



# GRACEAC Handbook

Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council Handbook



**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

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# **GRACEAC**

Since 1982, the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council (GRACEAC) has partnered with West Michigan member schools/organizations to provide quality athletic programs to students. While fostering Christian virtues, GRACEAC maintains athletic policies for the Diocese of Grand Rapids and its member schools/organizations.

GRACEAC is a member school organization staffed by a Diocesan Commissioner and sponsored by the Grand Rapids Office of Catholic Schools. It is supported by the GRACEAC Executive Committee and the GRACEAC Representative Council. Our policies promote competitive yet compassionate sports, focusing on the development of the student athlete, not the win/loss column. GRACEAC empowers students to develop sportsmanship, responsibility, and commitment to team. The focus of GRACEAC is to:

- Maintain policies and procedures that provide uniformity across its athletic programs.
- Increase educational value of its member schools/organizations.
- Regulate competition that aligns with Christian values.

Member schools/organizations agree to comply with GRACEAC requirements. Failure to do so jeopardizes the member school’s GRACEAC membership.

GRACEAC is subject to all regulations from the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools. In respecting the responsibilities given to the Diocesan Superintendent by the Bishop, he/she has the authority to act on or veto any GRACEAC matters.

GRACEAC has created this handbook to:

- Define GRACEAC operational procedures and policies and delineate roles and responsibilities of all GRACEAC participants.
- Guide member schools/organizations, principals, athletic directors, and coaches in executing their athletic programs.
- Foster Catholic/Christian values of responsibility and commitment to God, team and sportsmanship.

# Code of Ethics

GRACEAC's Code of Ethics emphasizes the importance of sportsmanship and virtuous conduct by:

- Providing a safe environment, mindful of inclusion, diversity and Christian values.
- Stressing the values of fair play.
- Providing a welcoming atmosphere to both/all teams, coaches, fans and officials.
- Respecting the integrity and judgement of sports officials.
- Encouraging leadership, responsibility and good judgement of all participants – on or off the field/court.
- Promoting physical, mental, spiritual, social and emotional well-being of all participants.

The primary function of elementary athletics must be developing student athletes who genuinely display Christian qualities of good sportsmanship and fair play in every aspect of life.

GRACEAC values prayer pre-game, post-game and at practices. For examples of prayers, visit [Prayers](#) for Notre Dame "Play Like a Champion Today" program prayers. Print prayers when printing handbook. Note, when hosting non-Catholic member schools/organizations, avoid reciting Catholic-specific prayers.

# Roles and Responsibilities

This section defines the critical roles/responsibilities of key GRACEAC individuals/entities. Compliance is crucial to an efficient and orderly administration of GRACEAC programs and, as a result, is mandatory.

## Superintendent of Schools

- Oversees GRACEAC Commissioner.
- Has the authority to act on or veto any GRACEAC matter.

## Office of Catholic Schools

- Manages the GRACEAC financial account.
- Administers the Michigan Catholic Conference insurance.
- Sponsors GRACEAC.

## GRACEAC Commissioner

### Administrative

- Develops, communicates and enforces program expectations, rules and policies.
- Manages registration.
- Approves mergers of member schools/organizations.
- Serves as Office of Catholic Schools representative at all GRACEAC meetings
- Ensures requirements on coaching and volunteer credentials - application, background check, Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Virtus training - for Catholic United Coaches.
- Coordinates professional development opportunities for coaches, including CPR, AED, concussion, and Play Like a Champion/or other coaching ministry resources.
- Validates school membership and eligibility policies.
- Oversees income and expenditures.
- Develops GRACEAC's annual budget.
- Collaborates with the GRACEAC Executive Committee and Council.
- Provides feedback and rule changes for member schools/organizations, ADs, and principals.
- Determines game schedules and cancellations for school based team sports.
- Manages event rescheduling.

### Leadership

- Promotes Catholic/Christian values in all league activities.
- Maintains and cultivates relationships with school ADs and principals.
- Hosts GRACEAC Representative Council meetings.
- Schedules and leads pre-season coaches' meetings.
- Evaluates school and league participation.
- Oversees the implementation of sanctions, penalties, and suspensions.
- Administers and evaluates end-of-season parent/coach/AD/school survey.
- Appoints and oversees Individual Sports Coordinators.

### Communication

- Maintains GRACEAC Member Handbook and Directory.
- Communicates updates from MHSAA, NFHS, GRACEAC, and other regulatory bodies.
- Recruits and retains member schools/organizations.
- Maintains and communicates registration, scheduling, and score reporting databases.
- Updates GRACEAC website and social media.
- Maintain Executive Committee and GRACEAC Representative Council meeting minutes.
- Schedules and chairs GRACEAC Rules Committee Representative meetings.



## **Assistant GRACEAC Commissioner**

- Serves as ex officio member at Executive Committee meetings.
- Attends Representative Council meetings as an ex officio member.
- Serves as a member of the Rules Committee.
- Assists with pre-season coaches meetings.
- Attends league meetings as directed by GRACEAC Commissioner.
- Assigns certified officials for school-based team sports.
- Plans and assists in athletic director orientation.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

## **GRACEAC Executive Committee**

The purpose of the GRACEAC Executive Committee is the governance of GRACEAC. It is the role of the Executive Committee to address matters concerning GRACEAC and propose changes to policies, rules, and procedures to the Representative Council for approval. The Executive Committee consists of five or more members. New members are nominated by stakeholders through current GRACEAC Executive Committee members and elected by Executive Committee members for a three-year term. This committee meets five to seven times per year and is chaired by the Executive Committee President. Officers include President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer and are elected by the Executive Committee members to a two-year term.

