ORANGE COUNTY JUNIOR ALL AMERICAN FOOTBALL
Serving our Youth and developing Character

Chapter Guide
Table of Contents

Introduction 1

CHAPTER 1  
“What constitutes a Chapter”

Introduction 2
Articles of Incorporation 2
Letter from FTB 3
501(c)(3) 3
EIN number 3
Rules and By-laws 6
Your Board of Directors 7

CHAPTER 2  
“Starting a new Chapter”

What needs to be done 7
Articles of Incorporation 7
FTB 3500 8
EIN number 8
501(c)(3) 8
Finally (rules, board & budget) 9

CHAPTER 3  
“The Board Meeting”

The agenda 10
The meeting 10

CHAPTER 4  
“The Election”

Eligibility for a position 13
The election 13
Important information for the election 13

CHAPTER 5  
“Handling Registration”

When to have an election and where 16
Collecting fees 17
Hardship cases 17

CHAPTER 6  
“Handling Equipment”

Issuing Equipment 18
Collecting Equipment 18
Consequences for not turning in equip. 19

CHAPTER 7  
“Picking the Coach”

When to pick your Head Coach 19
Application 19
How to pick the coach 19
Background check 19
Assistant coaches and staff 20
Cheer Coaches 20
Chapter 8
“Recruiting”

Advertising 21
Recruiting previous participants 22
Head Coach 22

CHAPTER 9
“The year end Banquet”

Basically two types of banquets 23
What’s Important 23
How to do it 24

CHAPTER 10
“The Cheerleader”

CHAPTER 11
“The cheerleader”

CHAPTER 12
“Fundraisers”

CHAPTER 13
“Conclusion”
Introduction

Purpose of this Guide

For several years, I’ve stated we have a one-third, one third, one-third rule. It seems we have about one-third of our Chapters that are very organized, Structured and always do what they’re supposed to do when they are supposed to do it. Another one-third of our Chapters seem to get most things do and have fair structure. The last third of our Chapters seem to always struggle.

In an effort to provide some help for our struggling Chapters or Chapters with a new, inexperienced board, I have attempted to develop a Chapter Guide. It is just that, a Guide. It is an accumulation of ideas from myself, Chapter Presidents of successful Chapters and Ex-Presidents that had successful Chapters. These ideas are not Law, just suggestions that might help your Chapter improve. If you use these ideas, I know you will see a big improvement.

I want to give a special thanks to the following people who gave me suggestions for this guide:

Lora Gonzalez, President, South Gate.
David Janich, Past President, South Orange County
Danny Frechette, President, Bellflower
Mike Filia, President, Irvine
Wanda Hadley, President, Mission Viejo
Dan Tusa, Past President, Fountain Valley
What Constitutes a Chapter?

Introduction

In order to have a non-profit organization, there are certain things that need to be in place. First, you must have certified “articles of Incorporation”, then a letter from the Franchise Tax Board declaring your organization as “Tax Exempt”. Next you must have a letter from the IRS stating you are tax-exempt (501-c-3) and have an EIN number from the IRS. You need to have “Rules and Bylaws” established and in writing. There are certain minimal items to be included. Finally, you need to establish a Board with a minimal number of members.

Articles of Incorporation

The “Articles of Incorporation” are usually one or two pages long. You are required to have a copy in your permanent file. If you don’t have a copy of this document, then contact the “Secretary of State” office. You will need your Corporation Number. They can be reached at 916-657-5448. Press one on the first menu, three on the next menu, then zero. This should get you to a live person. Tell them you need to have a copy of your “Articles of Incorporation”. There is a small charge for this.

You need to insure you are an active organization with the “Secretary of State”. You can do this on-line. Complete the following steps:

1. Go to the website www.ss.ca.gov/.
3. On the Left hand side, click on “California Business Search”.
5. Under “Status”, it will state “Active”, “Suspended” or “Inactive”.
6. If it doesn’t state “Active”, you need to contact the “Secretary of State’s” office at the above number to find out what’s wrong and what needs to be done to correct the problem.
You should print out a copy of this page showing you are active and add it to your permanent records file. Once or twice a year, follow the above steps to ensure you are “active”.

*Letter from the Franchise Tax Board stating your Chapter is tax-exempt*

Another item you should have in your permanent records file is a letter from the “Franchise Tax Board” stating your Chapter is tax-exempt with the state of California. It’s a one or two-page letter. Should you not have this letter, contact the Franchise Tax Board at (800) 852-5711. Tell them you need a letter stating your Chapter is tax-exempt. You will need your CCN number.

*Letter from the IRS stating your Chapter is tax-exempt*

You need a letter from the IRS stating you are tax-exempt (501-c-3) with the IRS. If you don’t have this, you can obtain one by calling the “IRS hotline – tax-exempt status” at 877-829-5500. Listen to the menu, you want to talk to a live person. Tell them you want a letter stating you’re 501(c)(3) shows you’re tax-exempt with the IRS. They will fax and/or mail you a letter. If you do not have a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, refer to the next Chapter (Under 501-c-3). It will tell you how to apply for one.

*EIN number*

You should have in your permanent records file a letter from the IRS assigning you an Employer Identification Number. Also form SS-4, an “Application for Employer Identification Number”. If you don’t have a letter from the IRS assigning you an “Employer Identification Number”, call 800-829-4933. You will need to have you EIN number. Tell them you need the above mentioned letter. If you don’t have form SS-4, it’s OK. You don’t need to fill out another one.

