



Athletic Director:

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Welcome to Gesu Bulldogs Athletics! The Gesu School Athletic Department offers a comprehensive, co-educational athletic program committed to high academic and athletic achievement while focusing on the development of student gifts. Rooted in the Jesuit tradition, the athletic department reaffirms traditions of education, personal growth, service to others and global citizenship. Through athletics, our children learn valuable life lessons and the fundamentals of sport which can be enjoyed for a lifetime.

Athletic Director

The Gesu Athletics Program is run by the Athletic Director. Their scope of duties includes but is not limited to: coach selection, managing the athletics calendar, scheduling, sports registration, facilities management, uniform and equipment coordination and in conjunction with the Athletic Advisory Committee (AAC) policy administration.

Athletic Advisory Committee (AAC)

Membership: Membership of the AAC consists of the following: Fr. Lukas Laniauskas (Pastor) and Matt Culkar (Athletic Director). Additional members are made up of former and current coaches and Gesu Parishioners selected by the Pastor.

Meetings: AAC meetings are typically held at the end of each sports season to evaluate the programs and policies that may need further consideration. This is essential to maintain the integrity of the program as well as the safety of each athlete. Meetings can also be called to discuss a particular issue that develops within the CYO league itself or to discuss a matter in dispute.

Responsibilities of the AAC include: advising the Pastor on athletic issues, assessments of each sports program, policy review and implementation and assisting in disputes.



Boosters

The Gesu Booster Club is a volunteer organization dedicated to supporting the Gesu Athletic Program. As a parish service organization, the Boosters operate under the auspices of the Parish Council and abide by the rules of CYO.

The Booster Club obtains through participation fees, fund raising efforts and direct donations the money necessary to run the athletics programs. The Booster Club establishes the participation fees and is authorized by the Gesu Finance Council to run a maximum of two fund raisers per year. The programs must be self-sufficient as no funds are provided by the school, parish or CYO.

Membership: Membership of the Gesu Booster Club consists of parents of participating athletes, coaches and any parishioner interested in the club and its activities.

Meetings: Booster Club meetings are held once per month August – May. Meetings are open to anyone interested. Parents who may have specific questions or comments concerning the Gesu Booster Club must contact the Booster Club President prior to a meeting for agenda consideration.

Fundraising Events: The Booster Club plans two fundraising events per year. There will be a fundraiser in the fall and another during the springtime. Support of these fundraising events is vital in keeping sports participation fees low. Additional, the Booster Club coordinates with PTO to ensure spirit wear is available to the community & supports a viable concession stand. Gesu Booster Club volunteers make all these things possible.

Philosophy

1. Encourage participation in the program.
2. Provide athletes a platform for life-long learning and personal growth.
3. Promote gospel values of sportsmanship, respect and dignity.
4. Develop the whole student athlete.
5. Create the foundation for athletes to contribute positively within their community and society.

The Gesu Athletic Program, its Athletic Director, coaches, Advisory Board and Booster Club support and abide by the rules set forth by CYO. At Gesu we believe in providing the opportunity for competition to every interested child in grades K-12 to the extent that the availability of coaches, practice facilities and financial resources permit. The athletics program sponsored by the Gesu Booster Club is open to all children who are members of the parish and who attend either Gesu School or Gesu PSR regularly. This means that attendance and enrollment are in good standing with the school or meaningful attendance at PSR. Registration in PSR for no apparent reason other than to gain CYO eligibility at Gesu will not be considered a valid basis for participation.

In the event that a neighboring parish does not have enough players to field a team for a given sport, with the sanction of the CYO office, Gesu may incorporate those students on a Gesu team.



Sports Offered at Gesu

Athletic offerings are divided into two major categories based on grade level. CYO sponsored sports are offered to students in grades 3-12. The intramural program provides sports to students in grades K-2. See below programs offered.

