



ST. MICHAEL  
THE ARCHANGEL  

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CATHOLIC PARISH AND SCHOOL

# Athletic Boosters

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Organization Bylaws and Policies

*Effective March 1, 2015*



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## Mission

The mission of the St. Michael Athletic Booster Association (“Booster Association” or “Boosters”) is to serve as an extension of the mission and youth ministry efforts of the parish. The Boosters Association is responsible for organizing, coordinating and sustaining high quality athletics experiences for our young people that build up their faith, character, virtues, self-confidence, communication capabilities and leadership skills, in the context of athletics.

Catholic Youth Athletics furthers the mission of the Catholic Church by providing sports experiences for youth that are firmly rooted in the Catholic faith tradition, based on the goals of Catholic youth ministry, and aligned with the evangelizing mission of the Catholic Church. The Boosters Association is committed to creating a family-friendly environment for our athletic activities.

## Goals

Athletics can be an integral part of the educational process. Athletics can provide experiences that will help the student athlete develop physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. It is our duty to blend values of the Catholic Church and sportsmanship so our student athletes come away with a heightened sense of themselves.

In order to accomplish our mission, the Boosters Association has outlined specific goals consistent with principles of the church.

- **Discipleship:** to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.
- **Participation:** to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.
- **Growth:** to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.
- **Faith, Character and Virtue Development:** In St. Michael athletic activities, winning, performing, and succeeding are always subordinate to the development of faith, character and virtues in participants and their families.
- **Trained and Competent Coaches and Athletics Leaders:** Coaches and athletics leaders serving on behalf of the Boosters Association understand their roles as forms of youth ministry leadership, and have training that leads to competence not only in coaching a given sport, but also in modeling and sharing faith, developing young Catholic disciples, and helping young people and their families stay meaningfully connected to the Catholic Church.
- **Safety and Well-being of Children:** The safety and well-being of young people in St. Michael athletic activities are paramount. The Boosters Bylaws promote the safety and well-being of children.
- **Stewardship and Accountability:** Demonstrate good stewardship of money and other resources, with trustworthy and transparent systems of financial accountability.

## Purpose

The purpose of the St. Michael Athletic Booster Association (“Booster Association” or “Boosters”) is as follows:

- Sponsor promote, coordinate and operate athletic activities for the youth of St. Michael Parish consistent with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Charter on Catholic Youth Athletics (“CCCYA”);
- Serve as an extension of the mission and youth ministry efforts of St. Michael school;
- Regiment a program of athletics for the youth of the parish and the school leagues deemed appropriate by the Booster Association and the CCCYA;
- Raise and disburse for the purpose of operating the athletic programs and projects which it sponsors and to exert fiscal responsibility in the management of those funds; and,
- Inform general membership of the scheduled activities and events of the Boosters Association.

The Booster Association shall attempt to provide as many athletic programs as possible. In addition to the faith-based goals outlined above, emphasis will be placed on teaching and developing the individuals athletically; demonstrating good sportsmanship and respect for their teammates, coaches, and opponents; building leadership, character, virtues, self-confidence, communication capabilities; and leaving a positive impact on the children participating in the programs.



## Governance and Organization

The Boosters Association serves under the direct authority of the Pastor of St. Michael Church. The Boosters Association is organized and comprised of the Executive Officers, Individual Athletic Coordinators, Fundraising Coordinator, Spiritual Liaison, and Parish Liaison. Membership is open to any parent of an eligible student athlete of St. Michael. An eligible Booster member must be at least 18 years of age. There is no fee involved to join the Boosters Association.

Board members shall be appointed to a one-year term (May 1 through April 30). Nominations for Executive Officer, Athletic Coordinators, and Fundraising Coordinator shall be submitted to the Board Secretary by the regular March meeting. The Executive Officers shall be voted in by the members of the Boosters Association at the April meeting. In May the new Executive Officers shall approve the appointments of the Athletic Coordinators and the Fundraising Coordinator. The Spiritual and Parish Liaisons are appointed by the Pastor on an annual basis in May.

## Executive Officers

The Executive Officers constitute the Board and are comprised of the following positions:

- **President** – The duties of the President shall include, but not be limited to:
  - Serve as the executive officer of the Boosters Association and represent it as necessary.
  - Prepare the agenda for and preside over all meetings of the Booster Association
  - Call all regular and special meetings of the Booster Association
  - Shall only vote on matters before the Booster Association when there is a tie
  - Create and appoint members to any standing committees as needed.
- **Vice President** – The duties of the Vice President shall include, but not be limited to:
  - Preside over meetings in the absence of the President. In this circumstance, the Vice President shall retain the right to vote on matters before the Board.
  - Assist the President in appointing members to any standing committees as needed.
  - Review all program/coach evaluations received from the Sport Coordinator and report to the Executive Board.
  - Serve as gym and field coordinator; establish blocks of gym time and field time for practices and games and inform Sport Coordinator of blocks of time.
- **Treasurer** – The duties of the Treasurer shall include, but not be limited to:
  - Collect fees and dues; maintain accurate records of receipts and expenditures; and provide accurate, complete and timely reports as required by the parish, the Archdiocese and the government.
  - Establish an annual budget for the Booster Association (fiscal year shall be May 1 to April 30).
  - Pay all outstanding bills promptly upon receipt.
  - Maintain a checking account in the name of St. Michael Athletic Booster Association. The President's name as well as the Treasurer's shall be on the signature card for each account established by the Association
  - Deposit all Booster Association income into the checking account in a timely manner.
  - Present a financial status report at each regular Booster meeting and prepare a year-end annual report no later than June 1. The year-end report shall be submitted to the Parish's Business Manager for a review of the accounting practices and principles.
- **Secretary** – The duties of the Secretary shall include, but not be limited to:
  - Document and maintain an accurate and permanent record of all proceedings of the Booster Association meetings.
  - Present minutes of the previous month's meeting at each monthly meeting.
  - Prepare and distribute minutes to all Booster Association members prior to the next regular Booster meeting.
  - Other duties as directed by the Executive Officers.
  - Coordinate the publication and/or distribution of Booster information in the church bulletin, school avenues, the PTO and approved social media outlets.