One final note, if you have a vendor that provides a service, you should have a form W-9 from them. An example is, we hire Southern Officials to provide us with referees. I have a form W-9 on file from them. You don’t need a W-9 from vendors you purchase products from, even if you are reselling the product.

*“Rules and By-laws”*

You need to have “Rules and Bylaws” in writing for your organization. There are certain minimum basic items needed in your “Rules and By-laws”. They should be organized by stating Articles, Sections then paragraphs. I suggest you have a cover sheet, and “table of Contents” the body of your by-laws and possibly an index. I suggest the following items as a minimum for By-laws:

1. Article I. Name. This should be your legal name as is listed on your tax returns.

2. Article II. Purpose. An in-depth description of what you are providing for you participants, how you are going to accomplish it and key points of your organization.

3. Article III. Officers. A complete list of all positions on your board, a description of their duties, eligibility for each position, How elected (selection, term of office, How the election is accomplished), method of removing an Officer, how to replace a vacant position, and procedures for discipline of members (active or affiliate members).

4. Article V. Meetings. When, where and how often. Who shall attend and who can attend. A description of how the meeting shall be run. What constitutes a quorum. Special meetings and a guideline for them. Description of voting procedures.
5. Article VI. Committees. A list and description of duties for each Committee (for example: Election Committee, Coaches selection committee, etc.).

6. Article VII Placement policies for participants. A description of how each Cheerleader is placed on a team and how a football player is placed on a team. List parameters, guidelines and rules for placing participants.

7. Article VIII Amendments and Dissolution. Describe how your By-laws can be amended and the procedure for dissolving your organization (exa. Distribution of equipment).

Here’s some suggestions for your Rules:

1. Article I. Purpose. Describe the purpose of your rules and how the relate to OCJAAF rules.

2. Article II. Participant eligibility. Describe any eligibility requirements you have in order participate in the program. (exa.: scholastic requirements)

3. Article III. Responsibilities of team officials. Describe the responsibilities of each team official, their duties, what’s unacceptable behavior and the consequences of this behavior. Be sure to include your medical requirements of each team staff.

4. Article IV. Playing field and Practice field. List your rules for staff and parents on game day and during practice. (exa.: parents stay off field, don’t leave trash, staff to treat participants appropriately, etc.)

5. Article V. Equipment care. The requirement for Team Staff to insure proper equipment safety. The requirements of parents to insure care of the equipment and responsibilities. (exa.: procedure of turning in equipment and the consequences of not turning in equipment.)

6. Article VI. OCJAAF rules. Describe the relationship with your Chapter rules and the Rules and By-laws of OCJAAF.

7. Article VII. Cheer Dress Code. Describe what Cheerleaders must wear during games and what is acceptable clothes for Practice. List what is not allowed. (exa.: no jewelry)

8. Article VIII. Financial responsibility. Describe the financial responsibility of your team staff in handling money and accounting for it. Also the financial responsibility of the participants parents to the Chapter and Team.

9. Article IX. Refunds. Describe your refund policy, the conditions when a refund would be given and when it wouldn’t. Describe the procedure in requesting a refund.

10. Article X. Special events. Describe any special events you would have such as the end of season banquet.

11. Article XI. Fundraising and sponsorships. Describe any Chapter fundraisers and the requirements of parent participation. Describe the requirements of team staff for fundraising and sponsorships. What care they do and what they can not do.

12. Article XII. Cheer Competition. Describe the requirements and responsibilities of Staff, Participants and Parents as relates to Cheer Competition.
The above description of the body of your “Rules and By-laws” are not mandatory, but highly suggested. Also, these are minimal items, you can and should add items to each. The more descriptive and exact you are, the more efficient your organization will be.

*Your Board of Directors*

Finally, you must have a “Board of Directors”. It should consist of a minimum of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Athletic director or Player agent. There are many more positions you can add. Probably a good efficient board would consist of ten to twelve Board Members. In addition, some Chapters include their Head Coaches as board members and some do not. I recommend establishing committees for larger tasks such as Homecoming day or a Chapter entertainment night.

Some suggestions for other Board Members might be a Vice-President for football, a second Vice President for Cheer, a Cheer Coordinator, a Photo ID Coordinator, Team Manager Coordinator, Equipment Manager, a Publicity Director, Registration Director, Scholastic Director, or a Fundraiser Director. These are just some suggestions.
Starting a new Chapter

Overview

Starting a new non-profit organization is a lot of work, but the end result is very rewarding. The first step is to contact the “Secretary of State” office. Here, you begin the procedure to establish your “Articles of Incorporation”. When you receive your certified “Articles of Incorporation”, the next step is to fill out form FTB3500. This is sent to the Franchise Tax Board and, when approved, determines your Organization as non-profit with the State of California. You need to establish an EIN number (Employee Identification Number) with the IRS. Finally, to finish your non-profit status, you need to file form 1023 with the IRS. This is to establish you as a 501(c)(3) organization. This determines your status as non-profit with the IRS. It takes an average of four months to receive a letter from the IRS establishing you as a non-profit organization.

During this period of time, there are other things to do. Early on, you need to begin establishing a board of directors (see Chapter one, the last paragraph for a list of positions). You need to plan a budget and establish a plan of attack. I recommend something similar to a business plan. Also, you need to create your “Rules and By-Laws”. Finally, take action on your plan.

