advisory Committee

The Athletic Advisory Committee is a committee appointed by the CYM Director of Youth Sports. This committee supports the efforts of the Office for Catholic Youth Ministry of the Diocese of Wilmington in maintaining quality athletic programs while fostering Christian attitudes.

The primary goals of the Athletic Advisory Committee are to:

1. Provide guidance to the Director of Youth Sports on all issues, rules, and decisions
2. Review and help formulate new updates to the current athletic policies as outlined in the Athletic Handbook while promoting wholesome, competitive sports programs.

The members of the Athletic Advisory Committee represent many segments of the community and various athletic programs. The members function to ensure compliance with rules within the context of the basic philosophy of CYM and to respond to member parishes/schools and their needs.

Athletic Associations

Athletic Associations are to be formed by each parish/school with the primary responsibility of running and governing their own Athletic Programs that will participate within the Diocese of Wilmington's CYM Athletic Program. Athletic Associations may include a number of volunteers or as few as one, depending upon the size of the parish's/school's athletic program.

All Athletic Associations are accountable to the pastor of the parish or in the case of private, regional or consolidated schools, the principal of the school. They are all also accountable to the CYM Director of Youth Sports.

Each Athletic Association must have an Athletic Association President (AAP) or an Athletic Director (AD). This person is to serve as the primary contact between the CYM Office and the parish/school.

Specific functions for the Athletic Association:

- Establish guidelines for active participation from both youth and adults. They are to outline the necessary guidelines for participation.
 - Factors for consideration can include: religious affiliation, active participation in church activities, enrolled students, etc. as well as the number of teams/participants, budgetary considerations, facility availability, etc.
- Determine which sport programs they will offer to their population
- Handle all individual coach/player registration
- Establish deadlines/timelines for registration completion consistent with program start dates (set by CYM Office)
- Set and collect all registration fees, volunteer costs
- Manage all fundraising activities
- Ensure all volunteer coaches are properly cleared with all certifications completed before they participate as a coach
- Complete all online rosters (AAP/AD must approve)
- Handle all parish/school-specific conflicts while partnering where appropriate with the CYM Office

*Parish/School Sport Coordinators, if they exist, will be able to perform some of these functions.

Athletic Associations can also choose to offer intramural/in-house programs provided they follow the guidelines set forth in the CYM Athletic Handbook.

All policies established by any Athletic Association must minimally be as strict as the CYM policies. In addition, the Office for Catholic Youth Ministry reserves the right to overrule any Athletic Association on a decision if in the opinion of the Director of Youth Sports and/or the Athletic Advisory Committee the decision is not in the best interests of the overall program.

Related Policies:

Athletic Associations	9.0	Participation in any CYM Athletic program is not based solely on Religious affiliation. Parishes/Schools are to establish guidelines for participation and can include factors such as number of teams/ participants, budgetary considerations, facility availability and similar considerations. These guidelines must be clearly stated and properly followed.
Athletic Associations	9.1.0	The Office for Catholic Youth Ministry requires each parish/school to name an individual as the Athletic Association President (AAP) or Athletic Director (AD).
Athletic Associations	9.1.1	The AAP/AD is to serve as the primary contact between CYM and each individual parish/school.
Athletic Associations	9.1.2	The AAP/AD (or Sport Coordinator) is responsible for approving rosters and assigning head coaches.
Athletic Associations	9.1.3	The Office for Catholic Youth Ministry may, for any grave reason, require the parish/school to replace their Athletic Association Program/Athletic Director.
Athletic Associations	9.1.4	If CYM finds that the policies of a parish/school athletic association are detrimental to, or not in the best interest of, the parish, school or overall CYM athletic program, CYM may institute sanctions up to and including refusing to accept the registration of athletic teams of that parish/school, or barring teams from participating in any more CYM contests. In such instances individuals that wish to participate will be referred to other parishes subject to openings.
Athletic Associations	9.1.5	If the conduct of players, coaches and/or spectators is found to be detrimental or that their continued participation is not in the best interest of the overall CYM program, CYM may dismiss the team from the CYM League.

Athletics as Ministry

Great strides have been made in recent years to help coaches and Athletic Association leaders more fully understand their role as youth ministers in the parish community. The Purpose of Philosophy of CYM Athletics will tell you that participants and their parents can expect more from this program than those that are not grounded in a religious tradition.

In many cases participation in CYM Sports will be the only contact that some young people and their parents have with a parish or church community. Every attempt should be made to recognize the presence of God in our athletes and in our athletic competitions. Positive sportsmanship and prayer are keys expectations.

Prayer before practices and games can go a long way in setting the scene for a positive experience. Prayer led by participants calls each to be accountable for behavior and conduct as young Christian men and women. Prayer led by adults reminds all of us of the example we must set as ministers to, with and for young people. Prayer in the presence of spectators reminds those in the stands that they share in the responsibility of creating a safe, positive and Christian environment.

A team that takes time to celebrate Mass together before or during the season reveals a coaching staff that understands their role as leaders in a parish faith community. A parish that takes time to bless their athletes calls the whole community into celebrating the gifts shared on the court, the field, the mat or around the track.

Athletic Programs by Season

Athletic Programs offered by the CYM office include the following by season.

Fall Season

- Cheerleading – Combined Grades (Girls)
- Cross Country – Junior Varsity and Varsity (Boys and Girls)
- Football:
 - Tackle – Junior Varsity and Varsity (Boys)
 - Flag – Pre-JV (Co-Ed)
- Soccer – Junior Varsity and Varsity (Co-Ed)
- Volleyball – Junior Varsity, Varsity and Senior (Girls)

Winter Season

- Basketball:
 - Boys: Pre-JV, Junior Varsity, Varsity, Intermediate and Senior
 - Girls: Pre-JV, Junior Varsity, and Varsity
- Cheerleading – Combined Grades (Girls)

Spring Season

- Baseball – Varsity (Boys)
- Fast Pitch Softball – Varsity (Girls)
- Track and Field (Boys and Girls)
- Volleyball – Junior Varsity and Varsity (Boys)

Each parish/school can choose whether to offer any of these sports during their program year. Athletes that would like to participate in one of these sports but are affiliated with a program that is not offering that sport can choose to have a secondary affiliation added to their profile for one sport season (not the full year or subsequent years) by working with the AAP/AD and the CYM Office. See more under Affiliation guidelines.

SEASON	DATES
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Fall	3 rd Monday prior to Labor Day – November 15 th Tryouts: May 15 th – end of school; Aug 1 st – 14 th
Winter	November 1 st - March 15 th Tryouts: October 15 th – October 31 st
Spring	March 1 st – June 15 th Tryouts: March 1 st - March 15 th

Program Divisions

Athletic Programs offered by CYM have an age and grade standard as noted in the below table.

DIVISION	GRADES	COMPETITION	AGE LIMIT
High School (Senior)	9 TH – 12 TH	Competitive	May not have turned 19 before July 1 st of current program year
High School (Intermediate)	9 TH – 10 TH	Competitive	May not have turned 17 before July 1 st of current program year
Varsity	6 th – 8 th	Competitive	May not have turned 15 before July 1 st of current program year
Junior Varsity	4 th – 6 th	Competitive/Instructional/Mandatory Play Rules	May not have turned 13 before July 1 st of current program year
Pre-Junior Varsity	3 RD – 4 TH	Instructional/Competitive/Mandatory Play Rules	May not have turned 11 before July 1 st of current program year

Transition Years:

Both the 4th grade year and the 6th grade year are considered transition years for athletes. It is expected that 4th grades participate at the Pre JV level and 6th graders participate at the Junior Varsity level. However, in the event that athletes have developed more rapidly than their peers CYM does permit 4th graders to play at the JV level and 6th graders to play at the Varsity level in certain sports. The guidelines and approval requirements are in the table below.