CYO Sports

FALL

Cheerleading (Grades 7-8) *Girls
Cross Country (Grades 3-8)
Rookie Tackle FB (Grades 5-6)
Tackle FB (Grades 7-8)
Flag Football (Grades 3-4)
Soccer (Grades 3-8) *Girls
Soccer (Grades 3-6) *Boys
Volleyball (Grades 3-8) *Girls

WINTER

Basketball (Grades 3-12)

SPRING

Baseball (Grades 4-8)*Boys
Softball (Grades 4-8) *Girls
Track and Field (Grades 3-8)
Lacrosse (Grades 3-8)

Intramural Sports

FALL

Cross Country (Grades K-2)
Flag Football (Grades K-2)
Soccer (Grades k-2)

WINTER

Basketball (Grades 1-2)

SPRING

Rugrats Track (Grades K-2)
Lacrosse (Grades k-2)

Requirements for Participation

- Parent/Athlete acknowledgement of athletic policies, code of conduct and handbook
 - Adhere to rules of the School, Athletic Department and CYO
 - Physical Exam: completed and on file in the AD's office
- Note:** A physical exam is required no less that once per calendar year
- Emergency Medical Form completed and on file in the AD's office
 - Registration fees paid by due date



- COVID-19 participation form CYO or IM (if applicable) completed and on file in the AD's office, as necessary

Registration

All sports registrations are done online at the athletics website: www.gesubulldogs.com

Registrations are conducted by season (Fall, Winter, Spring). All athletes wishing to participate must be registered on time. Registration deadlines will be communicated via email from the Athletic Director and posted online at the athletics website.

Costs: Please know that every child who wants to play will be able to do so without regard to the ability to pay. If the participation fees and family fees present an unacceptable burden, please contact:

Matt Culkar 216-932-0620 ext. 114 or via email mculkar@churchofthegesu.org

Practice Times: Once registered families will be notified by a coach or the Athletic Director and informed about practice times.

Game Times: A schedule of games will be communicated from the CYO office. Games are strictly scheduled by CYO, meaning neither the coaches nor Athletic Director has control of game times or locations.

Parent – Coach Communication

Parent – Coach Communication is outlined prior to each athletic season by the Athletic Director and coaches at the pre-season parent meeting. Coaches will inform athletes and parents how to contact them. Outlined below are expectations of communication, appropriate topics and the chain of command.

Expected communication from coaches:

- Program objectives
- Player expectations
- Location and times of practices and games
- Team specific information
- Disciplinary procedures

Expected communication from athletes:

- Schedule conflicts



- Questions, problems, concerns, athletes are to meet with the coach first to attempt to resolve

Expected communication from parents:

- Schedule conflicts
- Questions, problems, concerns, if the athlete and coach are unable to resolve parents are to express concern directly to the coach
- Concerns **appropriate** to discuss with coaches include: ways for your athlete to improve, behavior or disciplinary actions taken.
- Concerns **NOT** appropriate to discuss with coaches include: playing time, strategy, play calling or other student athletes.

Appropriate chain of command

Athlete → Coach

Athlete → Coach → Parent

Athlete → Coach → Athletic Director

Athlete → Coach → Parent → Athletic Director

Appropriate times and modes of communication

Athletes and parents should recognize that confronting an unsuspecting coach before or after a practice or game is not often a good time. It is important to note that these times are often emotional and are not a platform for sound communication. By allowing 24 hours to cool off, athletes, coaches and parents can gather their thoughts which will result in more productive communication. Please note, when meetings are necessary proper procedure calls for setting an appointment. Voicing concerns regarding a coach via internet or social media is never an appropriate form of communication.

Team Selection

It's the Gesu Athletic Department's philosophy to see as many students as possible participate in sports.

Grades 3rd – 5th

In sports where participation levels deem necessary (multiple teams per grade/gender) skills assessments will take place at the beginning of each season. Assessments in grades 3rd - 5th will be conducted by head coaches. In these grades the emphasis is on skill development and participation. Therefore, every effort will be made to split teams evenly based on skill level.