Articles of Incorporation

The first item needed to be a viable non-profit organization is to file “Articles of Incorporation” with the Secretary of State’s office. This is accomplished by contacting the Secretary of States office and asking for the paper work to file the “Articles of Incorporation”. They can be reached at 916-657-5448. Press one on the first menu, three on the next menu, then zero. This should get you to a live person. Tell them you need to have a the paperwork to establish your “Articles of Incorporation”. They will send you a package which will include a sample letter entitled “Articles of Incorporation”. You re-type this letter inserting your information in the proper places. Then send it back to the Secretary of State’s office. Include four copies of the Letter. There is a filing fee, currently $30.00.
In about four months, you will receive your official “Articles of Incorporation”. You will also receive a form from the Franchise Tax Board entitled FTB3500. You need to fill this out and send it back to the Franchise Tax Board. Include a certified copy to your “Articles of Incorporation”. In a few months, you will receive a letter from the Franchise Tax Board declaring your organization as tax exempt with the State of California. It’s important to keep this letter in a permanent file for your Organization.

**EIN number**

Initially, you need to file for an EIN number with the IRS. You do this by filling out a form SS-4. You can obtain this form by internet. Go to the website [www.irs.gov/](http://www.irs.gov/). Click on “More forms and Publications” on the left side of the site. Under “download forms and publication by:”, click on “forms and Instruction number”. Under “list of PDF files”, click on “0206 Form SS-4 Application for Employee Identification Number”, then click on “review selected files”. Again click on “0206 SS-4 etc.”.

Print this form and fill it out by hand as completely as you can. I then suggest you call the IRS at 800-829-4933. They will do the Form SS-4 for you on the Phone. This accomplishes two things. First, it insures everything will be filled out correctly. If you are unsure on something, they will help you. Second, they will get you your EIN number upon completion. By filling out the form SS-4 in advance, you should have all the information ready when you start the interview with the IRS person. When you get a copy of the form SS-4 from the IRS, it needs to be added to your permanent records file.

**501(c)(3)**

You now need to establish you Organization as Tax Exempt with the IRS. You do this by filling out Form 1023. It is fairly lengthy and quite complicated. You may need help with this form. You can also obtain this from the internet. Go to the website [www.irs.gov/](http://www.irs.gov/). On the left hand side, click on “more forms and publications”. Under “download forms and publications by:”, click on “Form and Instruction number”. Under “list of PDF files” scan down to “0606 Form 1023 Application for Recognition of Exemption” and click on it. Click on “review selected files” and click on the selected file.

This is a “fill-in” form and can be saved. Click on the box under Line 1 and enter the information. Use the Tab key to move to the next item or use your cursor. At any time, you can save your information and come back later to work on it. Click on “File” the “save as” and enter the name of the file. Another way would be to print the form 1023, then hand write the information. Once you feel you are done, go back to the internet form and enter the information from your worksheet.

When completed, you mail this form with a copy of your certified “Articles of Incorporation”, a check for $500.00 and any other documents listed in the instructions. If your Organization will have less than $25,000.00 in total revenue per year, then the fee is $150.00. This would not be common with our type of organizations. Your equipment alone will cost you that much and you obviously need enough income to pay for your expenses.

**Finally**
You need to create your “Rules and By-Laws”. Please see Chapter One, Page 3 under “Rules and By-laws” for guidelines on establishing your “Rules and By-Laws”.

You need to establish a “Board of Directors”. Refer to Chapter One, Page 6, “Your Board of Directors” for Guidelines.

Next, it’s extremely important to create a beginning Budget. Start with your Income. For example, Registration, fundraisers or Snack stand. Then work on your expenses. It’s important to be as thorough as possible. Do not have a zero balance. Have more Income than expenses in your budget. This gives you a positive balance and allows you to be prepared for unexpected changes as the year goes on. I suggest a positive four or five thousand dollar balance. Budgets will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter twelve.
The Board meeting

The agenda

The first item is to get prepared for the meeting. Begin by writing an Agenda for the meeting. I suggest beginning by setting up the headings for each subject, then fill in details for each. You should have a set format to your agenda each meeting. Perhaps something like an introduction, addresses from each board position, old business, new business and a conclusion.

An introduction would consist of a list of rules for the meeting, any pertinent information about the meeting and a brief outline of important subjects.

You should have a list of Board Members that will address the board in the meeting.

Next is old business. List any subjects to be discussed. These would be on-going subjects or items carried over from a previous meeting.

Under new business will be a list of new subjects to be discussed tonight or instigated tonight.

The conclusion would consist of any announcements, final comments of the meeting and upcoming events.

The meeting

During the introduction, I suggest briefly stating the rules of conduct for the meeting. In particular, who the Chair person is, that each person must be recognized by the Chair Person to be allowed to address the board and to be as brief, but thorough as possible when addressing the board. This would be a good time to briefly outline pertinent information or subjects for the meeting.

Each Board Member then should have an opportunity to address any issues with the board that relates to their position. This would be a good time to ask any questions or statements you have for their position. This is most efficient if the interaction is limited to the Board Member and the Chairman.

In the old business section, you can have a discussion about the subjects listed in the agenda. Everyone should be given a chance to speak, but again, one at a time and only after being recognized by the Chair Person.