TRANSITION GRADE	LEVEL	SPORT	APPROVAL REQUIRED FROM:
6 th Grade	Varsity	Cross Country Tackle Football Soccer Volleyball (Boys & Girls) Basketball (Boys & Girls) Fast Pitch Softball	AAP/AD
6 th Grade	Varsity	Baseball	Parent, AAP/AD, CYM Director of Youth Sports
4 th Grade	Junior Varsity	Cross Country Volleyball (Boys & Girls)	AAP/AD
4 th Grade	Junior Varsity	Tackle Football Soccer Basketball (Boys & Girls)	AAP/AD, CYM Director of Youth Sports (Only permitted to round out rosters)

Other important points:

- Wrestling (if it exists as a CYM sport) permits 5th-8th graders to participate at the Varsity level
- Track will not have a Pre-JV or Junior Varsity division. Rather all athletes 3rd-8th grade will run as a team but will be split into grades/groups when they run. Championships are 5th-8th grade, but permit 3rd & 4th graders to run as a 5th or 6th grader where appropriate
- 2nd graders will not be eligible for any sport other than Flag Football (and it will require approval from AAP/AD and CYM)
- 3rd graders may participate in Cross Country, Pre-JV Basketball, Track and Cheerleading
- 5th graders: If a 5th grader athlete is interested in participating at the Varsity level, the following must be received by the CYM Director of Youth Sports before the athlete is permitted to practice (they can tryout) or play in any game/contest.
 - Written request from parent/guardian explaining reasoning for consideration
 - Written approval from Pastor/Principal
 - Written approval from AAP/AD
 - Understanding that once the season starts the athlete may not move back to the lower level
 - The athlete is not permitted to play at both levels

Tryouts

- A parish/school may hold tryouts beginning 2 weeks prior to the date practices may officially start for a given sport.
 - Fall Sports Exception – parish/schools can choose to hold tryouts in May and August. In this case, athletes are still restricted to a maximum of three tryouts.
 - Spring Sports Exception - tryouts may begin on March 1st.
- Each tryout session is to be no more than 2 hours in duration.
- An athlete cannot attend more than 3 tryout sessions per sport.
- Tryouts are for the sole purpose of assignment to a division/team. In situations where a parish/school will only field one team in a given level/gender/sport, no tryout is permitted. Parishes/Schools that do field multiple teams may not use tryout sessions to begin team practice and training.
- Tryout means running drills or having scrimmages to determine the team on which an individual should be placed. While coaches can put in routine plays to gauge sport acumen they cannot be asking athletes to understand all plays.
- Athletes currently participating in an in-season sport are generally not permitted to try out for the sport in the next season. Exceptions are:
 - AAP/ADs are responsible for coordinating with coaches of ongoing seasons to ensure no athlete participating in a current sport misses any practices/games for a tryout.
 - Weekends where a reasonable amount of rest time between activities can exist.
- All athletes MUST be properly affiliated with the parish/school that they are planning to try out for BEFORE they are permitted to participate in any tryout.
 - It is the Sport coordinator and AAP/AD responsibility to ensure this rule is followed.
 - In the event a fall sport has tryouts in the previous Athletic Program year (in the spring), the AAP/AD must confirm proper eligibility (student, parish/religious ed member, etc)

Conditioning Drills – Football/Soccer:

- Conditioning drills for football and soccer will be permitted from the 3rd Monday in June through the 1st Friday in August.
- Participation from all athletes must be voluntary.

- The parent/guardian must complete CYM Form A prior to the athlete participating in conditioning drills. Form A should be turned in to the head coach.
- Drills are to be no more than 2 nights per week and no more than 90 minutes in duration.
- Coaches are to monitor players for heat-related symptoms.
- Equipment: cones, bags or other items for agility drills and wind-resistant equipment are permitted. No footballs or soccer balls are permitted on the field, near the field or visible in the immediate area where conditioning drills are taking place.
- Coaches/teams may not run plays or demonstrate tackling/blocking drills or techniques.
- Coaches/volunteer adults are not permitted to discuss with players or parents any eligibility for participating with the parish/school conducting the conditioning drills. These questions must be immediately referred to the CYM Office.
- Athletes should be properly affiliated with their parish/school on the CYM website before participating in any conditioning drills. All athletes, parents and coaches should understand that participating in one parish/school's conditioning drills does not guarantee affiliation. Questions should be directed to the CYM Office.
- Violations of these provisions will result in both JV and Varsity teams of the parish being ruled ineligible for post season playoffs or tournaments for the upcoming season.
- If calls or complaints are received that call into question the parish/school's adherence to the letter or spirit of these rules, the CYM Office may terminate all conditioning drills.

Practices

Subject to any exceptions contained in sport-specific rules, each team is permitted a maximum of 3 practices/scrimmages per week. These sessions are to be a maximum of 2 hours in duration, inclusive of warmups, stretching, water breaks and cool down periods.

Coaches are expected to monitor players for heat-related ailments or symptoms and provide appropriate and frequent water breaks. For outdoor sports, and indoor sports where no form of climate control is available, only stretches, walk-throughs and blackboard sessions are permitted if:

1. The temperature is above 95 degrees, regardless of humidity levels, or
2. The sum of the temperature and relative humidity equals or exceeds 170

Parishes/schools are strongly encouraged to have at least one individual present who is certified in CPR and first aid.

Related Policies:

Tryout/Practices	9.3	Team practices are not permitted until the first day of the each sports season as determined by CYM and stated below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Sports – 3rd Monday prior to Labor Day • Winter Sports – November 1st • Spring Sports – March 1st
Tryout/Practices	9.3.1	Athletes participating in two sports in the same season are restricted to two hours of practice time per weekday. Exceptions are on the weekends where rest can be sufficiently achieved.
Tryout/Practices	9.3.2	Any athlete who is on a roster in any sport may only attend a practice for another sport in a new season if the existing team is not practicing on that weekday. On weekends an athlete can attend both practices but must prioritize the existing sport.
Tryout/Practices	9.3.3	No athlete is to be denied permission to tryout for an upcoming season's team because he/she is still actively participating in a current sport.

Sunday Morning Athletics/Blackout Dates

The Office for the Bishop has made it clear that holding athletic events on Sunday mornings when liturgy takes place is inappropriate.

Due to the fact that the Office for Catholic Youth Ministry does not have direct responsibility for non-CYM leagues or tournaments, it is the responsibility of the pastor of each parish (or principal in the case of the private Catholic Schools) to monitor all parish/school teams.

Other dates that should be considered blackout dates where no tryouts, practices or athletic contests should be played are as follows:

- Christmas Eve (after 3pm)
- Christmas Day
- Holy Thursday (after 6pm)
- Good Friday
- Easter Sunday
- CYM Pilgrimage (Saturday prior to Palm Sunday) – exception if teams have no participants in CYM Pilgrimage may be permitted.

Related Policies:

Sunday Morning	9.4	Parish and private Catholic school athletic teams (CYM and non-CYM) are not to practice or participate in athletic contests prior to Noon on Sundays.
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Registrations/Billings

Registrations:

Prior to the schedule being produced and published, it is the responsibility of each Athletic Association to provide (by a deadline prescribed by the CYM Director of Youth Sports and published at the preseason meeting or via email) the following data:

- Team Confirmation & Divisional Alignment Form – this form will explain the number of teams expected for your parish/school and the divisions they would like to be placed in. This is NOT a guarantee that the team(s) will be placed in these divisions.
- Parish/School Conflict Forms – this form will described the parish/school conflict, the date of those conflicts and the teams that will be impacted by those conflicts. The CYM Office will do its best to avoid those conflicts when scheduling athletic contests. Please speak to the parish to capture confirmation classes, graduations, etc.
- Gym/Field Availability Form – this form will dictate when your parish/school field or gym is free to permit the CYM Office to use it to schedule games. ON this form please also indicate whether other non-parish/school teams can play there or if all contests must include one of the parish/school teams. The more we can have flexibility to put two other teams there, the better off we will be for scheduling.

Billings:

The CYM Office will establish program fees for each sport. These are subject to change each year and will be based on the associated costs per sport. Registration Fees per athlete will also be administered. These are cost associated with online registration system, including maintenance and website management. Invoices will be distributed to each parish/school once rosters have locked for that season. It is expected and required that all invoices are paid in full before the end of that sports season.

Parishes/Schools will be responsible for a team program fee once the registration forms are submitted to the CYM office and used for schedule purposes. If a parish/school needs to withdraw a team during the preseason or during the season, the parish/school must still pay the program fee associated with that team.