The GRACEAC Executive Committee President is responsible for creating meeting agendas and executing written communications on behalf of the committee. Also, appoints sub-committees as needed.

The Vice-President performs the duties and functions of the President in his/her absence as well as any duties delegated by the President.

The Secretary is responsible for maintaining meeting minutes of the Executive Committee & Representative Council. The Secretary is the custodian of all minutes/records, as well as the GRACEAC Handbook. Performs all duties assigned by the President of the committee.

The Treasurer reviews all GRACEAC financial records and shares reports at the Executive Committee and Representative Council meetings. In addition, the Treasurer performs all duties as required by the President of the committee.

The Executive Committee will seek representation of membership from the following sources: Athletic Directors, Principals, ex-officio members, Christian schools, and other stakeholders. The goal for membership is balanced representation between West Catholic and Catholic Central partner schools.

Proposed changes and amendments to the GRACEAC Handbook are made by a two-thirds approval of all members present at a regular or special meeting. The Executive Committee shall address any questions and proposed revisions to the GRACEAC Handbook from the Representative Council.

## **GRACEAC Representative Council**

The GRACEAC Representative Council consists of one member from every member school (appointed by the member school/organization) and the GRACEAC Executive Committee and Ex-Officio Members. Membership terms are determined by the individual member school/organization. The role of the GRACEAC Representative Council is to decide GRACEAC operational matters and to disseminate critical season and sport documentation to member schools/organizations. This committee meets four times annually, beginning in August and concluding in June, and chaired by the GRACEAC Commissioner and in absence by the Assistant Commissioner. Only members of the council have voting power.

Changes or amendments to the GRACEAC Handbook presented by the Executive Committee to the Representative Council shall become effective immediately upon ratification of a two-thirds approval of all members present.

## Individual Sport Coordinators

Individual Sport Coordinators are appointed by the GRACEAC Commissioner for Catholic United programs only. ISCs are the primary administrator of their respective program. If a CU program does not have a designated ISC, the GRACEAC Commissioner must fulfill all ISC responsibilities, outlined below.

- Ensure Catholic/Christian values of Catholic United programs.
- Uphold GRACEAC policies/procedures set forth in this handbook.
- Serve at discretion of GRACEAC Commissioner.
- Represent GRACEAC at outside leagues.
- Communicate GRACEAC and outside league information to coaching staff(s) and participants as appropriate.
- Facilitate coach professional development.
- Act as representatives to outside leagues.
- Schedule volunteers as needed.
- Assign hosted event/game duties (e.g., trainers, clock, scoreboard, gate, chains, course layout, etc.).
- Validate team rosters, including student athlete eligibility.
- Participate in securing and vetting coaches and assistant coaches.
- Mentor coaches and provide coach oversight, evaluation, and supervision.
- Provide conflict resolution.
- Enforce eligibility rules and requirements.
- Secure and maintain inventory, gear and uniforms.
- Distribute and collect inventory, gear and uniforms.
- Distribute and collect coaching bags and equipment.
- Organize hosted contests.
- Schedule team photos.
- Secure facilities and oversee field/court prep and maintenance.
- Coordinate fundraising under the direction of the GRACEAC Commissioner.
- Facilitate annual budgeting.
- Oversee and coordinate individual season schedules.
- Arrange for coaching apparel.
- Schedule/arrange team pictures and spirit wear sales.
- Arrange and administer pre-season coach meetings.

## **GRACEAC Rules Committee**

The GRACEAC Rules Committee is responsible to review, research, recommend, coordinate and finalize the rules for all GRACEAC Sports Programs. The committee ensures that all GRACEAC sports teams:

- Reflect the GRACEAC Philosophy
- Promote physical, mental, spiritual, social and emotional well-being off all participants.
- Provide a safe environment, mindful of inclusion, diversity and Christian values.
- Ensure gender equity and equal opportunity on and off the court and field. (Title IX )
- Adhere to current rules of other Rules Committees such as National Federation of High School (NFHS) and Junior High Sports, Little League of America and other nationally recognized rules committees unless otherwise noted.

The GRACEAC Rules Committee will include no less than 6 and no more than 12 members. Members will be volunteers from the GRACEAC organization and will represent as many areas and facets of the GRACEAC organization as possible. The membership will include the GRACEAC Assistant Commissioner (Co-Chair), Athletic Directors, Principals, Coaches, Officials, Individual Sports Coordinators, Representative Council Members, and Parents/Interested Individuals.

## **Member Schools/Organizations**

To maintain a membership in GRACEAC, participating schools are required to appoint an Athletic Director. Member schools/organizations are required to comply with the following, either directly or through their Athletic Director.

- Ensure all coaches and volunteers are Virtus trained
- Oversee the school's athletic programming.
- Manage all financial obligations to GRACEAC.
- Maintain records of required forms (Standard release, Consent to treat, Standards of behavior, Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS)/Concussion compliance form, physical form dated after April 15 for the following school year) for all participants.
- Provide reasonable access to facilities for hosting games.
- Develop and implement a student athlete conduct/academic performance standard and submit it to the GRACEAC Commissioner.
- Pay GRACEAC fees and dues promptly.
- Comply with GRACEAC policies and procedures. Failure to do so jeopardizes the school's GRACEAC membership.
- Ensure representation at Representative Council meetings.