## Athletic Coordinators

Individual Athletic Coordinators are established for any athletic activities in which there is sufficient interest amongst eligible participants. All Athletic Coordinators are appointed by the Executive Officers and a determination is made as to which athletic activity requires a coordinator. Coordinators will be added when a new sport is introduced and approved by the Board. However, if a Coordinator position is established and in the following year no interest is received to support the sport, the Coordinator position shall be dropped from the Board. If there are co-coordinators, the Executive Officers will appoint a Coordinator and assistant. The assistant coordinator shall not have a vote on matters before the Booster Association, unless the appointed Coordinator is absent from a meeting.

Athletic Coordinators have the following primary responsibilities:

- Attend any approved league organizational meetings, or other governing body organizational meetings.
- Manage the sport registration process with eligible participants verifying all participants meet the requirements outlined in section 4.2 in the CCCYA.
- Recruit and select coaches for each team under the guidance of section 6.2.10 of the CCCYA and confirming all coaches meet the requirements outlined in section 6.2.9 of the CCCYA.
- Submit a preliminary budget for their respective sport to the Treasurer by May 1 of each year. Submit a revised budget to the Treasurer after the completion of each sport season.
- Assign practice times for each team.
- Supervise the distribution and collection of uniforms and equipment.
- Distribute and collect program/coach evaluation forms, and forward all evaluations to the Vice President within one month of the completion of each sport season.
- Report repetitive violations of the CCCYA Code of Conduct involving parents, coaches, or players to the Executive Officers of the Association.
- Distribute information concerning league play, cancellations, or changes in scheduled games or practices to all appropriate parties
- Furnish a roster of coaches and his/her student athletes prior to the first game of the season to the Parish Liaison.

## Fundraising Coordinator

The Fundraising Coordinator is primary responsible for the organization of all Booster Association fundraising activities. The coordinator is appointed by the Executive Officers. The Fundraising Coordinator is also responsible for submitting periodic financial reports to the Treasurer on the outcome of fundraising activities.

## Parish and Spiritual Liaison

The Parish and Spiritual Liaison ("Liaison") is appointed by the Pastor and reports directly to him or a specified designee, with a staff member assigned as the representative to the Boosters Association. The Liaison serves as the connection between the Boosters Association and the St. Michael parish and school. The Liaison is required to be an active Catholic in good standing with the Church. The Liaison may be ordained, religious or lay, a paid staff member, or a volunteer. The Liaison is required to attend the monthly meetings and facilitate communication between both organizations.

The Liaison shall also have the following responsibilities:

- Communicating the spirit, mission, goals and principles of the CCCYA to all in the Boosters Association.
- Ensure that the annual coaches' ministry meeting(s) is (are) scheduled. Attend the annual coaches' ministry meeting(s) and monitor attendance at such meetings by the coaches.
- Assist coaches in implementing a spirit of ministry, as reviewed annually at the Coaches' ministry meeting, in practices and games throughout the season.
- Participate in end-of-year evaluations of coaches and discussions regarding their return for future years.



- Provide resources, including prayers and other resources, to assist coaches in their youth athletics ministry.
- Be a listening ear outside of the athletics organization for coaches, parents or athletes.
- In consultation with the Pastor and the Executive Officers, establish any guidelines to be fulfilled by coaches or teams to integrate Catholic/Christian faith and spirituality more fully into the athletics programming.
- Be a member of the Boosters Association Grievance Committee.

An annual review of the Liaison should take place with the Pastor or designee, with input from coaches and the Executive Officers.

## Booster Association Members Reimbursement

Booster Association members will not be paid for their services; however, they are entitled to receive credit on registration fees for athletic activities for any of their children during the tenure of their service. The credit amount will be established at the beginning of the term year (May 1 through April 30) and be voted upon by the Board Members.

## Resignations

Any Boosters Association members may relinquish their position by written resignation. If the resignation involves an Executive Officer, the vacant position can be held on an interim basis by any Board member until a special election is held to fill the position. If the resignation involves an Athletic Coordinator, the Executive Officers shall appoint a person to fill the position.

## Operations

Regular meetings of the Booster Association shall be conducted on a monthly basis. The membership of the Association is required to attend on a regular basis. Members shall be allowed to be absent from a meeting, but no more than three months in a row. All interested parties are welcomed and encouraged to attend the monthly meetings. If an individual has a specific item for the agenda, he/she must contact the President prior to the scheduled meeting to make sure it's included in the meeting discussion.

The Boosters Association is empowered to conduct the business of the organization and make decisions in the best interests of the organization that align with mission of these bylaws. All decisions regarding policy and finances shall be made by majority vote of the members of the Board. A quorum representing at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the Executive Officers is necessary for approval of all issues concerning the Booster Association. No Booster Association business shall be conducted without having a quorum present.

Each member of the Boosters Association shall have one vote on all matters concerning the Booster Association, regardless of the number of positions a member may hold. Votes may be conducted by the Board or the Boosters Association through in-person voting or by electronic communication (i.e., email, text, etc.). In-person voting may be done through a voice vote or secret ballot at the discretion of the President. Electronic voting must be open for a period of 48 hours from the time a voting message is distributed. Electronic voting will be conducted by the Secretary and results will be maintained as a secret ballot.

## Amendments

Amendments to the bylaws shall be introduced to the Board at a regular monthly meeting. The proposed amendment shall be read by the Secretary and discussed by the Board. The proposed amendment will be voted on by the Board and passed by majority at the next regular Booster meeting.