Payments must be made from an account bearing the name of the parish/school. Checks from individual businesses or persons will not be accepted without the direct approval from the CYM Director of Youth Sports.

Beginning with the 2022-2023 program year, the CYM Office may administer fees for the following:

- Parish/School team forfeits game without enough notice to cancel officials
- Parish/School team has non-rostered players/coaches participating in the athletic contests

Related Policies:

Registration/Billings	9.5	No team will be admitted to any CYM league unless the proper registration form(s) are submitted by the deadline as established and published by the CYM Office.
Registration/Billings	9.5.1	A parish/school is responsible for a team's registration fee once the team is entered into the season (at the time registration forms are submitted). If a team withdraws during the preseason or the season, the parish/school must still pay the team's fee.
Registration/Billings	9.5.2	No parish/school may register teams for an upcoming season unless all outstanding bills have been paid for any prior seasons. The CYM Director of Youth Sports must approve any request for an extension.
Registration/Billings	9.5.3	Payment for an athletic invoice to the Office for Catholic Youth Ministry must be paid from an account bearing the name of the parish or school. Personal checks or checks from businesses will not be accepted without the approval of the CYM Director of Youth Sports.

Online Rosters

All parish/schools are to complete a roster for each team on the CYM website at www.cdowcym.org. Completion can be done by the AAP/AD, head coach or the Sport Coordinator. However, all rosters are to be approved by the AAP/AD for each parish/school by the deadline for each sports season.

Accuracy of the roster with respect to athletes and coaches is the responsibility of the head coach, the parish/school sport coordinator and the AAP/AD. Each of these persons should print a final copy of the roster to ensure its accuracy. Once approved a roster will be locked and no additional players will be permitted to be added. Due date is usually the Thursday/Friday before the 1st weekend of athletic contests. Assistant coaches are permitted to be added after rosters lock; however, these individuals are not permitted to function in any coach role until they are added to the roster.

Violations of these rules can result in:

- Forfeits for illegal players/coaches
- Inability for volunteer coaches to provide guidance to the youth of their community
- Teams to become ineligible for playoffs and/or tournaments
- Additional sanctions to the parish/school, AAP/AD, sport coordinator or coach as determined by the CYM Director of Youth Sports and/or the Athletic Advisory Committee

In the event the eligibility of any athlete or coach is questioned, CYM will rely on the online roster and/or printed hard copy of that roster provided by the AAP/AD or coach.

Athletes may participate in multiple sports in the same season, but may be placed on only one roster in each sport. Once on a roster and that roster is locked there will be no movement of players from that locked roster to any other. This includes situations where younger players (4th graders/6th graders) are participating at the advanced level.

Related Policies:

Online Rosters	9.6	Only rosters completed according to the stated policies will be accepted for play by the Office for Catholic Youth Ministry.
Online Rosters	9.6.1	Official team rosters must be completed online by the head coach, parish/school sport coordinator or the AAP/AD. The AAP/AD must approve all rosters before they are locked.
Online Rosters	9.6.2	Only individuals listed on a team's official, online roster may participate in team events. Individuals not listed may not participate with the team, and a team will forfeit any games played with an unrostered individual player or coach.
Online Rosters	9.6.3	Only adults listed on the team's online roster may act as a coach.
Online Rosters	9.6.4	Online roster deadlines will be communicated by the CYM Office.
Online Rosters	9.6.5	Once the rosters are locked no athlete may switch to another team.

Online Rosters	9.6.6	A team cannot compete in any CYM or non-CYM athletic contests until all players and coaches are listed on the official online roster, the required adult/child ratio is met and the AAP/AD has approved the roster. Team will forfeit until these are completed.
Online Rosters	9.6.7	Coaches must follow up with parent/guardians on medical issues noted on the team roster.

Online Registration

Online Registration is the process by which a parent/guardian requests and consents for their child to participate in youth sports at the CYM level. The online registration process occurs on the CYM website (www.cdwocym.org). It is different from the individual parish/school registration process which will likely also be required. Financial payment will only be made to the parish/school. CYM Online Registration consists of three things:

- Athlete Registration
- Medical/Concussions
- Parental Consent & Release Form

All parents/guardians are responsible for completing a separate online registration for each of their athletes. Once this online registration has been completed CYM will assign a parish/school affiliation to each athlete. The parent/guardian will receive a notification from the CYM online system once the affiliation is assigned. The parent/guardian should then print the completed registration authorization form and bring to the Coach/Coordinator at the first tryout/practice (whichever comes first).

Families are encouraged to complete their registration as early as possible. Affiliations may not be completed for any registrations submitted too close to the roster deadline or tryout/practice dates.

All athletes must be properly registered and affiliated with that parish/school through the CYM Office before they are permitted to participate in any tryout/practice or athletic contest.

Violations may result in forfeits (team), ineligibility (players/teams) and/or sanctions (individuals/programs).

Related Policies:

Online Registration	9.7	Online Registration must be completed by the parent/guardian of every child who wishes to participate in CYM sports.
Online Registration	9.7.1	The parent/guardian must electronically sign both the registration and the concussion information sheet. Players must electronically sign the concussion information sheet.

Online Registration	9.7.2	Once registration is complete, the parent/guardian must print the Athlete Authorization Form and give it to the head coach/coordinator at the first tryout/practice. A player is not eligible to participate or tryout unless the parent provides the form and unless the form lists the proper parish affiliation.
Online Registration	9.7.3	Providing false information during the registration process will result in the participant being ruled ineligible for all CYM athletic programs in the current program year.
Online Registration	9.7.4	Any team allowing individuals to tryout, practice or participate in games that have not properly completed the online registration and been properly affiliated with that parish/school may be subject to further sanctions as determined by the CYM Sport Coordinator, CYM Director of Youth Sports and/or the Athletic Advisory Committee.

Team Participation/Affiliation

The CYM athletic program exists to serve the children and families of the Diocese of Wilmington, both Catholic and non-Catholic. All athletes will be required to be connected to a parish/school in order to participate in the athletic program. "Affiliation" is the assignment of a child to the appropriate parish/school via one of the following criteria (generally in this order):

- Catholic School Student – Will be assigned to the catholic school that he or she is enrolled in
- Parish Members – Will be assigned to a parish where the parent/guardian has been registered, active members with regular financial contributions for a minimum of 60 days
- Religious Education Student – Will be assigned to the parish where he or she is actively participating in the religious education program of that parish
- Geographical Residence – Will be assigned to the parish based on parent/guardian residence

Important Clarifications:

1. For families that struggle to make financial contributions to the parish, documented participation in parish events, fundraisers and volunteer opportunities (other than sports) fulfills the requirement. Non-parishioners or non-Catholic participants are expected to participate in and support that parish's sports program.
2. For those affiliated by geographical residence, CYM will generally look at the residence relative to the parish boundaries in order to determine primary affiliation. However, at times the CYM Office will consider the parish/schools with the greatest need in a particular sport and reserves the right to determine the affiliation based primarily on this issue after giving due consideration to any hardships it may place on a child.
3. A child will have only ONE primary affiliation. In some cases a child may be initially eligible for more than one (active parish member at one parish but enrolled in school somewhere else); CYM will choose school first.

Specific Affiliation Rules for Schools:

1. Private Catholic Schools (ex. Mount Aviat Academy, Nativity Prep, Serviam Academy, St. Edmond's Academy, and Ursuline Academy) – To be affiliated with one of these schools, the student must be enrolled at that school.
2. Diocesan Regional Schools (ex. Christ the Teacher) – to be affiliated with these schools, the student must:
 - Be enrolled in the school or
 - Be an active member of the Religious Education Program at one of the parishes that support that school

If a student is enrolled at a different Catholic school that does not offer that sport, the principal/AD at the regional school may approve an exception to participate.