## School Athletic Directors

School Athletic Directors must:

- Consider the health and safety of all athletic participants.
- Be VIRTUS trained and ensure all adult participants are VIRTUS trained.
- Establish, implement, and enforce a uniformed student academic eligibility requirements.
- Include all eligible students wanting to participate.
- Ensure each student athlete who faithfully practices with the team the minimum required time/serves for all league games, invitational tournaments, and city tournaments.
- Propose mergers to the GRACEAC Commissioner, by required deadline.
- Adhere to the GRACEAC policies and procedures.
- Report No-Host/No-Play dates to GRACEAC Commissioner by established deadline.
- Follow GRACEAC guidelines as school host for all games on site.
- Encourage and maintain a Catholic/Christian atmosphere focused on good sportsmanship, healthy competition.
- Maintain their school's team uniforms and be knowledgeable of the National Federal of High School Sports uniform rules or other applicable national governing bodies.
- Be aware of and adhere to GRACEAC policies.
- Inform coaches of student athletes' medical and special circumstances.
- Verify rosters to GRACEAC Commissioner or Individual Sports Coordinator.
- Provide supervision for all events hosted at their school.
- Attend quarterly meetings and act as point of contact for GRACEAC.
- Purchase and maintain an official scorebook for all hosted contests.
- Maintain GRACEAC-approved scorebook and playing time sheets for 90 days.
- Ensure game scores are reported to GRACEAC within 24 hours.
- Register teams for school-based team sports by established deadlines.
- Provide conflict resolution consistent with the Grievances procedures in this Handbook
- Promote registration to school athletic programs, especially new students and age-groups entering eligibility for GRACEAC sports.

## Coaches

GRACEAC coaches must:

- Promote physical, mental, spiritual, social and emotional well-being of all participants.
- Be VIRTUS trained (or the Christian-school equivalent) and possess Standards of Ministerial Behavior form.
- Be MDHHS Concussion Awareness certified.
- Accept any eligible students who wish to participate/GRACEAC maintains a no-cut policy. Recognizing that all students who wish to participate should be encouraged to take part in the athletic programs other than for disciplinary, health or safety reasons.
- Practice no more than two hours per day.
- Play student athletes at least the designated minimum playing time per GRACEAC policy.
- Encourage and maintain an atmosphere focused on sportsmanship and healthy competition.
- Respect communication protocols.
- Adhere to coaches' decorum and uniform compliance set by National Federation of High School Sports or other applicable national governing bodies.
- Inform teams of basic game uniform rules. Rules for game uniforms are set by the National Federation of High School Sports or other applicable national governing bodies.
- Report game scores within 24 hours to the GRACEAC.

In addition to the responsibilities, outlined above, Head and Assistant coaches for GRACEAC Catholic United programs must also:

- Comply with GRACEAC communication protocols.
- Comply with outside league requirements/certifications, including MHSAA where designated.
- Nominate assistant(s), where appropriate, and veto assistants proposed by GRACEAC. GRACEAC CU coaches may not hire or designate assistant coaches without approval of ISC and GRACEAC.
- Report all roster drops to ISC and/or GRACEAC Commissioner

In addition to the responsibilities, outlined above, Head and Assistant coaches for GRACEAC Catholic United programs must not:

- Alter GRACEAC issued equipment without approval of ISC.
- Incur reimbursable-expenses without prior approval from ISC.



## Student Athletes

GRACEAC student athletes must:

- Fulfill an obligation to develop good sportsmanship, team commitment and Catholic/Christian values.
- Be registered with GRACEAC for Catholic United programs.
- Maintain eligibility as set by student athlete's school's conduct/academic performance standards.
- Provide to his/her member school:
  - Standard release
  - Consent to treat
  - MDHSS/Concussion compliance form
  - Physical form
- Be a registered parishioner at the Parish/Church Community and/or registered student at the member school.
- Prioritize GRACEAC team commitments over other extra-curriculars.

Student athletes participating in all GRACEAC programs must adhere to the following:

1. Student-athletes agree to engage in and encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all teammates and coaches at every practice, game, and team event.
2. Student-athletes are expected to stand respectfully and participate in all invocations and the National Anthem
3. Student-athletes understand and agree the foul and inappropriate language, verbal or physical fighting, horseplay or other disruptive activities will NOT be tolerated.
4. Student-athletes understand that at all times they are in attendance at a practice, game, or school event, they are representing their member-school.
5. Student-athletes will not engage in any behaviors considered hazing.
6. Student-athletes understand negative and inappropriate commentary will NOT be tolerated.
7. Student-athletes agree to respect coaching decisions and will discuss any concerns or issues with the coach in private at an appropriate place and time.

## Parents

GRACEAC parents must:

- Register student athlete with GRACEAC by the established deadline.
- Complete a Sports Permission Form for their child.
- Complete their child's annual sports physical (dated after April 15).
- Ensure that their child is in good academic standing.
- Support, promote and maintain integrity and good sportsmanship at all events.
- Promote and encourage their child's attendance at all practices/games.
- Encourage and maintain an atmosphere focused on good sportsmanship, healthy competition and Catholic/Christian values.
- Volunteer your time.
- Provide a solution instead of a complaint.
- Direct concerns regarding host or game personnel to your school's Athletic Director.
- Follow proper communication protocol
  - Contact coach – respect the 24-hour rule.
  - Contact Athletic Director if situation goes unresolved.
  - Contact Principal if situation goes unresolved.
  - Contact GRACEAC Commissioner if situation is unresolved.
- Adhere to GRACEAC policies and procedures.