## Grievance Committee

The Archdiocese, St. Michael Parish and School, and the Boosters Association are committed to a safe and healthy environment for children, parents, coaches and spectators at all athletic events that take place in its name. Effective communication between the Boosters Association, leagues, parents and children, inspired by Christian ideals, is an essential element of



Archdiocesan athletics programs. Moreover, the Catholic principle of subsidiarity calls for matters to be handled at the lowest possible level, so that grievances are best managed and settled locally between people of good faith. In order to ensure healthy and effective communications especially in situations of disagreement or conflict, the Boosters Association has included the following process in these bylaws:

**Grievance Process:** Formal grievances must be filed in writing (or alternatively electronic communication) to the Boosters Association President. The President and the other members of the Grievance Committee will gather relevant information related to the matter and perform the necessary due diligence procedures to understand the facts and circumstances of the formal grievance. Members of the Grievance Committee will review the facts and information gathered in a timely manner and will present their decision to the Pastor for approval of the final decision. All final decisions will be communicated in writing to the individual that filed the grievance. All decisions will be made, and will be characterized by a presumption of good faith, Christian charity, personal responsibility, adherence to the principles of these bylaws, and a commitment to both the well-being of children and the common good of the faith community.

Decisions of the Grievance Committee are final; however, an appeal may be made to the Commission if: (a) due process as described in these bylaws has been claimed to have been violated; or (b) other noncompliance with these bylaws and the CCYCA has been credibly alleged.

**Grievance Committee:** The Grievance Committee of the Boosters Association is the group responsible for managing the grievance process. Its purpose is to effectively manage and resolve any problems or conflicts in the athletics program that have reached the point of initiating that process. The Grievance Committee consists of the four permanent Board members of the Boosters Association, including the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary and also includes the Parish and Spiritual Liaison, and Pastor.

## Code of Conduct

All who are involved in Catholic Youth Athletics are expected to conduct themselves as examples of Christian behavior. This is essential and expected as a witness to the mission of the ministry of Catholic Youth Athletics, both on the field of play and away from it. The conduct of coaches and players in practices and in competitions has a powerful impact on the conduct of parents and fans, the love of the sport, and the reputation of the Catholic faith community. This Code of Conduct extends to all events or activities sanctioned or sponsored by the Boosters Association; including but not limited to meetings, games, practices, travel to and from events, attendance at another team's game, camps, players' clinics, officials' clinics, and during other related activities. Any violations of this Code of Conduct ("Code") will be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Boosters Association, and/or league leadership.

There are four sections to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Catholic Youth Athletics Code of Conduct, as follows:

### Spirit of Catholic Youth Athletics

- Treat everyone with respect and love according to the Great Commandments: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments." Matt. 22:37-40
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship, patience, manners and an attitude indicative of the spirit and mission of the Catholic Church.

### Adherence to Laws, Rules and Policies

- Catholic canon law and Archdiocesan laws and policies including, but not limited to, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati *Decree on Child Protection*.
- Federal, state, and local laws and ordinances.



- The mission, goals, principles, and policies of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Charter on Catholic Youth Athletics, and those of the Organizational Documents of participating athletics organizations and leagues.

#### Specific Violations

- Eligibility: Violation of the eligibility policies of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Catholic Youth Athletics Charter, including using an ineligible player.
- Recruiting: No recruiting for athletic purposes or to enhance a team's competitive advantage is permitted.
- Leaving the field of play: No team may leave the field, floor, game or tournament because of dissatisfaction with the officials, or their decisions.
- Losing control: Coaches are expected to control their own conduct and the conduct of their players and report to the league and Commission instances where opponents, officials, parents, or fans have failed to control their own conduct.
- Running up the score: It is not permitted to humiliate an opposing team by playing in such a way so as to intentionally run up the score after the outcome of the game is no longer in question.
- Inappropriate communication and behavior: The use of inappropriate, insulting, disrespectful, bullying and demeaning language or behavior before, during or after meetings, practices or games by players, coaches, officials, parents, fans, site personnel, volunteers, or others involved in any parish athletics program is prohibited. Also prohibited are physical intimidation and the use of profane, vulgar, abusive or sexually-oriented language, in oral, written or electronic forms of communication (such as texting or email), by players, coaches, officials, parents, site personnel, volunteers, or fans.
- Escalating behaviors: Behaviors that incite others to act in ways that are in direct conflict with the spirit of Catholic Youth Athletics are prohibited.
- Vandalism and theft: There will be no vandalism, theft, or destruction of property at any athletics venue.
- Alcohol, tobacco, illegal controlled substances: No alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal controlled substance is permitted at practices, league competitions, or tournaments where children are present (such as "tailgating" where alcohol is present). Athletics organizations are expected to establish and communicate zero tolerance policies regarding alcohol, tobacco, and illegal controlled substances at competitions, tournaments and gatherings where children are present.

#### General Violations

Activities that are contrary to the mission, goals, principles, values, provisions or spirit of Catholic Youth Athletics as described in the CCCYA are prohibited.

### Implementing the Code of Conduct

The Boosters Association is responsible for providing sufficient resources on the details of the code of conduct to the student athlete, the parent or guardian, coaches and any other volunteer associated with a sport. Each coach and parent will be provided a copy of the Code of Conduct and will be required to attest to their understanding of the Code and to abide by its requirements. Additionally, coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players during practices, games, meetings, and tournaments. Parents are responsible for their own behavior, and the behavior of children in their care. Coaches and parents should work closely in establishing and maintaining the Code of Conduct. All coaches and parents should affirm their consideration and requirements of the Code of Conduct on an annual basis at a minimum.

### Penalties and Sanctions for Non-Compliance with the Code of Conduct

Participation on a team and attendance at practices and games are privileges not rights for players, coaches, parents and fans. In the case of a violation of the Code of Conduct, a coach or other official or authorized leader may choose to deliver a warning, or if the violation warrants it the individual may be ejected and suspended, as follows:

- **Ejection:** A coach, parent, or fan that is ejected for any reason must leave the premises (including the field of play, stands, and adjacent areas such as nearby parking lots) and shall be suspended for the next scheduled game. A player who is ejected from the game is not required to leave the premises. However, if a player (or child fan unaccompanied by an adult) is ejected and required to leave the premises, that child should be supervised by at least two adults until the child is directly under the supervision of a parent or guardian, in compliance with the *Decree on Child Protection*.