New business is similarly administered like old business. You would discuss the subjects listed in the agenda and finish by opening the meeting for board members to present other new subjects.
In conclusion is a good time to inform the Board of upcoming events. You might want to review the one or two top subjects of the meeting and make any final statements to the board.

These are not mandatory formats for your meeting, just suggestions. They follow close to “Roberts Rules”, a book written about a hundred years ago that dictates rules for administering a meeting. Most meetings follow these rules.
The Election

Eligibility for a Position

The first thing to do in preparing for an election is to establish requirements for eligibility for each Board Position and a description of their duties. Some Chapters have a two year period of service for certain Board Positions and one year of service for others. Other Chapters have a one year of service period for all Board Positions. A suggestion would be to have a two year service period for you Executive Board Members and a one year period for general Board Positions.

In almost all cases, there is a minimum requirement of board experience for the Executive Board positions, sometimes one year and sometimes two years as a board member. In other cases, the only requirement is for the Position of President.

The Election

Usually, the election is an open election. That means any Board Member or Parent of a participant in the program is eligible to vote. In this case I suggest advertising the date of the election in advance, possibly a flyer at the snack stand and forms to sign up for a position. The vote should be by written ballot and counted by the Secretary and verified by the President or someone assigned to verify the vote.

Some Chapters elect their Board positions by a vote of the current board members only. Sometimes only the Executive Board Positions are elected and the General Board Positions are appointed. Again, the vote should be by written ballot and counted by the Secretary and verified by the President or someone assigned to verify the vote.

Important Information about the Election

It’s very important to have all this information in your “Rules and By-Laws” and to follow these directives explicitly.

However you elect you Board of Directors, it’s important to have a thorough plan. I suggest having an election committee, possible three or four members. They should be appointed early in the year. Perhaps they should meet once every other month until the last two months before the election. During this period, you might
want to meet once or twice a month. In the early meetings, they should establish how the election will happen, how they will recruit new members, and how they will advertise the election, if necessary. In the latter meetings, they should be finalizing their plan, and checking the applications for a position for eligibility. You might want to do a background check before the election, at least for new applications.

Though everybody is very busy, especially during the season, it’s very important to be planning for the following year. You should be looking for potential new Board Members and establishing what current members will be applying for positions in the next Board and what position or positions they will be running for.

This is particularly important in regards to the Executive Board Positions, especially the Position of President. If the current President is not going to return, or more than one person is running for President, it is important to have a transitional plan. Some Chapters even plan on who is going to run for President in the following year fairly early in the current year. They actually go through a training period for the potential new President.

As a current President not planning on returning, please fulfill your commitment by insuring the transition to the new board is complete. If you are dissatisfied, complete your obligation in a classy manner. Don’t just bail out leaving your Chapter is a state of disarray. That’s the easy way out. The classy way is to make the transition as effective as possible. If nothing else, you’ll leave knowing you completed your commitment.

Finally, have a plan in effect to transfer all records to the incoming board. Often, I’ve heard of a new board not having access to previous records, even the checking account. This is inexcusable. I’m sure it’s even against the law to retain records of an organization you are no longer affiliated with. Most importantly, by hurting the Chapter you inevitably are hurting the participants in the Chapter most. Once your period of service is completed, turn over any and all records you have to the new board.

You should have in your “Rules and By-Laws” directives about backing up records. If you use a computer for you finances, the data base should be copied and given to the President of an appointed Executive Board Member on a monthly basis. If your record keeping is in long hand, copies should be passed on monthly. Your checking account should have three signers. Usually, at least one of them will be returning. Check with your bank on their policy on changing the signature card at the end of the year. Have a plan in effect to handle this, especially if the primary signer is leaving.
Handling Registration

When to have registration and where

The first registration date and number of subsequent dates vary a lot from Chapter to Chapter. Some Chapters have their first registration as early as December of the Previous year. Others don’t have their first signup until May or June. The most popular seems to be March for the first signup. Subsequent signups are usually once a month after that – on some occasions, twice a month.

Where you have registration is very important. In some cases, that would be where you have your practices. In other cases, you might want a place where there is a lot of road and foot traffic. Having a sign or signs is very helpful. Advertising when and where you have your signups is also very important. I suggest sending flyers to schools in your boundaries. School districts vary as to how you can distribute flyers. When I was a president, I would make bundles of thirty five flyers with rubber bands around them and group them by school in plastic grocery bags (taped up and labeled). I then took them to the school district and they distributed them through their mail room to each school. I did this about two or three weeks before my first signup. This allowed a week for the school to get them to the schools and eventually to the class room, giving the parents about a weeks notice.

Other districts will not distribute them through their mail system, but will allow you to go to each school and deliver them. This means more work for your Chapter, but it’s well worth it. I suppose there are school districts that will not allow you to distribute flyers at all. The important thing is to go to your school district and talk to the proper person asking what their policy is. They generally want to see a copy of your flyer for their approval.

Another way to advertise your signups is to post flyers in businesses in your area. Of course, get permission from the manager first. Grocery stores, post offices, restaurants, fast food places, any place where there is a considerable amount of foot traffic is a good location.

Another way to advertise is to have someone pass out flyers at youth basketball games or youth baseball games. I suggest passing them out to parents in the stands.

If there are some major civic events in your area, that’s a good place to pass out flyers, too. For example, if there are any city parades or festivals. Some Chapters even set up a registration booth at or near baseball games or basketball games or civic events.
Collecting fees

How you handle collecting registration fees is obviously very important. You should have at least one executive board member and always have two people handling the money. If it’s a check, both should verify the amount is correct and if it’s cash, both should count the money. I suggest having each person initial the registration form at the top or bottom after they verify the amount.