General Affiliation Rules:

- Once a primary affiliation has been created it is expected that the athlete participate for that parish/school for all sports for the duration of his/her eligibility through 8th grade. If a child's primary affiliation does not offer the sport that the child wishes to participate in, the parent/guardian may request a secondary affiliation to a different parish/school for that sport only. This request must be made in writing to the CYM Office. Assignment of a secondary affiliation will be at the discretion of the CYM Staff.
- Affiliation rules established by CYM are the minimum standards and may be extended by a parish/school. Parishes/schools are permitted to have guidelines that are stricter than CYM. Parishes/Schools are permitted to restrict the number of teams or participation to its own members, but they must adopt uniform policies across all sports and not just a few.
- All athletes must have a proper affiliation before they are permitted to participate in any tryout, practice or game contest. Parent/guardians should print and sign the Athlete Authorization Form and bring to the first tryout/practice. It is the responsibility of the head coach, sport coordinator and/or the AAP/AD to confirm that each player is eligible to participate for that team according to the Affiliation rules.
- Parents/guardians should not register in a parish for the sole purpose of athletic participation.

Violations of any of these rules may result in disciplinary action taken by the CYM Office against the player, the team, the coach/coordinator and/or the AAP/AD. Actions could include warnings, suspensions or other sanctions.

Athletes Residing Outside Diocese of Wilmington:

Athletes that reside outside the physical boundaries of the Diocese of Wilmington may only participate for parish/school athletic programs within the Diocese of Wilmington if one of the following is met:

- The athlete is registered at, and the athlete's family is making regular financial contributions to, a Catholic parish in the Diocese of Wilmington (for minimum of 60 days)
- The athlete attends a parochial or private Catholic school within the Diocese of Wilmington
- The athlete attends religious education classes at a Catholic parish in the Diocese of Wilmington

General Eligibility Rules:

- At no time will a player be permitted to participate simultaneously for more than one CYM team in the same sport.
- Academic eligibility standards will be left to the discretion of each individual parish/school.
- Individual athletes in 8th through 12th grade are prohibited from playing the same sport on a CYM team and a high school team (freshman, JV or Varsity) during the same sport season.
- An individual athlete becomes ineligible for a CYM team when he/she attends a contest with his/her high school team and is wearing the high school team uniform.

Violations of any of these may result in the player in question being deemed ineligible for all future games, forfeits for any CYM game that the player participated in and possible exclusion from playoffs or other sanctions as deemed necessary by the CYM Director of Youth Sports and/or the Athletic Advisory Committee.

Related Policies:

Team Participation/ Affiliation	9.8	All individuals shall be classified according to parish/school affiliations and are subject to the guidelines established by said parish/school.
Team Participation/ Affiliation	9.8.1	CYM cannot guarantee that all individuals requesting to participate in the CYM athletic program will be placed on a CYM team.
Team Participation/ Affiliation	9.8.2	An individual assigned an affiliation at a parish is subject to approval by the parish athletic association. Parishes may refuse to accept an individual assigned to a parish. For example, registration may have closed, teams may be filled, or accepting an individual may adversely impact a team's eligibility for playoffs, etc. In such cases, the parish/school athletic association is to refer the individual back to the CYM Office for possible placement on another CYM team.
Team Participation/ Affiliation	9.8.3	The CYM Office will make affiliation assignments after a review of the CYM Online Registration information for the individual. No individual may tryout, practice or play with a team until authorization has been received from CYM.

Team Participation/ Affiliation	9.8.4	It is the responsibility of a parent/guardian of a child wishing to play CYM sports to register said child at the parish/school by the deadline set by that parish/school. CYM will not consider requests for changes in affiliation if a parish/school deadline has not been met.
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Affiliation Changes

In certain circumstances a parent/guardian may wish to have their athlete assigned to a different parish/school than the original primary affiliation established by the CYM Office. In these cases the parent/guardian MUST submit a Change of Affiliation form to the CYM Office. Telephone requests will not be accepted.

Approval of Change of Affiliation Requests:

- These requests will be reviewed by the CYM Office and submitted to the AAP/AD of each parish/school (the original primary affiliation and the requested primary affiliation) for approval
- The CYM Director of Youth Sports will also need to approve
- Disagreements or appeals of decisions from the above two will be escalated to the Affiliation Committee (a smaller group of members from the Athletic Advisory Committee) whose decision will be final

Valid Reasons for Change of Affiliations:

- Athlete changes schools or parishes and qualifies for a new affiliation
- Athlete becomes a new student in a religious education program
- Parent/guardian changes physical residence locations (Requires proof of residence)
- Serious hardships

These changes will be confirmed by the CYM office before they are approved.

Invalid Reasons for Change of Affiliations:

- To play on the best team
- To play with friends
- To play with a specific coach

Timeline for Submission:

- Requests must be made before any athlete begins to participate in tryouts/practices/games, otherwise they will not be considered until the following sports season.

Related Policies:

Affiliation Change	9.9	All requests for a Change of Affiliation must be in writing using the Change of Affiliation Request Form. This form and the supporting documentation can be received from and must be submitted back to the CYM Office by email at catholicyouth@cdow.org.
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Affiliation Change	9.9.1	All requests for a Change of Affiliation must be submitted and approved before any player is permitted to tryout, practice or play in any athletic contest for either parish/school.
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Coach Requirements

All coaches are encouraged to:

- Become familiar with the CYM Handbook and sport-specific rules
- Ensure that the letter and spirit of CYM policies are followed
- Establish clear guidelines governing attendance at practices and games
- Specify philosophies on playing time and complaint/concern escalation
- Keep training and background clearances current
- Monitor email regularly

Age Restrictions:

- Pre-JV/Junior Varsity levels: coaches must be minimally 18 years of age
- Varsity levels: coaches must be minimally 21 years of age
- High School levels: coaches must be minimally 24 years of age

Teams are permitted to have “junior coaches” – these would be teenagers that would like to assist in coaching but have not reached the minimum age to be added to a roster as a full time coach. These individuals should be included in the Player/Coach ratio when determining the coverage required to meet the “For the Sake of God’s Children” requirements.

Coach Registrations

All volunteer adults wishing to function as a head coach or an assistant coach must complete the following steps before they can function as a coach and be added to a roster.

- Complete CYM online registration and coach profile on the CYM Website (www.cdowcym.org)
- Select the parish/school they will coach for
- Read and electronically sign the certifications on the website: Confidentiality Agreement and Volunteer Covenant (Must be completed each year)
- Complete the Concussion in Sports Training (link to NFHS Website can be found in the Coach Profile section or www.nfhslearn.com) (Must be completed every two years)
- Complete background check to comply with the “For the Sake of God’s Children” policies for the Diocese of Wilmington. Contact Parish/School office or AAP/AD for instructions. (Must be completed every 5 years)

It is the responsibility of the AAP/AD or Parish/School Sport Coordinator to add head coaches to rosters and it is the responsibility of the head coaches to ensure all assistant coaches are added to rosters. All certifications and clearances must be up to date before any coach will be able to be added to a roster and before they are permitted to serve in a role as a coach at any tryout, practice or game.

Coach Liability

Although liability issues and concerns dealing with volunteer coaches are not as demanding as those for paid coaches, it is always important to act in a reasonable and prudent manner when performing the duties associated with coaching. Volunteer coaches' liability issues are address in the Delaware Code Title 16, Chapter 68(v) of the Delaware Code. All coaches and volunteers are encouraged to review and be familiar with that information for their own benefit.

Even though State law provides for these limitations on liability, coaches must adhere to the Volunteer Covenant and any other school, parish, and Diocesan procedures at all times.

Related Policies:

Coach Registration	9.10	All coaches (head and assistant) are required to complete all necessary trainings and certifications before they are permitted to participate in a coaching role.
Coach Registration	9.10.1	All coaches (head and assistant) are required to complete a background check to comply with the "For the Sake of God's Children" policy of the Diocese of Wilmington. Coaches need to be fully cleared before they can actively participate in any coach role.

Code of Conduct – Coaches

All persons serving in a role as a head coach or an assistant coach will have expectations to fulfill throughout the season.

Head Coaches are expected to:

- Build relationships with the players, teaching the sport to the best of their ability
- Foster environment conducive to learning, growing and developing positive attitudes
- Encourage positive sportsmanship from all players, coaches and spectators
- Act as a positive role model for all players, assistant coaches, and spectators
- Treat officials, players, coaches and spectators with respect
- Develop a positive sense of Church community into the program, through prayer or Mass, etc

Assistant Coaches are expected to:

- Assist the head coach with tasks listed above
- Cover for the head coach in times of absence
- Serve in other functions (ex. Scorekeeper/Clock Operator) during athletic contests (it is important to note that when serving in this capacity, they should not also serve as a coach unless it is half time where there is plenty of time to recover back to their primary role for that contest)

Assistant Coaches are expected not to:

- Speak to or argue with any official
- Circumvent the head coach during practices/games

No head coach or assistant coach should ever approach spectators, other team members or other athletes during an athletic contest unless asked to do so by the officials of that contest.