- **Suspension:** An individual who is suspended shall be prohibited from attending the next game. Suspensions for egregious violations may include multiple games, practices, and other team activities at the discretion of athletics leaders. Suspension shall follow ejection as a consequence of the violation. Any violation of the suspension or a subsequent violation shall trigger an escalating series of responses, as follows:

| Violation | When / Where Occurred                        | Sanction   |
|-----------|--|--|
| First     | Before, during, or after a game or practice. | Ejection for the rest of the game or practice; attendance at next game is prohibited.                  |
| Second    | Before, during, or after a game or practice. | Ejection for the rest of the game or practice; attendance at next two games is prohibited.             |
| Third     | Before, during, or after a game or practice. | Attendance at practices, games and any other team activities is prohibited for the rest of the season. |

Depending upon the severity of the behavior displayed that is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct and stated parish and archdiocesan standards, the athlete or coach may be suspended from all Booster Association activities for the entire school year. Due to the length of the suspension, the decision must be approved by the Pastor.

- **School Related Violations:** Any student athlete that is suspended from St. Michael school for improper conduct as disciplined by school officials may not participate in St. Michael athletic activities during the period of their suspension, including practices and games.



## Sports Information Summary

The St. Michael Athletic Boosters organization finances, organizes and supports all our Parish athletic teams. The Boosters Association fields teams in six different sports across both girls and boys, from 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. All of our sports are played in parish leagues that comply with the CCCYA and our supported by the Archdiocese. Below is a summary of the sports coordinated on behalf of the Parish:

### Soccer

Soccer is offered for boys and girls played in both the spring and fall seasons. Teams are fielded by age groups from Kindergarten through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The teams have been categorized as follows: U8 - typically 1st and 2nd grade, U10 - 3rd and 4th grade, U12 - 5th and 6th grade, U14 - 7th and 8th grade.

Fall soccer starts in late August and runs through October. Registration is open during late spring. Teams are split as evenly as possible if more than one team exists per grade. There are no try-outs or talent evaluations held for our Soccer program. Spring Soccer starts play in March and runs through May with registrations occurring in the fall.

### Basketball

Basketball is offered for boys and girls, with boys playing from November through February and the girls playing from August through October. Basketball is offered for eligible student athletes from 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Registration for girls' basketball is held in late spring while the boys are open at the beginning of the school year in August. Basketball does include a distinction between competitive and recreational teams from 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade (in an "A/B" format). Any participant may participate in a try out to determine if they are placed on a competitive ("A") or recreational ("B") team. These team formats are further detailed in the section titled "Team Selection and Participation".

### Golf

Golf is offered for boys and girls in 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, with both seasons being played in the fall from August through October. Registration opens in late spring.

### Volleyball

Volleyball is offered for both boys and girls in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, with the boys' season occurring in the spring season and girls during the winter season. Registration is open for boys in early winter and the girls once school starts in August. Similar to basketball, volleyball does include a distinction between competitive and recreational teams from 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade (in an "A/B" format). Any participant may participate in a try out to determine if they are placed on a competitive ("A") or recreational ("B") team. These team formats are further detailed in section the titled "Team Selection and Participation".

### Golden Bears Football

The Golden Bears football program is comprised of St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Maximilian, St. John the Evangelist parishes and Mother Theresa Catholic Elementary School. The program plays in the Greater Cincinnati Youth League ("GCYL"), which is comprised of mostly Archdiocese of Cincinnati parishes and school youth football programs.

The Boosters Association has agreed to host the multi-parish and multi-school program. This association will be reviewed every two years and voted upon by the board. The Golden Bear program, its coordinator, its coaches, volunteers, parents and youth participants are required to abide by all Archdiocese policies and rules and are required to abide by all Booster Association policies and rules.

In the event the Golden Bear program, coach, player, parent or volunteer violate an Archdiocese, GCYL, Booster Association rule or policy, the situation and those involved will be handled according to the Booster Association policies and/or the CCCYA.



Each affiliate parish and school with the Golden Bears will be responsible for their students and parishioners' eligibility and adherence to the rules and policies of these bylaws and CCCYA.

The Golden Bears will provide a coordinator(s), to be approved by the Boosters Association, who shall fulfill all the responsibilities of the Sports Coordinator as outlined in these bylaws. The coordinator will be responsible for fulfilling all requirements of the CCCYA, the Boosters Association bylaws and policies, and the GCYL rules and policies. The coordinator will be responsible for all Golden Bear activities in the GCYL, such as league meetings, scheduling, player registration, player eligibility, etc.

The Boosters Association will allow the Golden Bears to utilize the Booster Association website and online registration process. The Golden Bears will be included and named under the St. Michael parish insurance policy.

The Golden Bears finances will be accounted separate from all other Booster Association finances and funds. At no time, will the Booster Association funds be utilized to support and/or subsidize the Golden Bear program.

Football is offered for boys in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Depending upon the number of participants, there will be three teams fielded with in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> / 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> / 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Registration is open from January through July and the season runs from August through October.