Some Chapters will take partial payments with the balance due at a later date. Make sure the parent is made aware of the due date for the balance and the Chapter rules about refunds.

A good procedure is to have a reduced registration for returning participants if paid by a certain date. Some Chapters set December 31st and the others go to a date of February 28th or March 31st. You might consider a discount rate for early signups too (not as much as returning participants). Perhaps you could set a date of March 31st or April 31st as the final date for early signups. These are big items for helping your cash flow early in the year.

Hardship cases

How do you handle those who say they don’t have the money but they want their child to participate? The first thing I suggest is to begin by making a hard core rule “No one can be on the practice field without a fully paid registration!” Make this very clear to your Head Coaches. Let them know that if they want someone to practice who still owes money for registration, they have two options. One is, they can pay the registration fee. Two, they can raise the money through fundraising or sponsorship. Let the parents know they can look for a sponsor for their child. They can knock on some doors. Grocery stores, restaurants, doctors and dentists are a good starting place. Maybe the family can pool their money together to pay the registration. If you have a chapter raffle, you might consider having the parents sell enough additional tickets to cover the registration fee.

Knowing that some people are not willing to go the extra nine yards, you might want to consider a hardship program. The first rule is, the parents must go before your board of directors and ask for a hardship registration. Make it clear that no one can practice without a paid registration unless the board of directors approves it. Because some people are afraid to go before a group, you might want to consider allowing them to have someone represent them. The decision would be a case by case decision. You might want to ask for some kind of documentation for their hardship such as a copy of a state aid check.

But the buck doesn’t stop here. I had what I called my “Ways and Means director” when I was a President. Call it what you may, but one of their jobs was to establish outside sponsors for hardship cases. They would call on businesses looking for companies that are willing to sponsor a child and other sources such as other non-profit organizations. One Chapter uses an organization called “Families Forward”. Perhaps Churches would be a good source. Most importantly, the parents should be required to participate in more volunteer positions such as working the snack stand or setting up or tearing down the field.

Finally, you might consider your Chapter as a sponsor for hardship cases. If you do this, you should have a set predetermined number of hardship cases you will accept each year. Be sure to consider this when making your budget for the year.

To some of you, this will seem rather hard core, but it’s necessary to have a successful Chapter. You may have a parent say to you, you are a non-profit organization therefore you can’t force us to pay registration. The Law states if you pay a minimum of $1.00 for a practice field or playing field you can charge a registration fee. This would be a very rare occasion.
Handling Equipment

Issuing Equipment

Have a form made up including a detailed list of equipment and any kind of identifying numbers that the participant will receive, and a statement stating the parent or parents are responsible for turning in the equipment or paying for lost equipment. Use a three part carbonless form. One copy goes to the Parent, one to the equipment manager and one to the President, Secretary or Treasurer. You should explain the procedure to turn in equipment and the consequences for not turning in the equipment at the designated time. You definitely should include verbage stating legal actions will be taken to collect monies for the equipment if not turned in. I suggest not issuing equipment without the parent being present to sign for it.

Some Chapters require the parents to make a deposit at the time of equipment issuance. Other Chapters require the parent to give them a check to hold until the equipment is turned in. Some even include a deposit in the registration fee with the understanding a refund check will be given back when the equipment is turned in.

I suggest holding your Head Coaches responsible too. As you will see later, all team funds should be kept by the Chapter and issued back as needed (this will be explained in Chapter 11, Handling Finances). Consider holding a certain amount of each team funds until all equipment for that team is turned in. Any equipment not turned in, the cost of such would be deducted from this money before a check is issued back to the team.

To some of you, these probably seem like drastic measures. They are, but they are all designed to protect the Chapter from unnecessary losses. In a long run, this will save money for the parents. The more you have losses, the more you need to raise your registration fees.

Collecting the equipment

How do you collect the equipment when the season is over? A lot of Chapters require players to wear shorts under their equipment and to bring a change of clothes to the play-off games. When the team is no longer in the play-offs, they are required to change after the game and immediately turn in the equipment to the coaches. Others will have a team equipment turn-in day and still others will have a Chapter equipment turn-in day. Instruct the parents to bring their copy of the equipment sign-out sheet. There should be a place on there for the coach or equipment manager to sign stating the equipment was turned in. Make the parents aware this is for their protection. If they don’t bring the sheet, they won’t have a record of turning in the equipment.
Players that quit during the season need to turn-in their equipment when they quit. Head Coaches should be responsible for collecting this equipment. If a player quits coming to practice or notifies the coach he is quitting, the coach should make arrangements to collect the equipment. Either the parent brings the equipment to the practice field or the coach needs to go to the parents house and collect the equipment.

If the coach is responsible for collecting the equipment, have a procedure for them to turn-in the equipment to the Equipment Manager or other Board Member. There should be a place on the check-out sheet to sign off showing the coach turned in the equipment.

Keep in mind, some players will be participating in the All-Conference games. Have a procedure in place to receive their equipment after the All-Conference games are over.

**Consequences for not turning in equipment**

There needs to be consequences for not turning in equipment. If you required a deposit, the deposit in not returned unless the equipment is turned in. If you held a check, after a certain pre-determined date, the check is to be cashed. If you require a certain amount to team funds held for equipment, the amount of the cost for lost equipment is deducted from the team funds.