Catholic United programs:

Registration of athletes in GRACEAC Catholic United programs constitute an agreement that one adult representative of the participant's family, or their appropriate designee, will fulfill volunteer responsibilities assigned by a coach and/or Individual Sport Coordinator (ISC). Volunteer responsibilities vary by sport/program and will be assigned judiciously.

# Eligibility Requirements

Any eligible student who wishes to be an athlete and who faithfully practices must be allowed to participate. Each school is responsible for establishing, implementing and enforcing an eligibility code uniform to all sports and for their organization. This code is unique to each school but must have the qualities of justice and fairness based on conduct and effort. GRACEAC also establishes a minimum standard with which all student athletes must comply.

## GRACEAC Eligibility Requirements

- Sponsoring member school is in good standing.
- Student athlete is enrolled in member school/organization.
- All current and required documentation is maintained at member school/organization.
  - Standard Release.
  - Consent to Treat.
  - MDHSS/Concussion Compliance form.
  - Physical form.
- Student athlete complies with member school's/organization's conduct/academic performance standard.
- Student athlete registers with GRACEAC for Catholic United Sports.
- Student athlete is expected to play at grade level.
- Student athlete meets age requirements:
  - Any student athlete who is 15 before September 1 of that school year is not be eligible to participate in the athletic program.
  - Any student athlete who is 14 before September 1 of that school year is not eligible to play in the 7th grade league.
  - Any student athlete who is 13 before September 1 of that school year is not eligible to play in any 6th grade league.
  - Any student athlete who is 12 before September 1 of that school year is not eligible to play in any 5th grade league.

These student athletes who are over age may only participate at the next higher level.

Important Note: Failure to comply with GRACEAC requirements will jeopardize the school's GRACEAC membership.

# Season Details and Calendar

GRACEAC administrates with two different programs:

- School team sports (volleyball, basketball, baseball, softball, track, soccer)
- Catholic United sports (football, soccer, sideline cheer, competitive cheer, cross country, tennis, wrestling, lacrosse)

## Sports

**Girls** – Volleyball, Sideline Cheer, Competitive Cheer, Girls Basketball, Girls Lacrosse, Softball, and Girls Soccer

**Boys** – Football, Boys Soccer, Boys Basketball, Wrestling, Boys Lacrosse, Baseball

**Co-ed** – Cross Country, Tennis, Track

## Seasons

**Fall** – Cross Country, Football, Sideline Cheer, Soccer (boys), and Volleyball

**Winter 1** – Boys Basketball, Competitive Cheer

**Winter 2** – Girls Basketball, Competitive Cheer, Wrestling

**Spring** – Baseball, Lacrosse (boys and girls), Tennis, Track, Soccer (girls), and Softball

## Seasons/Practices/Games

The GRACEAC Commissioner determines and publishes season calendars for member school leagues and Catholic United sports leagues. Season calendars fall into one of four categories: Fall, Winter 1, Winter 2, and Spring Sports.

GRACEAC exists, in part, to promote Catholic/Christian values. Chief among these values is worship and family enrichment. As a result, it is the policy of GRACEAC's central organization to not schedule contests or practices on Catholic Holy Days of Obligation and Sundays. GRACEAC acknowledges, however, there are a number of factors that affect individual member school/organizations and Catholic United teams that may result or compel sporting activities on Sundays. GRACEAC's policy regarding individual member school/organization and/or Catholic United teams/sports is as follows:

1. Practices and contests on Catholic Holy Days of Obligations are strictly prohibited. Individual member school/organizations must make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling practices or contests on Sundays.
2. If scheduling a Sunday practice is unavoidable, an individual member school/organization, or outside league in the case of Catholic United, may participate on a Sunday under the following circumstances:

(a) A student athlete's participation at the Sunday event is contingent upon their attendance at Mass or place of Worship, which is encouraged to be together, or in sub-groups where denominations differ in the case of teams sports, and in uniform at discretion of Coach.

(b) Student-athlete participation in a Sunday practice or contest cannot be compelled by the coach or member school/organization. A student-athlete's absence from a Sunday practice or contest cannot be used as a reason to prevent a 'start' or reduced playing time. In no way can a student-athlete be reprimanded for failure to appear in a Sunday practice or contest.

(c) Sunday practices must be approved by the member school/organization's Athletic Director and Principal and then reported to the GRACEAC Commissioner. Practices should be scheduled between 1:00 pm – 5:30 pm.

(d) Individual member school/organization and/or Catholic United coaches are entrusted with enforcement of this policy. Failure to comply may result in sanctioning the member school/organization by GRACEAC.

### **Mergers/Splitting teams**

Teams are formed within member schools/organizations first. Schools are required to review all team formation options within their own school (combining grades, having their own team, etc.) before pursuing a merger with another school. The GRACEAC Commissioner approves any necessary mergers or splits. Mergers occur only when a member school does not have enough student athletes to field a team. The GRACEAC Commissioner ensures that any student athlete who wants to be on a sport team has a place to do so. Student athletes are expected to play at their designated grade level. The GRACEAC Commissioner must approve special circumstances with regards to student athletes playing at a different grade level.

