



## YCCHAL Participation Handbook





## YCCHAL PARTICIPATION

The YCCHAL was founded in 1991 as a resource for homeschool students in Yellowstone County to provide varsity level high school team sports. Over the years, YCCHAL has expanded to offer elementary and junior high team sports. The goal of this league is to provide a Christian approach to athletics by demonstrating and encouraging Christ-like character both on and off the field of competition while promoting sportsmanship, fellowship, physical fitness, and healthy competition.

### Statement of Faith:

We believe in and unqualifiedly affirm: 1) The inspiration of the Bible, equally in all parts and without error in its origin; 2) The One God, eternal existent Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who created man by direct immediate act; 3) The fall of man, the need of regeneration by the operation of the Holy Spirit on the basis of grace through faith and the resurrection of all to life or damnation; 4) The pre-existence, incarnation, virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, substitutional death, bodily resurrection, ascension to heaven, and second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and 5) The spiritual relationship of all believers by the Lord Jesus Christ, Living a life of righteous works, separated from the world, witnessing of His saving grace through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. YCCHAL, in observance of these articles of faith, will encourage open prayer at practice and games. Scripture memory and other scriptural character building practices will be encouraged in all aspects of our program.

### Rules of Conduct and Participation:

- Athletes must be actively participating in an ongoing home education program under the direction of their parent or guardian and must not be enrolled as a full time student within any public schools. Any exceptions to this policy will be outlined in the Constitution and By-laws. Athletes are required to show respect and submit to the authority of their coaches at practices and games.
- Athletes are expected to show respect to teammates and only give them positive encouragement. Ridiculing, taunting, demeaning, or reproofing of team members will not be acceptable.
- Athletes are expected to accept their coach's tactical decisions, such as player positioning and playing time.
- Inappropriate actions and/or attitudes by an athlete toward teammates or coaches, may result in his/her suspension, or may result in an athlete being benched during a game. Athletes must agree to follow the instructions and directions of coaches, the athletic director and the executive council, understanding that they have the best interest of the players, coaches and league in mind.
- Officials are in a position of authority and shall be shown respect.
- Athletes should respect opponents, and play in such a manner that does not purposely attempt to hurt or injure another player.
- Athletes should display good sportsmanship, helping a player back to their feet and shaking the hands of opponents when given the opportunity.
- Athletes agree to train and play to the best of their ability.
- Athletes should maintain a positive attitude.
- Athletes are responsible for knowing about team activities, practices and games.
- Athletes should arrive on time and be prepared for all practices, games, tournaments, and activities during the season.
- The amount of time an athlete plays is at the discretion of the coach.
- Athletes should notify coaches of any absences prior to practices or games.
- Athletes should use encouraging language and refrain from foul, abusive or offensive language.
- YCCHAL practices a no-tolerance policy regarding alcohol and illegal drug use among student athletes. Student athletes found to be using any such controlled substance will be subject to eviction from their team.
- Athletes will not allow their enthusiasm for their sport to override their responsibilities to their family, education or church.
- No Jewelry of any kind may be worn by any athlete due to the safety issues involved. Glasses are to be worn securely.
- Dress during games and tournaments should reflect well on the League & not have inappropriate advertising or slogans.
- Athletes are asked to wear only non-scaff shoes on the gym floors.



## **Attitudes of Players:**

Our attitudes take precedence over every other aspect concerning the sport. As followers of Christ, we bear His Name and so everything we say and do should reflect Him. If a player is displaying a disrespectful attitude toward a coach, he/she will be benched. Disrespect must be stopped immediately. If the player continues to be disrespectful, involvement of the athletic director or the Board may be necessary. Playing time should be determined on ability, team unity and attitude. We will not allow a player with a negative, angry, disrespectful, or self-centered attitude to continue to play. Players are expected to rise to the standard. The standard is not lowered for the player. The Word of God is the standard.

## **Parental Code of Conduct:**

- I will treat my child's coaches with respect at all times, recognizing that they are volunteers and not professional coaches. I will do my best to support and encourage them in their endeavors.
- I will not speak disparagingly or disrespectfully about my child's coaches, teammates, or other parents in the League, either in front of my child or to other parents or players.
- I agree to support the coach and the team. I agree to accept the coach's decisions regarding my child's playing time and position and agree to not interfere, at any time, with the duties and responsibilities of the coach(es). If I have a concern regarding my child's playing time, I agree to follow the appropriate steps to communicate and resolve any differences of opinion by following the steps laid out in the conflict resolution agreement.
- I will support my child's coach in maintaining discipline and good behavior on the team. I will also assure that my child fulfills all the requirements for attendance, care of equipment, Bible verse assignment, and other work assignment by the coach.
- I will remember that this league has both an educational and competitive purpose; therefore, my child is not guaranteed equal playing time during competitions.
- I will endeavor to keep my language and conduct above reproach whenever I attend practices or games so as to reflect well on the YCCHAL and on the Lord we serve, remembering that we all have the same goal in mind, and all need to be quick to extend Grace.
- I will show respect for game officials and will refrain from shouting, rebuking, or arguing with their judgments. Likewise, I will treat opposing players and spectators with respect and courtesy at all times. (Remembering that as we play other teams in the MCAA we are all a part of the same Body, and as we play other teams in the county we are called to be a light.)
- I understand that there are consequences for unsportsmanlike conduct towards officials, coaches, opponents, and players that may result in the removal of myself from my child's game and future games or league activities.
- I agree to encourage, support, and affirm my child's play on the field.
- I understand that this league is organized and run by the volunteer hours of all involved, and agree to fulfill my responsibility as a parent by completing all assigned game day duties and helping out with my child's team.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to know about team practices, activities and games. It is also my responsibility to know how to access the schedule and keep myself informed of the schedule and changes to the schedule.
- I understand that unless my child is ill or injured, he/she is expected to attend all practices, games and activities pertaining to his/her team.
- I agree to help my athlete meet team expectations and commitments to the best of my ability.
- I agree to comply with the rules, policies and procedures of the team, administrators and board members of the YCCHAL.