### Cheerleading

Golden Bears cheerleading is held in conjunction with the football season. Registration is held in late spring and practices start in late August. Cheerleading is offered for grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Scheduling of Sporting Events

The Boosters Association recognizes one the goals of our athletic program is to serve as an extension of the Catholic Church and make sure our student athletes are receiving the appropriate religious education. As a result, sporting events and related activities will not be allowed to be scheduled during the following days/times:

- **Sundays and Holy Days:** No scheduling of athletics activities (including games, practices, tournaments, and other meetings) at parishes, schools or at Facilities, on or off-site, on Sundays and Holy Days before 1:00 pm (e.g., 1:00 pm kickoff, tipoff, starting whistle, etc.). Also, no scheduling of athletics activities on-site at Catholic parishes that adversely affect the parish's worship (for instance due to noise or parking problems) during Saturday and Sunday afternoon and evening liturgies.
- **Triduum:** No scheduling of athletics activities (including games, practices, tournaments, and other meetings) on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday.
- **Religious education and sacramental preparation:** Athletics activities (including games, practices, tournaments, and other meetings) are not to be scheduled when the children involved normally would be attending religious education, sacramental preparation programs and the like. If conflicts occur, programs of religious education, sacramental preparation and the like take precedence. Coaches are expected to support the faith formation of their players, and in no case are children to be penalized (for example, being required to sit out all or part of a game) by coaches or athletics leaders for missing a practice or game due to religious education, sacramental preparation, or participation in Sacraments.



## Eligibility and Participation

Eligibility for participation on a Boosters Association Youth Athletics team shall comply with the CCCYA *section 4.2.1* defined by the following:

- **Parish registration:** The participant's parent or legal guardian is registered with St. Michael parish. If the parents of a participant are registered at more than one parish, the child is expected to play in only one parish per school year (July through June); OR
- **Catholic elementary school:** The participant attends St. Michael School. If a participant from one parish attends another parish's school, or a non-parish school, the participant may participate either on the team(s) of the school they are attending, or the parish's team(s); OR
- **Unaffiliated participants:** Children (Catholic or non-Catholic) who are not registered with St. Michael parish or attending St. Michael School may participate in Catholic Youth Athletics only by special application and permission by the parish Pastor, the athletics organization(s) and the league(s).

If an eligible athlete is registered at more than one parish and decides to play for a secondary parish, the Boosters Association has added the following participation requirements:

- As long as the parent or guardian maintains the secondary parish membership, the athlete is not permitted to return to St. Michael athletics for the duration of their eligibility as a student.
- If the parent or guardian ends their secondary parish membership, the athlete may return to St. Michael athletics after serving one school-year suspension (July – June).

If the parent or guardian moves their family residence to a different locale, the athlete will be permitted to change their eligibility with either St. Michael or the other parish. For all sports sponsored by St. Michael, the athlete is to participate on that parish's team and is not permitted to play for a different parish without written approval by the parish Pastor, the Boosters Association and the league(s), on a case-by-case basis.

## Religious Education Requirements

All eligible athletes must abide by the following religious education requirements in order to maintain their eligibility to participate in the athletic activity:

- **Catholic participants:** Catholic participants will be enrolled in and regularly attend the St. Michael parish's or St. Michael School's religious education in the current school year (which may be scheduled during the summer or the school year). Three or more unexcused absences from religious education sessions will normally result in suspension from the team. Legitimate excused absences such as due to illness will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at the local level.
- **Non-Catholic participants in Catholic schools or parishes:** In the case of non-Catholic children enrolled in St. Michael School, they are eligible to play provided are attending the religion education classes in the current school year curriculum. If they are not enrolled in school, they are eligible to participate provided they are enrolled in and regularly attend the parish religion education classes (i.e., RCIA).
- **Unaffiliated participants:** As described in *Section 4.2.1(c), p. 16*, unaffiliated participants are not required to attend religious education, but may be welcomed and encouraged to do so.

## Other Participation Information

### Where Participants May Join Teams

Determination of the parish or school where a child is eligible to join a team is based on (i) the home parish where the parents and family are registered; then (ii) the school (in the case of non-parish schools); then if neither the child's home parish nor school offers a given sport, (iii) proximity to the child's residence. In this case, distance considerations are expected to radiate out in all directions from the child's primary residence, as follows:

- The first request for participation is expected to be made to the parish/school that is closest to the individual's residence. If the closest parish/school does not have a team, or doesn't accept the individual, the individual may play for the second closest parish, and so on.
- A parish that cannot provide a complete team in a particular sport, but has children interested in participating, can:
  - Place them on another parish team geographically adjacent to the parish that cannot field a team, or
  - Form a combined team with one or more adjacent parishes, in which case all children from a given parish are expected to play for that team.
  - If no parish or school is able to accept an individual, the league and/or the Commission may assist in placing the individual in an appropriate program.

### Playing Different Age Levels

Athletic participants may only play in their respective grade or age range for one season for any particular sport. If participants are requested to play in a different grade or age range in order to field a team for a sport, they may be entitled to play another season in that sport for the same grade at the approval of the Board of the Boosters Association.

## Safety and Well-Being of Children

The Boosters Association is fully committed to the safety of students and youth participating in our athletic activities. The following will be adhered to by all coaches and volunteers working with our athletes.

**Archdiocese of Cincinnati Decree on Child Protection:** The provisions of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati *Decree on Child Protection* must be followed by all coaches and volunteers of the Boosters Association, meaning that the Archdiocese of Cincinnati *Decree on Child Protection* and all related policies and recommendations are in full effect, *including the following sub-points which have been excerpted verbatim from the Decree* (visit the Archdiocesan website to review the *Decree* in its entirety):

- *Regular and occasional volunteers:* For purposes of the *Decree*, a "regular volunteer" is an adult who is not a cleric or employee (for example, a catechist, scout leader, coach, server coordinator, etc.) who functions in a regular relationship having contact with children. This includes interns, student teachers and others in similar capacities. For example, a regular volunteer is one who has contact with children on any overnight event; on at least a monthly basis; or in a multi-day program (e.g. Vacation Bible School). A regular volunteer has contact with children at least once a month, or participates in any overnight event with children. It does not include the occasional volunteer such as a driver or chaperone whose contact with children is less than one hour per month for activities that are not overnight.
- *VIRTUS®:* All candidates for ordination, clerics, regular volunteers and employees who have contact with children must attend a VIRTUS® Child Awareness Session on the *Decree* before they have contact with children. Responsible supervisors who hire personnel furnished by a third party contractor who have contact with children, or who utilize auxiliary services personnel, are to inform such personnel of the existence of the *Decree*, inform them of the requirements of the *Decree* which pertain to them, and give such personnel the option of attending a VIRTUS® Child Awareness Session on the *Decree*. All adult volunteers are encouraged to attend a VIRTUS® Child Awareness Session, including training on the provisions of the *Decree*, even if they are not regular volunteers as defined in the *Decree*.