Unsportsmanlike conduct can include (but is not limited to)

- Arguing or berating any official
- Berating any player
- Negative banter between coaches before, during or after a game
- Causing disruption during a post-game handshake line
- Encouraging or not preventing poor sportsmanship behavior from own team

*CYM will monitor conduct before, during and after all athletic contests, including events that occur in public places (such as parking lots, restaurants, etc.).

Coaches should be cognizant of what they post on social media and ensure it is not offensive, inappropriate or derogatory in any way towards players, parents, officials or spectators from all teams.

Any violations of these guidelines could result in sanctions implemented against the coach, team or entire parish/school athletic program. Sanctions could include warnings or suspensions. They could also result in coaches or entire teams being ruled ineligible for post season/tournament play or even expulsion from the league.

Specifically:

- Any coach who verbally or physically mistreats an official, another coach, any player or any spectator or behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner at any time during the season (regardless of whether an ejection, technical foul or other cautionary violations are issued) may be suspended from coaching in CYM Sports.
- Any coach who is ejected from any athletic contest will serve an automatic suspension (head coaches – 1 game; assistant coaches – 2 games) and will be subject to further, more severe discipline as deemed necessary by the CYM Director of Youth Sports.
- During the suspension period the coach is permitted to attend practices unless the sanctions specifically restrict this.
- No coach on suspension is permitted to be in the gym or at the field/track during an athletic contest while serving the suspension. If they are the primary means of transportation for their child they must remain in their vehicle until they leave the facility grounds.
- Parishes/Schools may impose additional penalties (but they cannot be less severe)

Related Policies:

Code of Conduct for Coaches	9.11	It is the responsibility of all coaches to ensure that the For the Sake of God's Children policies for the Diocese of Wilmington are followed at all practices, games and team activities.
Code of Conduct for Coaches	9.11.1	If the actions or attitude of a coach are found to be detrimental to the athletes or the CYM program, that coach will be subject to review and discipline. Disciplinary action can include, but is not limited to, probation, suspension, or dismissal, depending upon the circumstances.
Code of Conduct for Coaches	9.11.2	Upon completion of a period of suspension lasting more than 5 athletic contests, a coach must request reinstatement in writing to the CYM Athletic Advisory Committee. This letter must indicate that the suspended coach has reviewed and will support the Statement of Purpose and Philosophy of CYM Athletics. The letter must also be reviewed and approved by the pastor of the parish or the principal of the school where the coach will be participating.

Code of Conduct – Players

All athletes are expected to conduct themselves with positive sportsmanship and Christian attitudes at games, during practices and in their daily activities. Athletes are expected to:

- Commit to their CYM team – this means that they are expected to attend all practices and games of the CYM team over that of any other athletic teams when conflicts arise. This agreement is also covered in the Parental Consent & Release Form on the Online Registration.
- Actively participate in all tryouts, practices and athletic contests. Sometimes this means cheering on or encouraging their teammates.
- Work hard and give their best effort at all practices and athletic contests.
- Conduct themselves with positive sportsmanship in mind at all times during an athletic contest

Improper or unsportsmanlike conduct can include (but is not limited to):

- Using inappropriate or offensive language
- Challenging others to a fight
- Disrupting the post-game handshake line in a negative manner
- Negatively speaking about/taunting an opponent
- Arguing with or berating any game official
- While an active player in the athletic contest (whether playing or on the bench) causing an intentional disruption to an opposing player with the goal of missed shot, failed attempt, etc.

The expected behavior for athletes applies to all athletes before, during or after any athletic event and includes incidents in parking lots, restaurants, etc.

Athletes should be careful on social media to not post, follow or like anything that could be considered offensive, inappropriate or derogatory towards any other player, teammate, coach, official or spectator regardless of the team or parish.

All unsportsmanlike fouls (technical in basketball, yellow/red card in soccer, penalty flag in football, etc) are to be reported by the head coach of the team to the CYM Director of Youth Sports within 24 hours of the incident.

Three unsportsmanlike fouls during a single program athletic season will result in a minimum one-game suspension for the athlete. Other incidents of improper conduct by athletes before, during and/or after a CYM athletic contest may result in disciplinary action taken by the CYM Office. Disciplinary action can range from probation, suspension or dismissal depending upon the circumstances.

If any athlete is ejected from ANY parish/school or CYM athletic contest, whether sponsored by CYM or not for any unsportsmanlike activity, the athlete will be suspended for a minimum of the next athletic contest played by that team (whether a regular season game, tournament game or playoff game). If the team does not play any additional games that season, the athlete would be required to miss the next athlete contest he or she participates in during the next sports season (regardless of the sport). The CYM Office reserves the right to increase the disciplinary action if deemed appropriate.

During the suspension period the athlete is not permitted to attend the athletic contest, including sitting in the spectator area. An athlete's attendance at any athletic event while suspended will result in a forfeit by the team, or if the team lost, having its playoff win count reduced by 1.

Any violation of the social media rules or the guidelines provided in the section on unsportsmanlike actions may result in disciplinary action taken by the CYM Director of Youth Sports regardless of whether an unsportsmanlike foul was issued by an official.

Code of Conduct – Spectators

The purpose of CYM athletic programs is to promote Christian attitudes while encouraging healthy physical activity by the youth of the Diocese.

Parents and spectators have a strong influence on the behavior and attitudes of our youth athletes and those adults are held to a high standard of conduct. Spectators must remember that their behavior influences not only their children's behavior, but also a coach's willingness to volunteer, a referee's willingness to officiate and a parish's desire to host teams.

Spectators are expected to:

- Positively cheer for their child and/or team
- Encourage their team members in a positive manner
- Present positive sportsmanship towards all teams, coaches, officials and other spectators

Spectators are not expected to:

- Argue, berate or criticize officials
- Approach any coach (or the team bench area) within 24 hours of a practice or athletic contest
- Engage in any negative argument, discussion or shouting matches within anyone in a parking lot, field, bathroom, restaurant or other location
- Participate in or encourage unsportsmanlike conduct.

Unsportsmanlike conduct can include (but is not limited to):

- Objecting to decisions of game officials
- Disrespectfully addressing a coach, official or other spectator
- Challenging others to a fight
- Negatively speaking to or about any athlete
- Using inappropriate language/gestures
- Interrupting an athletic contest by going onto the floor or field/track or approaching a game official or coach

*CYM will monitor conduct before, during and after all athletic contests, including events that occur in public places (such as parking lots, restaurants, etc.)

Incidents of poor sportsmanship or unruly conduct will not be tolerated. Violations of this code of conduct may result in disciplinary action taken by the CYM Office that could include probation/warnings, temporary or permanent suspensions or even dismissal of the team from the league.

If any spectator is ejected from any parish or CYM athletic contest, whether sponsored by CYM or not, that spectator is banned from (at a minimum) the next two (2) athletic contests played by that team, or if the team does not play in two more contests, then the next two contests played by the athlete with whom the spectator is associated, regardless of the sport. The CYM Director of Youth Sports reserves the right to increase the punishment depending upon the situation.

Athletic Associations are encouraged to share these spectator conduct policies with all families and should ask guardians to be sure they share with other family members and friends that may be in attendance at any athletic contest.

Related Policies:

Code of Conduct for Spectators	9.12	Spectators may not file complaints with CYM concerning game officials, coaches, players or other spectators. Only the head coach of a team may file a complaint. If a spectator has a complaint, he or she must wait 24 hours after the athletic contest and then bring the complaint to the head coach and/or AAP/AD. The head coach and AAP/AD will review the matter and decide how to proceed, including whether to bring the complaint to CYM.
Code of Conduct for Spectators	9.12.1	Spectators should remember that they represent their parish/school just as much as team members and coaches. Parents, guardians, other family members and friends must be models of sportsmanship for all of our youth athletes. Adults are expected to demonstrate positive support for all athletes of all teams and treat all coaches, officials and other spectators with respect at practices or contests.
Code of Conduct for Spectators	9.12.2	If a spectator attends an athletic contest when restricted from doing so, that spectator's team will forfeit the contest (or, if the team lost, will have its playoff win count reduced by 1). A second occurrence will result in the team's exclusion from playoffs, or in the case of a non-playoff team, termination of the team's season.
Code of Conduct for Spectators	9.12.3	Coaches and/or athletic associations are responsible for ensuring a spectator ban is enforced, and are expected to assist and cooperate with a referee, sports coordinator or Advisory Committee member who attends the game and acts to enforce a spectator ban.