There are other consequences you can use. Some Chapters do not give out trophies to players who haven’t turned in their equipment. Surprisingly, this is a good enticement. In the following year, participants cannot register without turning in equipment or paying for it.

As a last resort, I would even file a small claims action against the parents. Often, just the filing of this action will instigate parents to turn in their child’s equipment. When parents realize you would go to this extent, it’s a good enticement for them to prevent actions going this far. I would suggest having legal advise when you design your equipment check-out as to the language needed to be presented to a small claims court. If you take this action, the parent needs to reimburse your Chapter for the filing fee.

Finally, if you have Chapter owned Cheer Uniforms, most if not all of these actions are viable.
Picking the Coach

When to pick your Head Coaches

The Head Coaches are generally picked by the Board of Directors. I suggest having a set procedure in deciding who will be your Head Coaches and the procedure should be incorporated into your “Rules and By-Laws”. I recommend selecting your Head Coaches by your December Board meeting. However, most Chapters seem to set March 1 as their goal to have their Head Coaches selected. I personally have my Head Coaches as voting board members. By having them in place in December, they can participate in all decisions for the whole year. Most importantly is to have them in place early in the year because they should be very involved in recruiting for their team.

The Application

You should have an application form to be filled out by each candidate for a head coach position. It should be in depth and ask question such as: “Have you ever had a felony charge or misdemeanor charge against you?” and ask for a list of references. I recommend a one page form, but very in depth. You need to have a reasonable amount of personnel information about each Head Coach. They have a lot of responsibility. They are responsible for each football player, each cheerleader, each Staff Member and each Parent. Asking for a lot of personnel information is not unreasonable. You might want to label the form as “Confidential”.

How to pick the Coach

I suggest establishing a coaches committee. It should consist of your board members that are knowledgeable about football and the Athletic Director. I also recommend an outside person to be on the committee, perhaps a coach from your local High School. They should report their findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors for a final vote on the Head Coach positions. You should have a Chair Person for this committee, probably the Athletic Director. Have a generic check list to fill out for each application. It should have a place to initial for checking references, background check, possibly the Megan’s list check, etc. It should include list of important questions and perhaps a system of rating each coach.

Background check

As of this year, OCJAAF will require all coaches and Board Members to have a records check. I suggest checking each of your coach application on the Megans Law Website. They now have a one time charge of $10.00 to activate the site, but it’s worth it.
Assistant coaches and staff

Usually the Head Coach picks his assistant coaches and staff. However, have them fill out an application and check Megans Law website on each one. The Board of Directors should give final approval on all staff members for each team.

Cheer Coaches

I suggest the same procedure for selecting your Cheer Coaches. They don’t normally have a vote on the Board of Directors, so maybe you can wait until later in the year to select them, but don’t wait until practice starts. I suggest no later than the end of May. Usually, June is when you are fitting Cheerleaders for uniforms and the coaches should be involved in this process.
Recruiting

I briefly discussed some recruiting methods in Chapter five, but I will reiterate them here. Where you have your signups is a good place to have a sign or signs posted (banners work great!). This is especially important if your signup place is where there is a lot of foot or vehicle traffic.

Posting signs in key locations in your city is very helpful too. They should advertise your organization, announce signup times and places and other pertinent information. Grocery stores, restaurants, post offices and a fence on a busy intersection are good locations for signs. Some cities will let you put banners across a busy street. Of course, make sure you have permission to place a sign in any location. You should check with your city hall, too. You want to be sure your signs are in line with their parameters.

Another way to advertise is to hand out flyers at youth basketball games or youth baseball games. Passing them out to parents in the stands seems to work best. If there are any major civic events in your city, that’s a good place to pass out flyers, too. Some Chapters even set up a signup booth at or near youth basketball games or youth baseball games or at civic events such as city parades or festivals. Again, you should have permission to do any of the about procedures.

Networking with youth basketball or baseball programs, churches or other family or youth organizations is very advantageous too. Exchanging information can be very valuable to your recruiting program.

If your school district will allow you to pass out flyers in the school classrooms, that is probably the strongest recruitment tool you’ll have. As I explained in Chapter five, I would wrap flyers with rubber bands in bundles of thirty five and then place them in grocery bags taped and labeled with the school they go to. I would get a list of schools listing the number of students in each school from the school district. This helped me determine how many bundles to make for each school. I then took them to the district mail room and they distributed through their school mail. I’d do this about three weeks before our signup day. This allowed a week or so for the flyers to get to the schools and eventually to the classrooms and sufficient time for them to get home to the parents.

Some school districts will not distribute them through their mail system, but will allow you the deliver them to each school. Though time consuming and a lot of work, it is well worth it to do this. There are some school districts that will not allow any flyers to be distributed in their district.
Recruiting previous participants

Probably the number one recruiting place is in your back yard. About mid season, your Head Coaches and Board Members should start working on recruiting your current participants for the following season. One way to entice them to return is to offer a reduced registration fee if paid by a certain date. Probably the best recruiting tool you have for recruiting current participants is having a successful season. Winning is one thing, but most important is having a well structured organization that concentrates on teaching teamwork, sportsmanship and just plain having fun. These are the keys to a successful Organization. The Athletic Director or President should attend each team banquet or the Chapter banquet. They should give a short recruitment speech at that time. The Head Coach should talk about returning next season, too.