- *Fingerprinting and Background Check:* Background checks through fingerprinting or otherwise in a manner approved by the Chancellor in accord with the current policies of the Archdiocese must be performed on adults as follows: candidates for ordination, clerics, regular volunteers (see definition above) and employees may not have contact with children until an acceptable background check through fingerprinting or otherwise in a manner approved by the Chancellor is completed in accord with the current policies of the Archdiocese.
- *Recruiting Volunteers:* Those persons who recruit volunteers to work regularly with children in the parishes, schools, agencies and institutions of the Archdiocese must exercise caution in selecting volunteers. No volunteer has the right to insist on a particular volunteer position. If there is any cause for concern in a particular case, the matter should be brought to the attention of the responsible supervisor for further review.
- *Permission, Health Information and Release of Liability Forms:* A child may participate in an organized program sponsored by St. Michael Parish and the Boosters Association only with the written consent of the child's parent or guardian on a standard *Permission, Release and Medical Power of Attorney* form (available online at the Archdiocese website at [www.catholiccincinnati.org](http://www.catholiccincinnati.org)). Such written consent is expected to provide for emergency care of the child, as warranted by the program or activity.
- *Minimum of Two Adults, Gender Ratio, Etc.:* For any activity sponsored by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, at least two adults, both of whom have successfully completed a VIRTUS® Child Awareness Session and background check through fingerprinting or otherwise in a manner approved by the Chancellor in accord with the current policies of the Archdiocese, and who are not related to each other, must be present for any activity, including but not limited to after school tutoring of any sort (whether the tutor is hired by the parents or not).

Moreover, the number and gender of the adults are to be in proportion to the age, number and gender of the participants, and the duration and difficulty of the activity. Prudence is required in applying this policy to different age groups, length of activity and the risk level of the activity.

- A ratio of 1:10 is recommended;
- Whenever there is a mixed group of boys and girls it is preferred that one adult of each gender is present. The proportion of male / female chaperones should be similar to the proportion of the children;
- Single sex athletics must have at least one adult of the same gender as the players (e.g., in case of injury or illness requiring attention in a rest room).

Whenever possible, one of the adults should be a parent or guardian of a participant. Exceptions for this are only allowed for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, regular day-school or religion classes conducted on the grounds of the parish, school, agency or institution, and if for unanticipated reasons, only one adult can actually be present for an activity which is not overnight.

For purposes of this Policy, "adult" excludes 18 and 19 year-olds not yet graduated from high school and others who have graduated from high school but who wish to attend activities with members of their high school class during the three months following their graduation with others who are less than 18 years of age.

- *Discipline:* No child may be disciplined corporally or corrected with abusive language.
- *Reporting (Ohio Revised Code § 2151.421(A)(1)(a); § 2151.421(G)(1)(a)):* Ohio law **requires** all persons acting in an official or professional capacity to immediately report any actual or suspected act of child abuse to the public children's services agency or to a municipal or county peace officer in the county where the child resides or where the abuse or neglect is occurring. Failure to do so is a misdemeanor and can result in prosecution. The Archdiocese encourages all persons to immediately report any actual or suspected acts of child abuse to Civil Authorities. In either case, a person reporting in good faith in making such a report is immune from both civil and criminal liability.

**Concussions:** Head injuries can happen in any sport. Boosters Association coaches, volunteers, parents/guardians and athletes should comply with state law (see [Ohio HB 143](#) for more details) as regards concussions, including:

- Before practice or play begins for each sport or season, the parent or guardian of each participating child should review and sign the head injury information sheet required by Section 3707.52 of the Ohio Revised Code and available at [www.healthyohiprogram.org/concussion](http://www.healthyohiprogram.org/concussion).
- Before beginning to coach or officiate, coaches and officials in Catholic Youth Athletics should receive training on concussions and the requirements of Ohio law.
- If a player exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury while participating in practice or competition, the player shall be removed from the practice or competition by either of the following: (i) The individual who is serving as the student's coach during that practice or competition; or (ii) an individual who is serving as a referee or official during that practice or competition. Parents are expected to be notified of the injury as soon as possible.
- If a player is removed from practice or competition as per Section 4.3.2(c) above, under Ohio law the coach or referee who removed the player must not allow the player, on the same day the player is removed, to return to that practice or competition or to participate in any other practice or competition for which the coach or referee is responsible. Thereafter, under Ohio law the coach or referee shall not allow the player to return to that practice or competition or to participate in any other practice or competition for which the coach or referee is responsible until both of the following conditions are satisfied: (i) The student's condition is assessed by a physician or other authorized licensed health care provider; and (ii) the player receives written clearance that it is safe to return to practice or competition from a physician or other authorized licensed health care provider.

***Heat, Inclement Weather, Lightning, Thunder and Thunderstorms.***

- ***Lightning, Thunder:*** When thunder is heard or a lightning bolt is seen at a practice or competition, teams will suspend play and take shelter immediately. Once play has been suspended, play or practice will not resume until approximately 30 minutes has passed since the last thunder was heard or lightning flash witnessed.
- ***Heat:*** To prevent heat illness (i.e. heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke), when there are high temperatures, leagues, athletics organizations, coaches and teams should exercise prudence (such as by monitoring athletes closely, limiting practice duration, allowing lighter clothing, providing frequent fluid breaks for rehydration, and/or providing for shade).