Minimum student athletes necessary to form a team:

- Basketball – minimum 7
- Baseball/Softball
  - 5th/6th – minimum 12
  - 7th/8th – minimum 11
- Soccer – minimum 10
- Volleyball – minimum 8
- Lacrosse – minimum 13
- Football
  - 5th/6th – minimum 16
  - 7th/8th – minimum 18

### **Minimum playing times**

GRACEAC determines minimum playing time. If a student athlete is on the bench and in uniform, he/she must meet these minimum playing time requirements:

- Football – eight (8) plays per game for a team with 22 student athletes or less; seven (7) plays for a team of 23 to 28 student athletes; and six (6) plays for a team of 29 or more
- Soccer – 15 minutes per game
- Volleyball – 16 serves per match (regular season); 10 serves per match (postseason)
- Basketball – 6 minutes per game
- Baseball/Softball - two full innings (6 outs) in the field and one at bat
- Lacrosse – 10 minutes per game
- No minimum playing time is determined for competitive cheer, sideline cheer, cross country, wrestling, tennis, and track

### **Emergency closing/Event cancellation**

Member school principals or athletic directors must have a communication plan in place for notifying students, parents and staff of school closings due to weather or other emergencies.

If a school is closed for weather or any other emergency, all sporting events are cancelled. These events may be rescheduled on the same day if weather improves or the emergency has been eliminated. A decision to cancel is made by 3 pm weekdays and 7:30 am Saturdays.

### **Transportation**

Families of students who participate in athletics are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from practices and games.

### **Sports Banquets**

Sports banquets must be limited to a simple event, celebrating good sportsmanship and participation. Any awards or recognition must be identical and given to all participants. We encourage member schools/organizations to follow MHSAA guidelines for spending amounts.

### **Social Media Usage**

Participation in GRACEAC sporting programs implies general consent for photo use on GRACEAC social media. Proper consent is necessary when using images from GRACEAC events on personal social media sites.

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# Event Guidelines

## Host procedures

The host school's athletic director or gym manager is responsible for managing all operations related to games/contests, which includes:

- Making their facilities accessible for GRACEAC contests.
- Restricting gym/field access for teams and fans to 30 minutes before the start of the first game.
- Reserving the playing field/court for student athletes and coaches only.
- Ensuring that spectators remain in their teams' designated section.
- Maintaining the playing field/court (including field lines).
- Providing and supervising game management workers.
- Providing basic gym/field security and safety.
- Supplying basic first-aid items for all teams.
- Completing an incident report for any injuries that occur and reporting the incident to the GRACEAC Commissioner.
- Reporting any violations, protests, or unusual events to the GRACEAC Commissioner.
- Providing a separate, private and enclosed area for game officials.
- Reporting scores to the league.
- Remaining on site until all student athletes or fans leave the site and building is secured.
- Encouraging and maintaining an atmosphere focused on sportsmanship.
- Depositing gate receipts in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Ensuring GRACEAC policies and league rules are upheld (by reporting violations to the GRACEAC Commissioner and/or President).

See pages 23-26 for specific procedures for volleyball and basketball.

## Special circumstances

### Unconscious/injured/concussed student athlete

- Head Coaches must be MDHHS Concussion Awareness Certified.
- Head Coaches determine if a student athlete is unconscious/injured.
- Head Coaches will remove the unconscious/injured/concussed student athlete.
- A student athlete who has been unconscious or determined concussed may NOT return to play in that game.
- A student athlete who was unconscious or determined concussed must provide written authorization from a physician (MD, DO) to his/her Athletic Director before returning to a practice/game.
- An injured/not concussed student athlete may return to the game if his/her coach determines he/she is able.

**Bleeding student athlete**

- Any student athlete who is bleeding or has an open wound or an excessive amount of blood on his/her uniform must leave the game.
- The officials stop the game, allowing the coach time to substitute.
- The affected student athlete must remain out of the game until the bleeding has stopped.
- If the uniform has an excessive amount of blood on it, it must be removed.
- Coaches must carry a spare uniform.

**Bullying/Taunting**

GRACEAC expects everyone at GRACEAC events to conduct themselves with dignity and respect. Bullying, taunting or harassing, including sexual or racial harassment, are violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Any acts of bullying, taunting or harassing will result in:

- Taunting includes any actions or comments that bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, demean or harass based on race, gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, size, economic status, disabilities or personal matters. Examples include but are not limited to: physical intimidation, reference to sexual orientation, “in your face” or “trash talk” confrontation by one student athlete/coach/spectator to another or towards a group.
- Officials are to consider taunting/bullying/harassing a flagrant, unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offender from the contest/day of competition and the next contest/day of competition.
- A warning may be given but is not required for ejection.
- Spectators may be given one warning for taunting. Spectators who persist will be removed from the contest area by the host Athletic Director or his/her representative.
- The host AD must report all taunting incidents within 24 hours to the GRACEAC Commissioner.

**Sanctions Policy for Student Athletes, Coaches, Officials and Spectators**

These are minimum sanctions. Individual schools may choose to increase severity of sanction and/or time limits. Sanctions apply to any infractions that occur during games, practices or other league/team events where student athletes are present. These same sanctions apply to adults, parents, spectators, coaches, student athletes and officials.