Grades 6th - 8th

In sports where participation levels deem necessary (multiple teams per grade/gender) skills assessments will take place at the beginning of each season. In grades 6th, 7th and 8th an impartial panel of coaches will conduct assessments and make all decisions concerning athlete placement on teams, under the supervision of the Athletic Director.

At the 6th, 7th and 8th grade levels, if there are multiple teams per sport, the most skilled players will be placed on the same team together. At the 8th grade level, the goal of the Gesu Athletic program is to field the most competitive teams for the purpose of competing for the CYO Diocesan City Championship. Other 6th, 7th and 8th grade level teams will be comprised as player interest, player skill levels, CYO divisions and available coaching permit. The Athletic Director will work with the coaches, the Athletic Advisory Committee and CYO to make determinations as to composition of teams and placement of teams in the CYO divisions.

If participation numbers are low on either the 6th, 7th or 8th grade level (or all), the grade levels will be combined to field one or multiple teams. All boys and girls will try out for the Varsity "A" team spots and the remainder will play on the Varsity "B" team.

All athletes wishing to participate on the CYO 6th, 7th and 8th grade JV and Varsity "A" teams must make a 100% commitment to that team. Athlete participation on any other team during that season is highly discouraged. Gesu and its coaches are no different than any other league or coach, attendance at practices and games are mandatory. If an athlete wishes to participate on both a Gesu "A" team and another Gesu or non-Gesu team, the athlete must seek permission from the Athletic Director and coach. In the event permission is granted the athletes must make Gesu Athletics the priority in the event a conflict arises.

Playing Up

If a 6th or 7th grade player possesses unique skills, then the 6th or 7th grader may participate on a team at the higher grade level. This is a rare exception and will only be considered if a request is submitted in writing by the players parents to the Athletic Director and Athletic Advisory Committee (AAC) one month prior to the start of practices. The player's parents must present the reason that their child should be allowed to play at a higher level, after which the Athletic Director and AAC will decide whether the child may try out for the team at the higher grade level. If the child is allowed to try out, final decision on whether he/she may play at the higher level will be made by the coaches and the Athletic Director who may request assistance from the AAC. No 3rd, 4th or 5th grade athlete is permitted to move up.

Playing Time

All rules regarding playing time are governed by CYO guidelines, which Gesu and its coaches will strictly abide by.. In certain circumstances, however, Gesu coaches have the right to sit a player or restrict playing time for any reason listed in the Code of Conduct or this Handbook. Examples include: unexcused absence, poor grades, conduct detrimental to the team, and conflicts or inability to practice due to participation on multiple teams.

Coaching



Volunteer coaches are the heart of the Gesu Athletic Program. Anyone interested in volunteering as a coach should contact the Athletic Director.

Coaching Assignments: With the advisement of the AAC, the Athletic Director is responsible for making all head and assistant coaching assignments.

Priority is given to qualified non-parents, especially on the 6th, 7th and 8th grade level. In addition, qualified female coaches will get priority consideration for the girls' teams.

All coaches are to adhere to the rules set forth by Gesu, CYO and the coaches' code of conduct. They will be responsible for reading and knowing the rules of their sport. Failure to comply with the code of conduct may result in removal of a coach from his or her position.

All coaches must work through the Athletic Director when direct communication with the CYO office is required. As the Pastoral Designee the Athletic Director is ultimately responsible for communication with CYO in regards to fees, policies, selection of host sites, referees, rules and sanctioned events.

Coaching Certifications

All coaches interested in coaching must complete the following:

- CYO Coaches Development: <http://ccdacle.org/cyo/coaches-development-program/cdp-registration>
- Virtus: <https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/index.cfm?>
- NFHS Concussion: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61037/concussion-in-sports>
- Lindsay's Law (cardiac arrest): <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/lindsays-law/lindsays-law>

Additionally, all coaches must be fingerprinted and background checked. All coaching requirements are reimbursable through Gesu Boosters. Receipts can be submitted to the Athletic Director.