The Head Coach

Your Head Coaches are very instrumental in recruiting new players. Early in the year, your board should instruct them on the importance of their involvement in recruiting and ideas on how to go about recruiting.

Back in the dark ages, when I was a head coach, I frequently attended youth basketball games and youth baseball games. I particularly concentrated on the better players. Usually a good basketball player or baseball player will make a good football player. I'd attempt to introduce myself to them, give them a flyer and express how much I like to see them play for me. If I could, I also introduce myself to their parents, too.

Recruiting Jr. High School students can be a bit more difficult. When I passed out flyers to schools, the middle schools generally didn’t pass them out in the class rooms. Usually, they would put a stack in the P.E. room. I had some mild success in introducing myself to the P. E. instructors and actually was allowed to make a brief presentation to their classes.

Again, the best way to recruit returning participants is the have a well structured Organization. You might want to evaluate what entices returning participants and what reasons people have for not returning. Some Chapters have a very high rate of returning participants and others very low.

Cheer coaches or Cheer Coordinators can recruit cheerleaders too. Softball leagues and Girls basketball leagues might be a good place to look.
The year end Banquet

Basically two types of banquets

There are two types of banquets, one with the whole Chapter and the other with each individual Teams. It's nice to have a Chapter Banquet, but with larger Chapters, it becomes very time consuming to honor each participant properly. My suggestion is to have some kind of a year end function as a chapter and let the teams have individual Banquets. If you do have a Chapter function, be sure to give a lot of notice so teams can schedule their banquets around it.

What's Important

I've seen teams that were 0 and 9 for the season and never very close to winning in any of their games. Yet, with a properly run Banquet, the year was a success to the participants. It’s a time to recognize each person in a positive manor. It should never be a roast. One year, I attended a team banquet once and the Cheer Coach decided to roast each cheerleader and mascot. She said nothing but negative statements about each person. She probably thought it would be fun, but I was very unimpressed. She did a good job as Cheer Coach until then, but, guess what? She wasn’t a cheer coach the following year.

This is a time to pump the kids up and discuss nothing but positive things. I admit, when I was a Head Coach, I have a few kids where I had to get very creative, but those were the ones I worked hardest to say something positive.

I think it’s important for, at least the Chapter President and Player Agent to attend each banquet. The President should address the team, perhaps just before the trophy presentation starts. The key job is, phrase, phrase, phrase. If you think hard enough, there’s always something positive you can say about a person, even the ones you don’t like. Here, I would suggest the President makes a short “Atta boy” speech and always recognize the coaches.

Finally, the most important part, the trophies. Every football player and cheerleader should receive a trophy. It’s OK to give other trophies such as “Play of the Year” or “Most improved Player”.
How to do it

The first thing is to find an appropriate location for the banquet. What’s appropriate depends on the structure of the banquet. Are you going to have any games? Are you going to have a guest speaker? Consider what you are going to do before you determine a location. For example, a banquet room would not be appropriate if you plan on having a flag football game.

I’d plan on two to three hours for the banquet. More than three hours is too long, but it would be pretty hard to have a banquet less than two hours. You should allow at least one hour for trophy presentation. Perhaps you could start by recognizing your staff, then the cheerleaders and finally the football players. If there is a cheer squad for your team, it extremely important they are an equal part of the team, now and throughout the season. Plan what to have to eat and where the money will come from for the food. Usually, this is accomplished by team fundraisers during the season, but some teams have a pot luck for the banquet. Sometimes, teams will ask for a fee from each parent for the banquet.

This is a good time to think about signups for the next season. Possibly, you could have a reduced registration fee if they signup at the banquet.

Again, even if the team didn’t do well in the win/loss column, a good banquet can make the season a success.
The Cheerleader
Handling Finances

The Budget

This is by far, the most important tool you have to control your finances. It should be completed in January, no later than the end of February. The budget needs to be very comprehensive and thorough. It should consist of estimated income and expenses.

The income should consist of all estimated income for the year. Some items here would be registration fees, fundraiser income, sponsorships, and donations. In estimating these figures, you should review the last three year’s P & L statements. You should then adjust them based on your opinion as to whether they will increase or decrease for this year.

Next you need to estimate your expenses. Again refer to the previous P & L statements for the last three years. If you know of new expenses for this year, be sure to include them in the budget. The important thing is to be comprehensive and as exact as you can.

You’ve estimated your income and expenses for the year. You have a negative balance. What do you do? First, is there any other income such as a fundraiser you can do? Do you want to set a goal for donations or sponsorships and include them in your budget? Do you need to raise your registration fees? Next, look at your expenses. Is there any fat you can cut? An expense you can delete or reduce?

What should your balance be at the end of your budget, 0? No, for smaller Chapters it should be three to five thousand dollars to the positive and larger Chapters, seven to nine thousand dollars to the positive. The reason for this is it allows for unexpected expenses or a smaller income than expected. It gives you a cushion and protects you against a financial disaster.