Suspension is defined as prohibiting any verbal and/or physical attendance, contact or involvement in any GRACEAC directed or sponsored activity. Individuals suspended may not be in or near the building or field in which a GRACEAC activity is practiced or played. Consequences are cumulative and will be on file indefinitely.



## Consequences for Specific Infractions

Use of alcohol, tobacco (including vaping), marijuana, or other illegal substances:

- 1st Offense: Ejection/removal from event and one game suspension.\*
- 2nd Offense: One year suspension
- 3rd Offense: Lifetime suspension

Any bodily assault/contact:

- 1st Offense: Ejection from the game/match and one year suspension. \*
- 2nd Offense: Lifetime suspension.

Abusive, harassing or threatening language or gestures:

- 1st Offense: Ejection from the game and one game suspension. \*
- 2nd Offense: Ejection from the game and one-year suspension.
- 3rd Offense: Lifetime suspension.

Conduct that interferes with the game:

- 1st Offense: Ejection from the game and one game suspension. \*
- 2nd Offense: Ejection from the game and two game suspension.
- 3rd Offense: One-year suspension.

Allowing or encouraging foul, abusive, harassing or threatening language, gestures or behavior by student athletes:

- 1st Offense: Ejection from the game and two game suspensions. \*
- 2nd Offense: Ejection from the game and one year suspension.
- 3rd Offense: Lifetime suspension.

Violating or failing to adhere to GRACEAC and/or School Athletic Policies (i.e. – student athlete below minimum playing time, exceeding maximum practice time):

- 1st Offense: One game suspension.
- 2nd Offense: Two game suspensions.
- 3rd Offense: One-year suspension.

\*Ejection from game means removal from gym/field/court and out of site from stands and players.

# GRACEAC Volleyball Match Guidelines

## Provisions for host member schools/organizations

- The host school's principal, athletic director and/or game manager oversee all game workers including official score board operator, scorebook recorder, and gate fee taker.
- The host school's Principal, Athletic Director, Game Manager and/or Responsible Designee hire, train, supervise the scorekeeper and gate fee collector.
- The Athletic Director, Game Manager or Responsible Designee may pay all individuals involved in the GRACEAC game.
- Scorer's table must contain a legible score book.
- Scorer's table is to be free of clutter, food, drinks and other non-essential items.
- Workers at the score table may not use their cell phone for personal calls during the game.
- Scorer's table is to be at least 3 feet from sideline or as much as space allows.
- Scorer's table is to be under adult supervision, if grade or high school students are employed.
- The game officials are to be called to the scorer's table as soon as possible to resolve any disputes.
- Coaches will be asked to remain at their bench during resolution of any scorer's table disputes.
- Score book keeper records points scored, coach and bench penalties and time-outs, according to the official scorebook.
- Gate Fee collector collects entrance fees from all adult spectators. Gate fee collector remains at the gate as needed.
- Gate Fee collector hands over the entrance fees ONLY to the Athletic Director and/or Game Manager.
- Gate fees are set by GRACEAC.
- Workers remain at the scorer's table until dismissed by the game officials.
- Coaches are to supply the scorer's table a student athlete roster 5 minutes before their scheduled game time containing student athlete number, first and last name, listed in numeric order.
- Coach's failure to provide roster as described limits or eliminates team's ability to execute an appeal.
- Host gym provides all warm up and game balls. Do not bring team's practice balls to the game.

# GRACEAC Basketball Game Guidelines

## Instructions for Scorer and Timer and Playing Time Keepers for Basketball Games

The hosting gym has three individuals at scorer's table as long as is necessary to adequately complete necessary documentation and game scoring but no less than two. The scorekeeper, game timekeeper and playing timekeeper must remain at the scorer's table at half time and at the end of the game until dismissed by the game officials. The scoreboard operator and score book recorder must sit next to one another.

The individuals at the scorer's table are responsible to record:

1. Points scored (Free throws, two and three point)
2. Fouls (personal and technical), including officials warnings
3. Time outs and quarter and time of time out
4. Possession arrow
5. Playing time Sheet.

**Score book and playing time sheet:** An official score book is used for points, fouls, time outs and possession arrow. The score book must include school/gym game, time and date of game. An official GRACEAC playing time sheet or its approved equivalent is used to record playing time. The completed score book and playing time sheet must be maintained for 60 days. GRACEAC has the right to request score book and playing time sheets.

Coaches must provide a completed playing time sheet to the score table 5 minutes before the scheduled game. The playing time sheet must include each student athlete's first and last name and uniform number in numerical order, lowest number to highest. The playing time sheet must include school/gym game, time and date of game. Failure to provide a playing time sheet is assessed as an administrative technical. The penalty will be two free throws for opposing team and opposing team will inbound ball at half court to begin game. Possession arrow will go to offending team. Head coach will not lose bench privileges.

**Goals:** A field goal is two points, recorded in "First Half" or "Second Half", and recorded in the running score at bottom of score sheet. A field goal scored from outside the three point arc is recorded as three points.

**Free Throws:** Each free throw will be designated by recording a zero, if made the zero is filled in.

**Team Foul Penalty:** When a team commits more than seven fouls in a half, a one and one will be awarded. When a team commits ten fouls in a half, two free throws will be awarded. The scoreboard operator will stop adding team fouls after the 10th foul.

**Fouls:** Score Keeper will record fouls. The scorer must notify the referees if a student athlete's individual foul total reaches five fouls. A running total of team fouls is kept for the 1st half and 2nd half.