## Coaches in Catholic Youth Activities

As outlined in these bylaws, St. Michael athletics serves as an extension of the teachings of the Catholic Church and being responsible overseeing the youth ministry mission of youth athletics. Coaches play a critical role in this process as they have frequent interaction with our athletes and should serve as a role model of the principles reflected in these bylaws.

Coaches have two primary roles: (1) to develop young athletes, and (2) to help form young Christians. The Boosters Association and Athletic Coordinators should exercise great care and attention in the recruitment, selection, preparation, training and support of coaches. Our children – God’s precious children – are in their hands. Coaches of teams under Catholic auspices in the Archdiocese should:

- **Charter compliance:** Abide by and uphold the bylaws of the Boosters Association and the mission, goals, principles, policies and procedures of this Charter, including the Archdiocese of Cincinnati *Decree on Child Protection*, and the Code of Conduct outlined in these bylaws.
- **Sportsmanship:** Represent the team with a high level of sportsmanship, integrity and respect towards team, parents and opponents at all times (sidelines and practices included).



- **Player development:** Support and assist in the spiritual, emotional, social and physical development of all players by providing opportunities for athletic skills training, character development, and spiritual growth.
- **Faith and spirit:** Work with the athletic organization's Spiritual Liaison to ensure an environment conducive to growth in faith, character, and virtues. Reinforce and model, by their own example, with children and their families, the importance of faith and religious practice, including Sunday Mass, Holy Days of Obligation and regular, ongoing religious education.
- **Regular prayer:** Ensure that prayer happens at each practice and game.

Head coaches are also required to do the following:

- Ensure that assistant coaches are clear on the Code of Conduct and how they are expected to enforce it in practice. All coaches, including head coaches, are expected to sign and submit copies of the Code of Conduct affirming their commitment to it. These should be retained and kept on file at St. Michael Parish.
- Meet prior to the beginning of each season with the Parish and Spiritual Liaison to review evaluations from the previous season or year, and to plan for ongoing quality improvement.

## Coach Recruiting and Selection

Coaches for St. Michael athletics must meet the following requirements:

### Age Requirements:

- Head coach (at high school or elementary levels): A head coach should be at least 21 years of age and in compliance with the *Decree on Child Protection*.
- Coach (at high school level): At least 21 years of age and in compliance with the *Decree on Child Protection*.
- Coach (at elementary level): At least 19 years of age, a high school graduate, and in compliance with the *Decree on Child Protection*.

### Criteria:

In recruiting and selecting coaches for teams, the Boosters Association will identify, recruit and select persons based on these criteria:

- *Virtues:* Lives the values and virtues of the Catholic faith whether or not a member of the Catholic Church.
- *Capabilities:* Knowledgeable about coaching children in a particular sport.
- *Rapport:* Exhibits a positive rapport with both children and adults.
- *Maturity:* Exhibits appropriate maturity (e.g., level-headed, able to control temper, take responsibility for mistakes, accept criticism).
- *Commitment:* Able to commit the time necessary for preparation, practices and games.

## Minimum Requirements for Coach Preparation

Coaches are required to perform the following activities to be prepared to work and teach God's children for the Boosters Association:

- Maintain full compliance with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati *Decree on Child Protection*.
- Participate in the Annual Coaches' Athletics Ministry Meeting.
  - **Annual training and updates:** Coaches are expected to attend at least one meeting per year for all coaches in which they receive a presentation of the mission, principles and goals of Catholic Youth Athletics ministry and Code of Conduct, along with any updates on safety, Charter developments, Best Practices, changes in parish policies or practices, and other matters. The Boosters Association will offer this multiple times during a school year to coincide with the different sports seasons.



- **Archdiocesan role:** The Commission will provide resources to assist in this training.
- Annual Evaluations: The Boosters Association requires secure anonymous, written evaluations of coaches from parents whose children are participating in the athletics program after each sport season.
  - **Archdiocesan role:** The Commission will provide evaluation forms that may be used by athletics organizations.
  - **Follow-up:** Athletic coordinators and other Boosters Association members review evaluations and use them in assisting coaches in their development, counseling them on problems, working with them to correct serious deficiencies, using them to determine that a coach needs to be replaced, and when warranted keeping parish or school leaders informed.
  - **Record-keeping:** Evaluations are retained for at least three years to allow for continuity of perspective in working with coaches. The Boosters Association keeps these evaluations in a secure and confidential location for these at the parish.
- Coaches are responsible for adhering to the Code of Conduct and being responsible for their players and their adherence to the Code of Conduct (refer to the section titled “Implementing the Code of Conduct” in these bylaws).
  - Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players during practices, games, meetings, and tournaments.
  - Parents are responsible for their own behavior, and the behavior of children in their care.
  - **Commission role:** The Commission will provide resources to assist athletics organizations, coaches and parents in implementing the Code of Conduct.

## Playing Time

St. Michael athletic teams will abide by the following rules regarding an athlete’s playing time during games during the season (including any tournaments while participating for the parish).

**Instructional, Recreational and Competitive Designations** – These designations are defined to assist coaches (or other athletics leaders) in establishing age-appropriate practices and in clarifying playing time:

- *Instructional (Up to and including Grade 5):* Respecting their young age and the well-being of their families, instructional play will take place in a single league, include no more than two tournaments in addition to the league tournament, and with teams of roughly equal skill in that sport. (See below for playing time norms in instructional athletics).
- *Recreational (Grades 6-8):* For the purposes of these bylaws, it is assumed that all Catholic Youth Athletics are recreational unless otherwise designated as competitive. (See below for playing time norms in recreational athletics.)
- *Competitive (Grades 6-8):* Teams and leagues that opt for the competitive designation will publish that designation so that players, parents and families are clear on playing time expectations and any other differences from recreational athletics. (See below for playing time norms in competitive athletics). The decision for designating a team as competitive in situations where there is only one team for a respective grade will be at the discretion of the sports athletic coordinator.

The Boosters Association outlines the differences in teams that participate in recreational or competitive divisions for grades 6 through 8 in the section “Team Selection and Participation”.