The budget’s done, the board has voted on it, do you file it away until next year’s budget? Actually, it should be addressed at each board meeting throughout the year. As each expense occurs, compare it to the budget to insure it doesn’t exceed the budgeted amount. If it is going to be higher than the budgeted amount the board must approve the additional amount. That’s part of the job, but not all of it. Where will the additional monies come from? You need to find a way to increase the income or decrease another expense, possibly an expense that already occurred was less than budget. The same procedure is accomplished in case an income item is less than the budget. This is a lot of work, but, if you follow this guide, your Chapter will be successful financially.
Bookkeeping

It’s essential that a good bookkeeping system in place. I personally recommend Quickbooks or at the least, Quicken. Once you’ve learned the program, it makes life easy to keep track of your finances and gives you the ability to make just about any kind of report you can think of. At the very least, your system must be able to keep track of accounts receivable (income), accounts payable (expenses) and bank accounts. You also need to be able to make minimal reports from your system.

Reports

Is a bank statement a complete financial report? The answer is no. It will give you an idea of your expenses for the month but not completely. Most checking statements list the check number and amount. Even if your account lists who the check was to, it may not be clear what it was for. It will tell you how much was deposited this month, but what was if for? Was it registration, snack bar, or fundraiser?

You need to have a P & L (Profit and Loss) statement. I recommend year to date in your P & L. First list all income items and insure they describe what it was for. Then list all expenses for the year. Finish by listing the balance at the bottom, be it a plus or a minus number.

You need a budget comparison year to date statement. If you don’t want two separate statements, this could serve as your P & L year to date statement, too. As a minimum, you should have three columns. The first would be actual income and expenses, the second is the budgeted amount and the third is a plus or minus comparison of the first two columns. It should show income first, then expenses and a balance figure at the bottom.

You should have a balance sheet or a copy of the bank statement. A balance sheet shows many things, but the important items are the bank account balances.

The fourth report is an aging report or a summary report of the accounts receivables. This shows who owes the Chapter money and how much they owe. This is especially important if you allow parents to make payments on their registration fee.

These reports should be given to each board member at each board meeting. The report should be discussed in detail and a vote to accept the Treasurers report should be made.

The bank account

You obviously need a checking account for the Chapter. You may want a separate account for team monies. The Chapter has the tax exempt status, not each team. They can not handle any monies obtained through fundraising, only the Chapter. You might have a savings account or a CD. The important item is to have more than one person controlling these accounts. If you have your treasurer as a check signer, have all correspondents go to the President such as bank statements. The President should make a copy and maintain a record before giving the statement to the Treasurer. I recommend having three people on the signature card at the bank and require two signatures on each check. You might use a check request form to be given to the treasurer at the board meeting. This gives you an additional paper trail.
**Handling cash**

Handling cash is a big temptation to confiscate some money for an individual. Loss prevention is a high priority. At functions such as snack stands, it's important to have at least one board member, preferably an executive board member present at all times. I suggest having that person handle the money. Have the parent working the function give the money to the board member. When money is picked up, have two people count it and both sign for it. I suggest a three part receipt book. Give one copy to the person giving the money, one copy to the person receiving the money and a third copy to the President or another designated board member. If a person wants to be dishonest, they can, but this will help protect your money.

**Conclusion**

If you follow this guideline, I can almost guarantee you financial success. The important item is a checks and balance system on anyone who handles funds. Protect your Chapter which, in turn protects individuals handling monies from being accused of taking monies.
Fundraising

There are many types of fundraisers. Probably the most popular is the raffle. I'd suggest setting up a committee for this fundraiser. First determine the prize or prizes. Usually it’s a cash payout. You need to determine how much that'll be. Maybe estimate how much you will take in and insure you don’t give away more than 20% of that amount. The committee should look for prizes donated by corporations. Perhaps a gift certificate from a restaurant or a toy from a toy store or flowers from a flower store. Maybe you might want to think big and look for a car dealer or a used car dealer that might be willing to donate a car for first prize. You might want to add the raffle ticket amount on to your registration amount. You could then give the parent enough tickets to cover the raffle and the whole registration fee. The selling point is: heres how your child can participate for free!

Candy Sales or cookie dough sales are popular. The important thing here is control. These are usually cash transactions and it’s significant to handle the money properly. Keep accurate records of items given out and money turned in.

Jog-a-thons can be good fundraisers. The participants get sponsors to sign up for a donation based on the number of laps each person completes. For example, a donation of one dollar per lap is committed and if the participant completes 20 laps, the person donates twenty dollars.

Corporate sponsors are a great source of revenue. I had a position on my board called “Ways and Means Director”. Their job was to solicit Corporate sponsors. A lot of larger corporations make their decisions on sponsorships in October or November, so September is a good time to go after larger corporations. If you have a yearbook or parent handbook, you might offer to advertise them in your handouts.
Conclusion

As a president, I set my goal at the beginning of the year to finish the year having pleased everybody. I realized that was probably not going to happen, but I figured if I set my goal high enough, well who knows. There’s nothing wrong with setting lofty goals, you just have to realize they are lofty goals.

I found a well ran, well oiled machine was the first step towards this goal. If all the ducks were in place, the I’s dotted, the T’s crossed, the better chance I had.

It’s the President’s job to insure everyone is doing their job. If not, then what’s it going to take to get them to do their job? If all else fails, then it’s time to replace that person. In particular, if the Treasurer is not providing monthly reports, something must be done.

Finally, remember what we are here for – the kids. Everything we do has an ultimate goal of accomplishing a great organization for our football players and cheerleaders.

What it’s not is a place for adults to achieve glory or power for themselves. Let these people help another organization. We need to strive towards being one big family providing only for our kids!

Thanks for being a great volunteer in OCJAAF.