**Coach/Warnings:** If a coach or athlete is given a verbal warning, the official will instruct the score book recorder to enter the offender and the quarter and time of the warning.

**Time Outs:** Each team will have four 60-second timeouts. A warning horn will sound with 15 seconds remaining in the timeout.

**Playing Time:** Each athlete must play the minimum playing time, as listed in the GRACEAC policy. The playing time recorder will enter the time the student athletes enter and leave the game until they reach their minimum playing time. The Head coach is responsible to assure all student athletes meet their minimum playing time.

**Scoreboard - Score and Time:** Scoreboard operator will have clock running prior to game to indicate the start of the game. First game begins at the scheduled time. Quarters for 5/6th grades will be 6 minutes. Quarters for 7/8th grade will be 8 minutes. Half times will be 6 minutes in length. At the end of a game, the clock will be set to reflect a countdown to the next game's start time. Games do not start before scheduled game time. Teams that do not have sufficient number of student athletes to start game are given a 10-minute grace period. After that 10 minutes, they forfeit the game.

**Scoring Anomalies:** If a major problem becomes apparent, wait for the first dead ball situation, sound the horn to notify the refs and stop the clock. If the score is tied at the end of the 4th quarter, teams play a 3-minute overtime. This will continue until a winner is decided. All fouls and timeouts are carried over into overtime. Overtime is an extension of the 4th quarter. Each team will receive one additional timeout per overtime.

**Possession Arrow:** A possession arrow is placed on the scorer's table and is visible to game officials. The first possession arrow will point in the direction of the team that did not take possession following the jump ball. The arrow is changed on every held ball. The possession arrow changes AFTER the awarded team inbounds the ball. The possession arrow points in the direction of the awarded team's basket. At halftime, because teams change baskets, the possession arrow will be adjusted accordingly.

### **Other Score Table Responsibilities**

- Score table personnel must be trained in their individual responsibilities.
- Score table must remain clear of clutter (drinks, food, cell phones).
- Table Personnel may not use phone or electronics (exception - half time and end of game).
- The score book and playing time sheet must be made available to officials before and during the game. The game officials must assure proper recording of the score book and playing time sheet.
- If scorer table personnel have a concern, they are to indicate to game official at next dead ball and call officials to table. Game officials will determine correction, if needed.
- The score book is the official recording of the game.

# Grievances

Anyone with a grievance should adhere to the 24-hour rule which delays the discussion and gives everyone a chance to resolve a disagreement rationally rather than emotionally.

## Procedure for filing a grievance

1. Contact Coach (24-hour rule).
2. If the grievance has not been resolved, contact school Athletic Director.
3. If the grievance has still not been resolved, the Athletic Director contacts his/her Principal.
4. If the grievance has still not been resolved, the Principal/Athletic Director contacts the GRACEAC Commissioner.
5. Final course of action – GRACEAC Commissioner contacts Executive Committee for adjudication.

## Procedures for league rule violations/policies

- Any violation of league rules, regulations or policies must be reported to the host school Athletic Director or his/her appointed representative.
- The Athletic Director must communicate the complaint to the GRACEAC Commissioner and all involved principals, athletic directors and coaches.
- Within one week, if those involved are unable to resolve the dispute, this matter will be referred to the GRACEAC Executive Committee for further adjudication.
- The GRACEAC Executive Committee will deliver the decision to the principals and ADs of the involved schools.
- An appeal of the GRACEAC Executive Committee's decision can be made to the Diocesan Superintendent. Any imposed sanctions are deferred until the Superintendent has made a final decision.

GRACEAC partners with member schools/organizations to offer athletic programs. Member schools/organizations agree to comply with GRACEAC requirements. Failure to do so jeopardizes the school's GRACEAC membership.

# Organizational Information

GRACEAC Hotline – (616) 456-9563

GRACEAC Web Site – [www.graceac.com](http://www.graceac.com)

Twitter – @graceacsports

Facebook - @graceacdogr

## Organizational chart

GRACEAC is subject to all regulations from the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools. In respecting the responsibilities given to the Diocesan Superintendent by the Bishop, he/she has the authority to veto any GRACEAC matters.

## Office of Catholic Schools Information

Phone – (616) 243-0491

Email – [admin@grcatholicsschools.org](mailto:admin@grcatholicsschools.org)

Website – [www.catholicsschools4u.org/](http://www.catholicsschools4u.org/)