Code of Conduct for Spectators	9.12.4	Repeated or continuous inappropriate spectator conduct may result in sanctions against the team or athletic association, including forfeits, exclusion from playoffs, or dismissal from the league.
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Unsportsmanlike Conduct Fouls

This section addresses all unsportsmanlike conduct fouls issued in all sports (technical fouls in basketball, yellow cards in soccer & volleyball, unsportsmanlike penalties in wrestling and football, and restricted to bench in baseball and softball).

All unsportsmanlike fouls in all sports must be reported by the head coach to the CYM Director of Youth Sports within 24 hours of the completion of the athletic contest. The report should be sent in writing and should include the name of the recipient, a description of the infraction and additional information about the athletic contest (time, location, opponent, period of the infraction).

Failure to properly report these unsportsmanlike fouls in the timeline specified above could result in disciplinary action taken by the CYM Office.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct Fouls include (but are not limited to):

- Arguing, berating or objecting to decisions of game officials
- Disrespectfully addressing a player, coach, official or other spectator
- Challenging others to a fight (before, during or after an athletic contest – regardless of location)
- Negatively speaking to, about or taunting any athlete, coach or opponent
- Using inappropriate language/gestures
- Interrupting an athletic contest by entering the playing floor, field or track
- Approaching a game official or coach before, during or after an athletic contest regardless of location
- Disrupting the post-game handshake line in a negative manner
- While an active player in the athletic contest (whether playing or on the bench) causing an intentional disruption to an opposing player with the goal of missed shot, failed attempt, etc.
- Negative banter between coaches before, during or after a game
- Encouraging or not preventing poor sportsmanship behavior from own team

Any athlete or coach that receives 3 unsportsmanlike penalties in any full athletic program year (across all sports) will be suspended for a minimum of one game (to be served in the next athletic contest after the third penalty). Each additional unsportsmanlike conduct penalty carries a minimum one –game suspension. The CYM Director of Youth Sports reserves the right to increase the disciplinary action if deemed necessary.

Some sports have automatic technical fouls or yellow cards for certain infractions that would not be considered unsportsmanlike:

- Too many people on the floor, field, court
- Reaching over the line and touching the ball

While these infractions must still be reported to the CYM Director of Youth Sports they will not count towards ones total of unsportsmanlike penalties.

Ejections

The purpose of CYM Athletic programs is to promote Christian attitudes while encouraging healthy physical activity by youth in the Diocese of Wilmington. It is the responsibility of all those attending that proper conduct be displayed and respect given to officials in charge of contests.

Any athlete, coach or spectator that is ejected from an athletic contest will face immediate disciplinary action from the CYM Office including suspensions, impacts to playoff eligibility or even seasonal, program year, or permanent bans. Any coach or spectator that is ejected from an athletic contest must leave the building, field or track/course immediately. If they have an athlete participating in the athletic contest they should go wait in their vehicle. A player that is ejected from an athletic contest must remain on the team bench or team area for the remainder of the game. They are not permitted to leave the facility by themselves. A parent/guardian can escort them out of the facility, field or track/course if they are available without interrupting the play.

All ejections, regardless of whether they are in a CYM sanctioned event or not, must be reported by the head coach to the AAP/AD of the parish/school and the CYM Director of Youth Sports within 24 hours of the date of the athletic contest. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action against the head coach.

Minimum suspensions for ejections will be:

- Athletes – 1 game
- Head Coaches – 1 game
- Assistant coaches – 2 games
- Spectators – 2 games

The CYM Director of Youth Sports reserves the right to impose additional penalties after reviewing the facts of the ejection.

Suspensions must be served in the very next athletic contest for that team, whether it is a tournament, regular season or playoff game and regardless of whether it is sponsored by CYM or not. Adults that have been suspended but also are the only transportation means for their athlete(s) must remain in their vehicle during the duration of the athletic contests that they are suspended from.

A member of the Athletic Association MUST be in attendance during all suspensions to ensure compliance with these rules. Any violations of these rules at any time of the athletic contest (before, during or after) will require an immediate stoppage in the contest and a forfeit for that team.

If ejections occur in the last athletic contest for that team, the suspensions will carry over into playoffs, next sport or even the next season. This will be determined by the CYM Director of Youth Sports.

Two ejections for the same individual in any one athletic season will minimally result in a seasonal ban for the remainder of that athletic season for that team, including any playoffs or tournaments.

Related Policies:

Ejections	9.13	If a coach or an assistant coach of a CYM team is ejected from ANY parish or CYM athletic contest, whether sponsored by CYM or not, the coach will be suspended. Minimally, head coaches will be suspended from the next athletic contest and assistant coaches will be suspended from the next two athletic contests played by that team.
Ejections	9.13.1	If an athlete is ejected, the minimum suspension will be the next athletic contest played by that team.
Ejections	9.13.2	If any spectator is ejected from an athletic contest, the minimum suspension will be from the next two athletic contests for that team.
Ejections	9.13.3	The CYM Director of Youth Sports may impose additional penalties for all players, coaches and spectators that are ejected after reviewing the facts of the case.
Ejections	9.13.4	Suspended games will include playoffs and tournaments.
Ejections	9.13.5	Two ejections for the same individual in any one athletic season will minimally result in a disqualification and seasonal ban for the remainder of that athletic season, including playoffs and tournaments.
Ejections	9.13.6	If an ejection occurs in the last game for that team, a suspension will carry over to the playoffs, tournaments, next athletic season or next program year as determined by the CYM Director of Youth Sports.
Ejections	9.13.7	It is the head coach's responsibility to report all ejections to the CYM Director of Youth Sports and to their AAP/AD within 24 hours of the athletic contest. Failure to do so may result in penalties imposed to that head coach or the team.
Ejections	9.13.8	A member of the parish/school Athletic Association must be present at all athletic contests during all suspensions for that team. Any violations of the suspension will result in an immediate stoppage and forfeit by that team.

Complaints

In order to address concerns and complaints appropriately and efficiently, they must be raised following a specific chain of parties. All complaints/concerns must be submitted in writing and must follow the protocols listed below.

1. Concerns with someone within the same parish/school (playing time, conduct, sportsmanship):
 - Must be raised by a parent/guardian of athlete
 - Following the 24 hour guideline, raise concern to the head coach of the team in writing
 - After a period of time that permits action by the head coach, raise concern to the Athletic Association or the AAP/AD.
 - Complaints or concerns about the head coach could be raised directly to the AAP/AD.
 - If still needed, the AAP/AD and parent/spectator can together raise the concern to the CYM Director of Youth Sports. While escalations may start as a verbal conversation, they should always be in writing before any action is taken.
2. Concerns with someone outside the same parish/school (officials actions, conduct of other coaches/players, spectators):
 - Raise the concern to the head coach of your athlete's team
 - Validated concerns should be made to the AAP/AD of the Athletic Association
 - Only head coaches are permitted to file a complaint with the CYM Director of Youth Sports about a game official. They can include commentary from spectators.
 - AAP/AD can forward these complaints about other coaches/players/spectators to the CYM Director of Youth Sports provided they believe it is a valid concern that needs to be addressed by this office.

Related Policies:

Complaints	9.14	A head coach may file a complaint with the CYM Office regarding an official, coach, player or other spectator. Coaches must first discuss the concern with the AAP/AD of their parish/school. The AAP/AD should consider whether to bring the pastor/principal into the conversation.
Complaints	9.14.1	A player, parent, or spectator must first bring concerns or complaints to the head coach's attention for the head coach to address according to CYM Procedures. If the concern is about the head coach it must be brought to the AAP/AD.