**Expectations Regarding Playing Time** – Whatever the league, the level, or the team, it’s vital that all (i.e., children, parents, coaches, or other athletics leaders) are clear in advance on expectations regarding playing time, and how it will be monitored and maintained through the season. Even in leagues and on teams that are competitive, all children have a right to full team



membership with roughly equivalent privileges and responsibilities, without nepotism or favoritism, including playing time in accord with the following:

- *Instructional athletics (up to and including Grade 5):* Children are expected to have roughly equal playing time in practices, games and tournaments, monitored and maintained through the season by the coach or athletic coordinators.
- *Recreational athletics (Grades 6-8):* Children in recreational athletics should have roughly equal playing time in practices, games and tournaments, monitored and maintained through the season by the coach or athletic coordinators. Coaches may limit playing time as a disciplinary measure (for example, as a consequence for missing practices, consistent tardiness, or other infractions).
- *Competitive athletics (Grades 6-8):* Coaches of these teams have authority to allocate playing time as they deem necessary based on the competitive nature of their team and sport. If participating in a competitive league where playing time standards are established, coaches will abide by league rules. Regardless of league rules, coaches must allow playing time for their players a minimum of roughly one quarter for basketball and one game for volleyball. Competitive teams can only be formed for grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. If 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are combined into a single team (necessitated by numbers of available players) the norms applicable to 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply. At the competitive level of play, such standards do not guarantee that every player in every game will be provided the minimum level of playing time; however, coaches should make their best effort to allow for meaningful playing time for their players. For health and safety reasons, standards may vary by sport and playing time may vary by game. Coaches may limit playing time as a disciplinary measure (for example, as a consequence for missing practices, consistent tardiness, or other infractions).

**Expectations Regarding Practice Hours and Schedule** – Athletic coordinators and coaches should abide by the following guidelines when scheduling practices for their respective sports:

- *Instructional athletics (up to and including Grade 5):* Practices should be held for 60 minutes two times per week with the option of having 90 minute practices for Grade 5.
- *Recreational and Competitive athletics (Grades 6-8):* Practices should be held for no more than 90 minutes two times per week.
- Certain sports may require longer practices due to the nature of the sport and for safety considerations. In the event, practices need to differ than these guidelines; the allotted practice time must be approved by the athletic coordinator and the Booster Association Board Members.
- Consistent with scheduling athletic events, practices may not be scheduled that interfere with religious educational events or specific holy days (refer to “Scheduling of Sporting Events” for additional information).

## Team Selection and Participation

The Boosters Association has designated recreational and competitive teams for the sports of volleyball and basketball beginning in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, otherwise denoted as “A” for competitive and “B” for recreational. In order to have a fair process for all athletes, the Boosters Association has outlined certain processes that must be followed.

If there is an interest in an “A/B” format the registered athletes must go through an evaluation process. The Athletic Coordinator will provide a minimum of one evaluation session to determine which team the student athlete will be placed on. The evaluation session shall be a minimum of 1-hour. All student athletes are encouraged to attend the evaluations. No parent of any child being evaluated may be present in the evaluation space. This includes the Athletic Coordinator, Board Member, or Coach.



For special cases (such as injury, illness, death in the family, or new to the parish after initial evaluations took place, etc.), a separate evaluation will be held. This is not always possible depending on the timing of registration and first practices. In such cases, athletes may be placed on teams at the sole discretion of the Athletic Coordinator and/or Booster Board.

The Athletic Coordinator shall obtain qualified and experienced personnel to rate each student athlete. The evaluators will consist of people who have knowledge of the particular sport fundamentals and skills and the ability to evaluate each and every athlete fairly and without bias. These evaluators will not consist of parents who have children being evaluated. Preferably, the evaluators will not have previous relationship or experience with the athletes (such as a former coach). If possible, the personnel evaluating the student athletes should not be affiliated with St. Michael School. A St. Michael Booster Board member will be in attendance at all evaluations.

The Athletic Coordinator should identify a non-parent coach, if possible, to coach the "A" team in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the CCCYA. If a non-parent coach cannot be recruited for the "A" team, a parent coach will be permitted. The "A" team must already be selected from the above evaluations before a coach may be selected. The Booster Board will make the final coaching selection from those that apply. At no time can a parent or non-parent coach be paid for their services. All coaches will comply with the coaching principles and guidelines referenced in these bylaws and the CCCYA.

Players that are selected for competitive team rosters shall prioritize attendance at practices and games over other sports activities and events. Players absent from practices or games due to other sports or events shall result in disciplinary action by the head coach through consultation of the Athletic Board and Executive Officers of the Boosters Association.

## League and Tournament Participation

**Approved leagues and tournaments:** St. Michael Athletic Teams are expected to participate only in leagues approved by the Pastor or the Commission. In addition, tournament participation is limited to tournaments sponsored by leagues, or parishes or schools within approved leagues.

**Tournament fees:** There shall be no financial or other obligation placed upon parents to participate in more tournaments than those for which the Boosters Association has planned and paid.

**Uniforms:** Team uniforms are for parish or school-sanctioned activities (e.g., games, tournaments, pep rallies, etc.). Teams are not to wear their uniforms outside parish or school-sanctioned activities. Since uniforms are the property of the Boosters Association, athletes and parents are responsible for maintaining these uniforms and may be assessed a fee for any uniform lost or returned in damaged condition that is not considered to be normal wear and tear from the season. The fee amount will be determined by the athletic coordinator with the approval of the Board of the Boosters Association.

## Non Discriminatory Practices

**Discrimination** – Discrimination based on ethnicity, nationality, gender and race is contrary to Catholic moral teaching and is unacceptable in St. Michael Youth Athletics.

This applies in particular to:

- Scheduling (e.g., preferential treatment to boys' over girls' sports);
- Team formation (e.g., selections based on race, ethnicity or nationality); and
- Playing time (e.g., decisions based on race, ethnicity or nationality).