Facebook – @dogrcatholicsschools

## Executive Committee

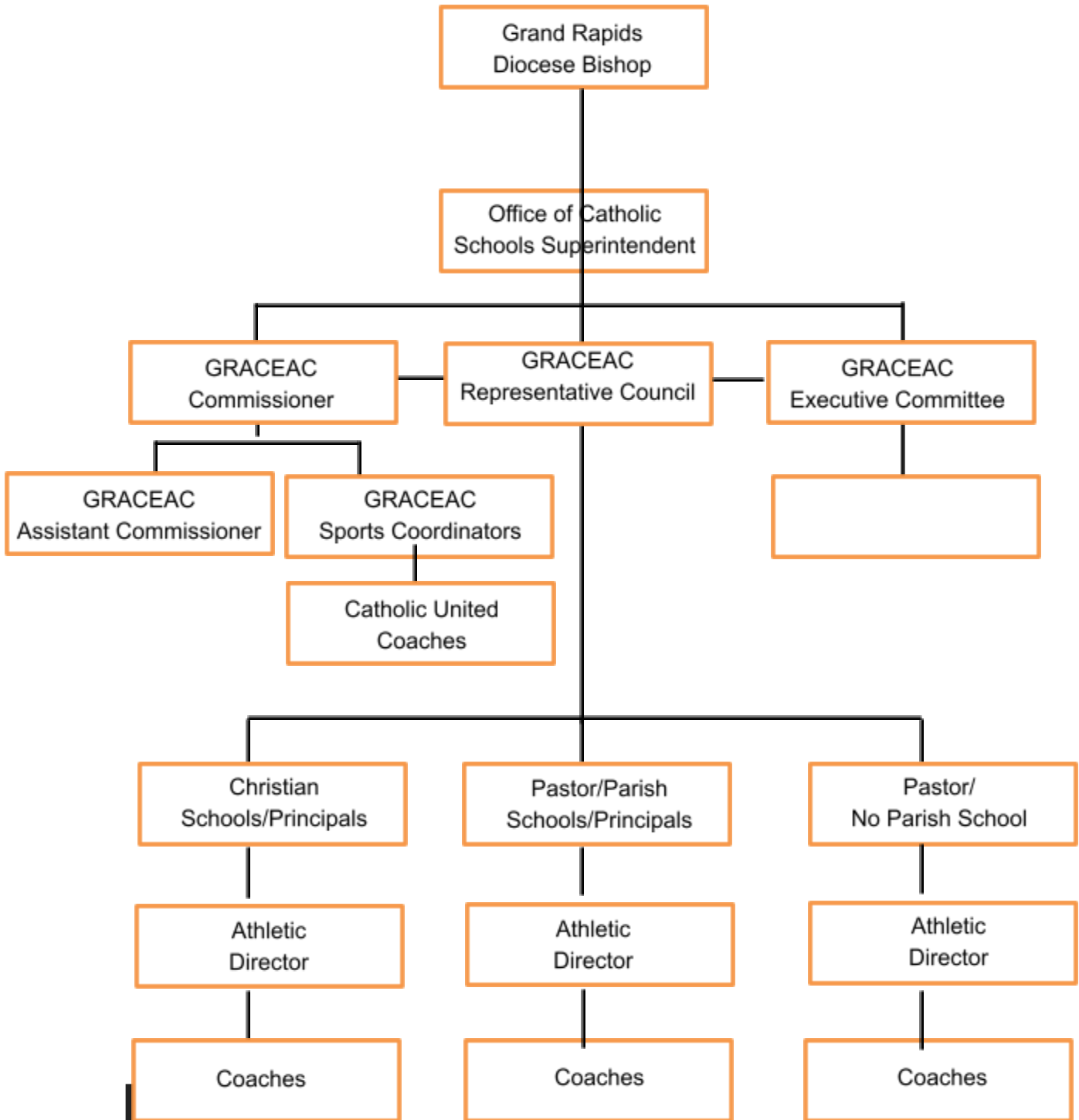
GRACEAC has an Executive Committee of five or more members, appointed by the Superintendent or the GRACEAC President by recommendation of the GRACEAC Commissioner for a three-year term. Committee members may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

The Executive Committee coordinates the activities of GRACEAC. They meet before GRACEAC meetings and for special circumstances. This committee is governed by the rules outlined in the GRACEAC Constitution. Executive Committee members set general meeting agendas and adjudicate GRACEAC violations. All Executive Committee decisions other than grievance rulings may be overturned by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the meeting.

## Assistant GRACEAC Commissioner

The Assistant GRACEAC Commissioner represents the organization at Executive Committee, Representative Council, and Rules Committee and League meetings. In addition, he/she schedules officials for GRACEAC and Catholic United games and assists with pre-season coaches and athletic director trainings.

**GRACEAC Organizational Flow Chart of Responsibilities**





GRACEAC is a self-funded, self-governed organization. Revenue is generated from the following sources:

- Member school fees
  - Individual student athlete fees
  - School/Organization based team fees
  - Representative Council fee
- Special events
- Fundraising

GRACEAC revises its budget annually, consistent with the diocesan fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The GRACEAC Commissioner is responsible for setting the annual budget, including details for each sporting program and the expenditure of organization funds. Any requests for funding must be made through the GRACEAC Commissioner.

Member school fees are set annually by the Commissioner, subject to approval by the Executive Committee and the Representative Council. All member schools/organizations are responsible for paying their dues and fees on time.

Member school/organization fees include:

- Representative Council fee is required of all member schools/organizations to participate in individual-sport and school-based team sports.
- School/Organization based team fee:
  - Determined annually during budgeting.
  - Assessed to member schools/organizations at the beginning of each season.
  - Prorated to each member of a merged school team based on registered student athletes at the time of the merger approval.
- Individual student athlete fees:
  - Determined annually during budgeting.
  - Apply to Catholic United sports and track.
  - Assessed to member schools/organizations at the beginning of each season.
  - Payment is the responsibility of member schools/organizations.
- Other fees:
  - Late registration (school-based teams): 50% regular team fee
  - Late registration (individual/Catholic United): \$35.00
  - Member schools/organizations will be billed for unreturned equipment, gear, and/or uniforms of its student athletes participating in Catholic United programs.
  - Failure to play a scheduled game, once the season's schedule is finalized, will result in a \$100 forfeit fee.