Complaints	9.14.2	Complaints addressed to CYM may begin with a phone call, but also must be submitted in writing or by email, including the name of the complainant. All names will be kept confidential except by permission of the complaining person. However, anonymous complaints will not be addressed.
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Appeals/Protests

Appeals:

Appeals of any decision made by the CYM Director of Youth Sports must be submitted in writing within one week of the ruling being received by the coach, player or spectator. Appeals will be sent to the CYM Director of Youth Sports, who will then forward the appeal to the Athletic Advisory Committee. Decisions of the Athletic Advisory Committee will be final and cannot be escalated any further.

Discipline decisions remain in effect prior to and during the review of the appeal until a decision is reached by the Athletic Advisory Committee.

The Athletic Advisory Committee decision, including whether an in-person meeting will be required, will generally be shared first with the CYM Director of Youth Sports and then sent back to the person making the appeal by the CYM Director of Youth Sports.

The following types of decisions cannot be appealed:

- Decisions of game officials (this is different than a protest), including technical foul/unsportsmanlike conduct fouls
- Ejections and minimum suspensions for ejections – this applies to players, coaches and spectators

Protests:

There is a difference between filing a complaint about the conduct of a player, coach or spectator and filing an official protest regarding the interpretation of rules during an athletic contest.

While no athletic contest will be replayed even if the game officials misapplied or misinterpreted a rule, a head coach is permitted to file a protest to ensure no further contests are disrupted.

The process is as follows:

- If a head coach believes an official's application of a rule may have been misapplied or misinterpreted during the athletic contest, he or she should immediately notify the official during the athletic contest in a respectful manner. See NFHS rules concerning correctable errors.
- If after a contest is completed the head coach still feels that an official has misapplied or misinterpreted a rule during a contest the head coach may submit in writing an official protest to the CYM Director of Youth Sports. The Director of Youth Sports will review and follow up with the appropriate organization of officials that worked the athletic contest.

Ineligible Players

It is the responsibility of each parish/school Athletic Association to verify the date of birth and grade of each participant that is listed on the team roster before they participate in the first team tryout/practice. The following documents can be used to verify date of birth:

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate
- State Identification Card
- Letter from Principal on school letter head.

The following documents can be used to verify grade:

- School Report Card
- Letter from the Principal of the school on school letter head

Athletic Associations must keep this information confidential. They should never make copies and should never share this information more broadly than the Athletic Association members.

If a player's age/grade is in question, the following may occur:

- Only the AAP/AD may contact the CYM office to challenge the eligibility of a player on an opposing team. The challenge must be in writing detailing the reason for the challenge.
- The request must be submitted with a check for \$50 payable to Catholic Youth Ministry
- The CYM Office will permit the Athletic Association/parent appropriate time to produce verification of the child's date of birth or grade that is in question.

Any usage of any ineligible players will result in the forfeiture of all games in which that ineligible player participated.

Athletic Contests/Games

Every effort will be made to give all teams in a particular sport the same number of games. The CYM Office and CYM Sport Coordinators will set the number of games per sport per division with consideration given to the number of teams, availability of gyms/fields and the number of weeks in a season.

Once the schedule is published there will hopefully be no further changes to schedules. Any team that knows they will not have enough to field a team should notify the CYM Sport Coordinator early enough so that officials can be cancelled. Any team that does not notify the CYM Sport Coordinator at least 3 hours before the game time will be charged a game fee (the cost of the officials).

Two forfeits for any reason in any one season will result in that team be ineligible for post season playoffs or tournaments.

Playing Time

Parishes/schools are reminded that the purpose of CYM Sports programs is to promote Christian attitudes while encouraging healthy physical activity. Children sign up for sports to play, have fun and be part of a team. As a result, each parish/school is responsible for monitoring teams and coaches to ensure that children have an opportunity for a positive athletic experience in a Christian atmosphere.

Minimum playing time rules have been established for some sports, mostly at the JV (and PreJV) level, with a few at the Varsity level. In some cases mandating playing time is not needed, such as in cross country where everyone runs. In other sports it is not practical or possible, due to the format or flow of that sport's games. Each sport's specific set of rules details playing time requirements if any. Athletic Associations are expected to develop and monitor their own playing time policies, which may provide for more playing time, but not less, than the CYM rules.

In addition, coaches are expected to hold a parents' meeting at or close to their first practice of a given season. At that meeting the head coach is expected to discuss:

1. The CYM Playing time rule, if any, that applies to the team
2. That head coach's policies and expectations for playing time, including what players should expect, on what basis the coach assigns playing time and what may affect a player's playing time (ex. Effort, attitude, missed practices, etc.)

While each coach is permitted to set his or her own playing time rules within the structures of CYM rules and any Athletic policies, coaches are asked to give primary consideration to the purpose of CYM sports noted above.

Questions/concerns on playing time should be raised to the head coach of the team and escalated to the AAP/AD of the Athletic Association. The CYM Office will not consider playing time issues unless they are in direct violation of CYM rules.

Postponements/Cancellations/Forfeits/Weather

One of the goals of CYM sports is for all teams to have a full schedule for their athletic season. Once schedules are produced, it is expected that all games are played according to that schedule. The CYM Office does recognize that from time to time conflicts will arise and will work with teams/coaches to reschedule games if needed. However, once the schedule is published we cannot guarantee a reschedule date.

Ideally all parish/school conflicts are known up front and submitted by the deadline. The CYM Office will attempt to help reschedule athletic contests that are originally scheduled:

- Where the conflict was known and submitted by the deadline
- Where the conflict was not known but was scheduled after the deadline
- Where weather causes the postponement or cancellation of an athletic contest

The CYM Office cannot guarantee any rescheduled game for parish/school events that were known before the deadline but not included on the submission, for personal reasons, for a lack of players, or for any coach conflicts. If a rescheduled date cannot be agreed to by both coaches, this will result in a forfeit game for the team with the conflict and a win for the opposing team.

Rescheduled contests may need to be played during the week at a team's practice slot.

No coach may cancel, postpone or change any athletic contest unless authorized to do so by the CYM Office/CYM Sport Coordinator.

Athletic contests will not be rescheduled due to other tournaments.

For outdoor sports, any sign of lightning or sound of thunder requires all activities to cease immediately. Players, coaches and families must be moved off the practice, game, meet area and are encouraged to move inside or to their cars. The athletic event may not resume for a minimum of 30 minutes from the last sound of thunder or the last sight of lightning.

Forfeits:

Any team that does not have a full complement of players required to begin the athletic contest 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time will forfeit that athletic contest. They can agree to scrimmage the opponent during that time slot but they must leave the field/floor in time for the next game to begin at the scheduled start time.

Two forfeits due to lack of players may result in a team being ineligible for players or being dismissed from the league. If a team is dismissed from the league, the AAP/AD must submit a written petition to the CYM Director of Youth Sports to apply for re-admittance the following year.

In addition, any game that is forfeited by any team where officials are not given advanced notice of the cancellation will result in a charge to that Athletic Association equal to the cost of game officials.

Related Policies:

Postponements/Forfeits	9.15	All games must be played according to the game schedule.
Postponements/Forfeits	9.15.1	Coaches may not cancel or change any athletic contest for any reason unless authorized to do so by CYM.
Postponements/Forfeits	9.15.2	Any team found refusing to travel to a scheduled location for league competition will suffer a forfeit, pay a fine equal to that of the game officials and be immediately ruled ineligible for playoffs or post season tournaments.
Postponements/Forfeits	9.15.3	The CYM Director of Youth Sports will make a decision on the postponement of all CYM athletic contests due to inclement weather, driving conditions or field conditions. A decision made by the CYM Office to postpone a contest is not reversible by any other authority. A coach may NOT postpone a scheduled contest unless authorized by CYM.
Postponements/Forfeits	9.15.4	CYM regular season and playoff athletic contests will NOT be rescheduled due to tournaments or outside events. Forfeits will result if teams cannot participate due to the lack of players.