Physicals & Emergency Medical Form

CYO requires physical examinations for all students participating in a sport. Physical examinations forms must be turned into the AD's office before a student may try out, practice or participate in an interscholastic competition. Physical examination and the emergency medical forms are combined into one document and are available online at the athletics website: www.gesubulldogs.com (Forms Tab).

COVID-19 form section (if applicable)



All athletes have to have one of the two COVID-19 forms completely filled out and on file with the athletic director. This is before they are able to practice or play on any team. The IM Covid form is for all athletes participating on an intramural team (non CYO). The CYO Covid form is for all athletes participating on a CYO team. These forms will have to be filled out annually until further notice. These forms can be found at gesubulldogs.com under the “forms” tab.

Concussion – Return to Play

If an athlete is referred to a physician or emergency room for a concussion or other serious injury, the athlete must have a written ***return to participate form*** from a physician. If the doctor does not release an athlete to play, a parent or coach cannot overrule that decision.

Risk of Participation

Participation in interscholastic athletics can be an activity involving risks, including injury. The dangers and risks of playing or participating in any sport include, but are not limited to: death, serious neck or spinal cord injuries which may result in complete or partial paralysis or brain damage, injury to bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons, and other aspects of the muscular skeletal system. Gesu School and staff take every precaution to prevent such injuries but risk does exist.

Drug, Alcohol, Tobacco and Weapon Policy

The use and/or possession of non-prescribed drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or a weapon, by a player, coach, official or spectator at any Gesu athletic contest or practice session is prohibited. Gesu practice and game sites are drug, alcohol, tobacco and weapon-free zones. Coaches and/or administrators who discover a player, coach, official or spectator in violation of this rule should notify, as applicable, the athlete’s parents and coach, the site supervisor, the parish pastor and/or parish athletic director.

Pre-Season Meetings

The Gesu Athletic Department holds a preseason meeting before every sports season. It is MANDATORY for at least one parent or guardian to attend.

Quitting a Team

Gesu Athletics strongly discourages student athletes from quitting teams. Any athlete who leaves a team before the end of the season (by choice or removal) is expected to turn in all equipment and uniforms on that day. If an athlete quits, participation fees will not be refunded.

Practice and Pick Up

Student athletes are expected to attend all practices. Practice length may vary based on sport and the time of season. Coaches will communicate times and days of practice. They will also make every effort to end practices on time. Parents



are asked to be considerate of the coach's time and arrange for timely pickup of student athletes. A member of the coaching staff will remain at practices/games until all student athletes have been picked up.

Uniforms

Athletic uniforms are the property of Gesu. They may only be worn in athletic competitions or practice unless authorized by the coach. Athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of school issued equipment and uniforms. Any equipment or uniforms not returned in good condition or that may have been lost or stolen will be subject to financial penalty (the cost of the replacement). Athletes are required to return all equipment and uniforms in-person to their coaches or the athletic department.

Cancellation of Contests

If Gesu is closed due to inclement weather conditions, all practices will be cancelled. In some cases, due to unusual contest requirements, practices and games may continue at the discretion of the Athletic Director and will be communicated by your coach.

Hazing

Hazing in any extracurricular activity is strictly prohibited. Hazing as defined by the Ohio Revised Code 2903.31 is as follows: "As used in this section, 'hazing' means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation onto any student or other organization that causes or creates substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person." Athletes involved in a hazing incident may be removed from the team and lose any awards.

Social Media

Student participation on social media across the Internet should be appropriate and held to high standards of behavior, as each member of the Gesu community is always an ambassador of the school. Therefore, any and all behaviors and communications, regardless if they are made on or off-campus, are directly reflective of the school. Students are prohibited from posting images or messages that cast Gesu in a negative connotation, specifically immoral or illegal acts, whether they occur during or outside of a school function. Students are responsible for all content on accounts registered to their name. Disciplinary consequences will be applied for anything deemed to violate this ordinance for unacceptable behavior seen or transmissions made through email, websites, social networks, instant messaging, blogs, message boards, cell phone messaging, and/or any other electronic communication.