

7th and 8th Grade Catholic Elementary Football League

2003-2004

revised 8-4-03

1. The 7th and 8th grade Catholic Elementary Football League (CEFL) shall consist of Catholic parish school teams that are members of the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council (GRACEAC). Players must be in the 7th or 8th grade. (Exception: see Rule #11.) No CCD students. Players must be enrolled in a GRACEAC Member School.
2. All other GRACEAC handbook rules and regulations apply.
3. All other game rules will be according to the National Federation for High School (NFHS) Rules for Junior Highs.
4. Each participating school must have a roster complete with names, birth dates, and grades; uniform colors; coaches phone, address, and phone numbers; school name and team nickname. This roster must be signed by the school principal and submitted by the athletic director to the league president one week prior to the first game.
5. The coaches will bring players from both teams to the middle of the field and lead the group in prayer.
6. Opposing teams and coaches will meet immediately following the game to shake hands in demonstration of good sportsmanship.

Mergers

7. Any school requesting a merger should do so any time after August 1st by referring to the following guidelines:
 - A. Schools shall not practice together prior to approval of their merger request by the league president. Violations shall be reported to the league president.
 - B. A principal or athletic director may request a merger. Coaches must seek approval through Their school principal or athletic director for a merger. Coaches may not request a merger.

Practice

8. Practices may begin on the Monday during the week of August 15th. (* Rule P) Practice must be non-contact conditioning and drills, helmet and shoes only for the first four practices. Players may have contact practice on or after their fifth practice.
9. All teams are limited, per week, to:

Pre-Season: 10 hours - 5 practices

Season: 8 hours - 4 practices

Practice time shall be limited to two hours per day. Coaches are encouraged to cut time for practice and number of practices when there is an opportunity to do so. (* Rule G) .

League Play Off

10. Seeding for the play-offs:

A. the CEFL shall use the formula patterned after the MHSAA football play-offs. Each team will have a base rating of 80 points and 8 bonus points for each victory, 4 points for a tie. A win earns the victor the base points and the bonus points. A tie earns half the base and bonus points. In a loss, the losing team earns 1 point for each win the victor has less one.

B. The total points earned divided by the number of games played are the team's play-off average. The two teams with the highest averages will play for the championship; number three will play four, etc.

C. Head-to-head results will be used if they are tied with play-off averages. If they did not play or they tied, a coin flip will be used.

Game Eligibility, Weight Limit & Minimum Playing Time

COACHES WHO VIOLATE THESE RULES IN ANY FORM WILL BE *SUSPENDED* FROM COACHING IN THIS LEAGUE FOR ONE (1) YEAR. VIOLATIONS ON THE FIELD WILL BE PENALIZED AS A 15 YARD UNSPORTSMANLIKE PENALTY.

11. All student athletes playing 7th & 8th grade football will be weighed in 20 minutes before the scheduled game time. A player may weigh-in without their helmet, shoulder pads, and/or jersey to meet weight limits.

- Student athletes who weigh 155 lbs. or less may play any position.
- Players who weigh more than 155.10 plus will be allowed to play under the following restrictions:
 - A. Offensive positions are limited to the tackle, guard and center. They may not be in the backfield or end position. No tackle eligible pass plays.
 - B. Defensive positions are limited to tackle or guard only; no nose tackle, linebacker, end or safety position. No gap defense is allowed between the offensive center and guards.
 - C. On defense: These players must begin each play in a three or four point stance. They must penetrate through the line of scrimmage and may not be lined up outside the opposing tackles stance. They must be opposite one another and May not aligned outside the opposing player's body. Coaches, please do not make an attempt to make this tackle position an end position. Keep this player in a position that is honestly played as a tackle.
 - D. On offense: These players must begin each play in a three or four point stance. They must follow the stance of the rest of players from tackle to tackle. [Note: this allows the occasional use (once or twice per game) of a 'quick count' from the intermediate position-between upright and a down position. This rule should not be taken to mean that the proper position for the line is a three or four point stance.]
 - E. They may not be on the field during kick-off or kick returns. If a team does has less than 11 (eleven) 155 lbs. or less players to field a kick or kick off team, they may elect to have the ball placed at the 35 yard line.

F. Only four players per team weighing more than 155.10 lbs. plus may be on the field at the same time.

G. The officiating crew will be given numbers of all players who weigh more than 155.10 lbs.

H. On punts, of the four 155.10+ players on the punt team, one can line up as the punter. That player must punt the ball. Any time an attempt is made by this player to advance the ball by running or passing, the play will be whistled dead immediately and the defensive team will take possession of the ball at the original line of scrimmage. Coaches are encouraged to substitute these players on punt or punt returns.