League Playoffs/Tie Breakers

Individual Athletes Qualifications:

To qualify for CYM playoffs and championship events in all CYM sports, athletes on a team roster must:

- Be on the active roster of a CYM team
- Participate in a minimum of half of the regular season contests; Track & Field and Cross Country: athletes must run in a minimum of 3 meets
- Be below the threshold for suspension for unsportsmanlike fouls

Exception: Injuries to athletes restricting their ability to participate in an athletic contest (must be approved by the CYM Director of Youth Sports)

Team Qualifications:

Each sport may have their own set of rules around teams that are eligible or ineligible for playoffs. These can be found in the sport-specific rules. Qualifications that apply to all sports are as follows:

- Less than two forfeits for lack of players or coaches
- No team suspensions due to ejections, ineligible players or actions by coaches, players, spectators

Playoffs Seeding/Tie-Breakers:

CYM will have playoffs for most Varsity sports. They will be single elimination bracket unless specified in the sport specific rules. Standings will be kept throughout the season. It is the head coach of the winning team's responsibility to call, email or publish the score of their contests. Playoff seeding will be based off team records. Points may need to be awarded if certain teams are moving divisions for playoff purposes. Generally teams will be award 2-3 points per win at the higher division level and 1 point for a win at the lower division level. Tie-breakers may be needed in the event of a tie in final record or final seeding. The order of tie-breakers will be as follows:

- Head to head match up
- Coin flip/hat draw
- In the event of a 3 or more way tie, we will first look at head to head to determine if any team won all contests against the others tied; otherwise we will draw from a hat

Related Policies:

League Playoffs	9.16	The CYM Office will determine play-off alignment for all sports. Ties for final regular season league standings or playoff seed will not require a play-in contest.
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Parish In-House Programs

Each parish is permitted to have their own in-house program for any sport they choose to offer. They are permitted to offer it to any athlete at any age they choose. They are encouraged to have a registration platform that will enable families to choose an in-house program and pay the required registration fee. Each parish that offers an in-house program is responsible for the rules governing that program. Unless it is extreme circumstances the CYM office will not involve itself in any issues surrounding the in-house programs from each parish.

Registrations:

- Each parish/school should have a registration process for each in-house program they offer
- Each family does not need to additionally register with CYM on our registration website (www.cdowcym.org).
- If an athlete is playing a sport for a team registered in a CYM league as well as for a parish in an in-house program, this athlete MUST be properly registered and affiliated with that said parish before any tryout/practice or participation in any athletic contest is permitted.
- Families should understand that playing in an in-house program for one parish/school does not automatically mean that each athlete will be affiliated with that same parish/school in the year they would like to participate in a CYM sport. Please refer to the Affiliation sections of this handbook for further clarity on this topic.

Mouth Protector

Mouth guards are recommended to be worn by all athletes in all sports considered contact sports (football, soccer, wrestling, basketball, cheerleading) and limited contact sports (baseball, softball, and volleyball).

If an athlete has metal dental appliances such as braces and is participating in a contact or collision sport, a protective mouth guard is required. Athletes that do not have a mouth guard but are wearing braces are not permitted to play in any athletic contest or practice.

The intra-oral tooth and mouth protector (mouth guard) shall be of any readily visible color other than white or clear. It shall include an occlusal (protecting and separating the biting surfaces) and labial (protecting the teeth and supporting structures) portion and cover the posterior teeth with adequate thickness.

Game officials may waive the requirement that the color of the mouth guard be other than clear or white as long as the official can see that the individual is wearing a mouth guard.

Medical

Medical history is collected as part of the requirements for Online Registration. This must be completed by a parent/guardian for ALL individuals who wish to participate in ANY CYM sport.

The Office for Catholic Youth Ministry does not mandate a doctor's physical or doctor's note to participate in CYM Athletics. However, a parish/school has the authority to mandate a doctor's physical and/or doctor's note for participation on their athletic teams. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of the athlete to make sure that the child is physically, mentally, and emotionally able to participate in the CYM sports program. In the event a parish/school requires a doctor's physical or doctor's note for participation on a parish/school team in the CYM Program, the doctor's opinion regarding a player's health and ability to participate in CYM athletics supersedes any parent/guardian's authorization for a player to participate in the CYM athletic program.

It is strongly recommended that each team have a first aid kit available for practices and games.

Head Injuries

An athlete who receives a potential head injury during a practice, athletic contest or game (regular season, scrimmage, tournament, playoff) in which the athlete is dazed or shows symptoms of a concussion as described in the DIAA “Concussion Handout for Parents” may NOT return to the practice/contest/game until the athlete has been seen and cleared by a physician.

Generally if a concussion has been confirmed by the physician, the physician will require a 6 stage return to play. The 6 stages are as follows:

1. No physical activity. If athlete has no signs or symptoms of a concussion after 24 hours, they should proceed to stage 2
2. Low levels of physical activity (walking, light jogging, light stationary bike, light weight lifting)
3. Moderate levels of physical activity with body/head movement (moderate jogging, brief running, moderate stationary biking, moderate-intensity weightlifting)
4. Heavy non-contact physical activity (sprinting/running, high intensity stationary bike, regular weightlifting routine, non-contact sport specific drills)
5. Full contact in controlled practice
6. Full contact in game play

CYM Head Injury RTP (Return to Play) Form must be completed by the physician and submitted by the parent/guardian to the head coach and to the CYM Office before an athlete is permitted to attempt Stage 5 or Stage 6. While athletes may return to a practice once they hit stage 4, parents/guardians are expected to comply with physician’s instructions and inform the coach as to what stage the athlete is at. Coaches are expected to also monitor the athlete during stage 4 and stage 5. Athletes are not permitted to return to any contact practice (stage 5) or contact athletic contest/game (stage 6) until the CYM office received the “CYM Head Injury Form” (noted below).

It is important to note that any athlete who has additional symptoms when attempting to perform athletic activities in each stage must immediately stop all activities, wait an additional 24 hours and then begin again at the previous step. For example, if the athlete attempts stage 3 on a Monday but has a headache while doing so, this athlete must immediately stop all activities, wait until Wednesday to then attempt stage 2 again. The expected time in between each stage is the next day (meaning no two steps should be completed on the same day).

The physician must complete the “CYM Head Injury” Form, authorizing the return of the athlete to contact practices and athletic contests. In addition the parent of the athlete with the head injury must sign and complete the form. The head coach of the team must complete their section of the form. After all have been completed, the form is to be submitted to the CYM Office. Direct, specific approval must come from the CYM Office before the athlete is permitted to return to any practice/contest/game. Since it is expected that this form is only to be used when the athlete reaches Stage 5, it will only be accepted without physician conditions. Any physician recommendations for gradual return or limited activities will not be accepted and the athlete will not be permitted to participate.

Head injuries should be reported by the head coach of a team within 24 hours of the head injury occurring. The head coach is to complete the online injury form through the CYM Online Registration Systems (www.cdowcym.org). The head coach should log into their account and then click injury form.

Any coach that permits an athlete to return to play before a physician's note is cleared through the CYM Office or fails to report the injury within 24 hours may be subjected to disciplinary action from the CYM Office, including warnings, suspensions or dismissal from coaching the athletic program for a period of time to be determined by the CYM Office.

Related Policies:

Medical	9.17	Injuries, other than head injuries, will only be reported at the parish/school athletic association level and not to the CYM Office. Athletic Associations are directed to implement policies and maintain records to deal with player injuries and ensure player safety. The CYM Office, or any game official, reserves the right to remove a player from a game if the player appears to be hurt or otherwise playing under unsafe physical conditions.
Medical	9.17.1	An athlete that has asthma may not practice or play in games/athletic contests unless the coach has possession of an inhaler, with the athlete's name inscribed on the inhaler, and the athlete is able to administer the inhaler without aid.
Medical	9.17.2	An athlete that is allergic to bee stings and has a history of anaphylactic reaction may not practice or play in games/athletic contests unless the coach has possession of an EPI-PEN with the athlete's name inscribed on the EPI-PEN and the athlete is able to administer the EPI-PEN without aid.
Medical	9.17.3	A concussion is a traumatic brain injury. Signs and symptoms may show immediately or may not appear for 24-48 hours. All CYM coaches are responsible for reading and being familiar with the "Concussion Handout for Parents" and making certain all parents/guardians of team members have a copy of this handout. In the event an athlete receives a potential head injury during a practice or game/athletic contest the athlete must be seen by a physician who is required to clear them to return to play.