I. Players designated for interior line play only may be requested to mark their helmets to assist game officials with proper identification.

J. Anytime a player over 155.10 lbs. has possession, other than punting, the ball is dead. Game officials will determine which team has possession under normal game rules.

13. To insure total participation, it shall be mandatory that each student athlete participate a minimum amount of time per game: eight plays per game for a team with 23 players or less; seven plays for a team of 24 to 29 players; and, six for a team of 30 or more.

Game Rules

14. The game will consist of four quarters of eight (8) minutes each.

15. Halftime will be eight minutes. Five minutes of coach's choice and three minutes of warm-up.

16. The game stopwatch will be supplied by the game officials, unless a scoreboard is determined to be the official time.

17. Games are played with an eight minute clock with high school stoppage rules. Each team is allowed three time-outs per half, and four and two minute warnings will be given at the end of the half and the end of the fourth quarter by the officials. (Where the time clock is not visible.)

18. Mercy Rule - When a team is ahead by 24 or more points in the second half, the mercy rule will take effect. The clock will run continuously, stopping only for time-outs, injury timeouts, first downs and scores. Please keep in mind that the time clock will begin at the official's instruction and will begin at times earlier than normal clock operations.

19. The game ball must be an intermediate size football. Each team may use their own ball during offensive possessions.

20. A kicking tee must be used for all kick-off.

21. A player or coach ejected from a game by an official will miss that game and the next scheduled game.

22. The ball, after a touchdown will be placed on the three yard line. A successful running play will be worth one point; a successful passing play will be worth two points.

23. If a regular season or play-off game ends in a tie, the following tie breaker rules apply:

Each team will have up to two series of four plays from the ten yard line to score a touch down and extra point(s) or field

goal (where goal posts are present). At the end of each set, if one team leads, they are the winner. If the game remains tied at the end of these two series, the game will remain a tie. Each team will be allowed one extra time-out during this tie-breaker series. In the Championship game only, another tie-breaker series shall be used until a winner is determined.

24. Coaches, please do not attempt to preserve a "shutout" by placing your first team defense back into the game late in the fourth quarter. When a substantial lead is obtained late in the game, please allow the less played student athletes or underclassmen the opportunity to finish out the game.

Player Safety and Injuries

25. An unconscious or apparently unconscious player, as determined by the game officials, will be removed from the game by the official. The player may not return to *any game or practice*, without written authorization from a physician. (M.D. or D.O.) This authorization must be given to:

A. the game official prior to the player's return, if for the same game.

B. the Athletic Director before practicing again.

26. A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has an excessive amount of blood on his uniform must leave the game. The game official (referee) will stop the game and allow the coach one full minute to bring in a substitution. The affected player must sit out one full play before returning to the game. Excessive bleeding or an excessive amount of blood is any amount on the uniform or skin that can be transferred to a player, opponent, or official. The player may not return until the bleeding has been stopped, and if necessary, the affected area covered. If the player has an excessive amount of blood on their uniform, the uniform must be removed. Coaches are encouraged to have extra pants, jerseys, socks, etc. for the player to change into. Inexpensive numbered t-shirts can be used as long as they are of a similar color as the game jersey.

25. Spearing is an unsportsmanlike penalty, which carries a 15 yard penalty. Spearing is the attempt or act of tackling or blocking the opponent by placing the helmet into the opponent's body. Spearing causes head and neck injuries. Coaches are encouraged to teach proper tackling and blocking.

Inclement Weather

26. Coaches or athletic directors should call the GRACEAC hotline (456-9563) for information regarding game status. If a game is cancelled due to inclement weather, the contest shall be played at a time and field mutually agreed on by the league president and coaches.

27. Lightning, tornadoes, hail, or gale winds will result in the game being stopped immediately. There is no discussion. Lightning is lightning. Players, coaches, fans and officials must seek shelter in a car or building immediately. If lightning or thunder is present for more than 15 minutes will result in a cancelled game. If a game is called by the referee due to inclement playing conditions, the game shall be considered completed if half the game has been completed, except in the case of a tournament game, which shall be played in full at a later date. Games stopped prior to an entire half being played shall be played over in its entirety at a time and field mutually agreed on by the league president and coaches.