## **Communication:**

Communication is vital between coaches, players, parents, the athletic director, and the board of directors. Please assume the best in all circumstances and remember to extend Grace, as Grace has been freely given to us. If a parent, athlete, or coach has an issue with playing time, playing position, or any other aspect of the game/team, it is expected that he/she will follow the steps to resolve the issue as outlined by the conflict resolution agreement.

## **Conflict Resolution:**



*If your brother sins against you go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.*

*Matthew 18: 15-16*

As a parent, guardian, or athlete involved with the YCCHAL, I will agree to the following Biblical steps in resolving any problem, conflict, or disagreement with a coach, parent, player, or other participant in the YCCHAL.

1. I will pray that everything I say honors God. I will not use personal attacks, foul language, shouting, physical force, gossip, or other intimidating behavior at any time.
2. Before going to the coach, I will take some time to check my own motives, intentions, and behavior, taking responsibility for any wrong I might have done and asking God to take the log out of my eye before trying to take the speck out of my brother's eye. ~ Matthew 7:4
3. I will contact the coach in person or by telephone, at an appropriate time to discuss the matter directly. I will not contact him/her through text messages or email. I will not use email to register a complaint.
4. I will not attempt to discuss a problem or a complaint with a coach immediately before, during, or after a game. I will not disrupt a practice in order to discuss a complaint, but will address the matter at a neutral time.
5. If the problem is not resolved, I will tell the coach that a third party needs to be involved, and then contact the athletic director, or a member of the Executive Council to arrange a meeting with the coach present.
6. If these steps have not resolved the problem, and I wish to seek formal resolution from the Executive Council, I will submit a signed, written complaint to the Executive Council.
7. **Both parents and all athletes must agree to this conflict resolution in order to participate in YCCHAL.**

## **Bullying:**

- Bullying by a parent, player, coach, board member, or athletic director is never acceptable.
- Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person.
- Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. It is done to intimidate, coerce, control, embarrass, exclude or instill fear.
- Bullying can be emotional~ being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, or tormenting (picking on, threatening gestures or comments).
- Bullying can be physical~ pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Bullying can be racial~ racial taunts, jokes or gestures
- Bullying can be sexual~ unwanted physical contact or sexual comments
- Bullying can be verbal~ name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors or picking on
- Bullying is never ok and will not be tolerated.
- Anyone believing to be the victim of bullying should follow the procedures outlined in the conflict resolution section.
- Anyone participating in bullying will be asked to change his/her behavior.

If bullying continues, dismissal from YCCHAL may be necessary.

## **Player Eligibility:**

Student athletes are allowed to participate in the YCCHAL at the High School level for four (4) years.



1. An extension of a fifth (5th) year of participation will be granted to those students who are in the eighth (8th) grade and participate at the JV or Varsity level. The Executive Council of the YCCHAL and the Board of Directors of the MCAA must be informed in writing of such participation.
2. Seventh (7th) grade student athletes are allowed to participate in the YCCHAL at the High School level only when the total athlete participation is below the following:  
Soccer—12; Volleyball—9; Basketball—10, without losing a year of eligibility. The Executive Council of the YCCHAL and the Board of Directors of the MCAA must be informed in writing of such participation.
3. In this case, seventh (7th) grade student athletes are allowed to participate in the YCCHAL at a Sub-Varsity High School level without losing a year of eligibility. The Executive Council of the YCCHAL and the Board of Directors of the MCAA must be informed in writing of such participation.
4. Teams will not consist of co-ed rosters. Girls will participate with all girls' teams and boys will participate with all boys' teams.
5. Existing MCAA member schools without enough students to participate in the current sport may combine with another church school/association, but only with MCAA Board approval.
6. Athletes must be actively participating in a home education program under the direction of their parent or guardian.
7. No athlete is eligible to participate who has received a GED.
8. No athlete is eligible to participate who has gone through a graduation ceremony.

Grades: No player may play with grades that are not "passing". Parents are required to monitor this and self discipline their children.

If there is an excessive number of players signed up to play a sport, the Coach will determine the maximum number needed. Tryouts, or other skill level assessment, will be used to determine team members.

## Lettering:

*Please see Article IV of the by-laws.*

In addition to Article IV, a player must be a varsity player. Must be in high school as junior high players are ineligible. Should have memorized the team verse or scripture verses given by the coach. Must have demonstrated respectful attitude to coach and teammates. Needs to have played in at least four conference games prior to the tournament.

## Music:

All music played at YCCHAL games and/or practices is subject to board review and approval. While the preference is for Christian music to be played, secular music is allowed, provided that it does not have inappropriate language or subject matter. Below are general guidelines that should be used in the selection of music:

- Acceptable: Songs played on a Christian radio station (Air1, The Effect, K-Love, etc); Instrumental music; Secular songs with a positive message
- Unacceptable: Lyrics that contain cursing (even if it is "bleeped" out); Lyrics with derogatory or slang words for any race, gender, etc. or that objectify men or women; Lyrics which discuss gambling, violence, drug or alcohol abuse, etc.



## **Coaching Staff:**

Recruitment: Coaches and assistant coaches may be recruited by the Board, referred by parents, parents of an athlete, or other interested parties as approved by the Board. Head coaches will be allowed to determine their assistants with Board approval.

The coaching staff for each sport for each season will be reviewed and approved by the Board as stated in the Bylaws. The Board may require statements of faith, resumes, letters of recommendation or other ways to ensure the prospective coaches will train the athletes under Christ centered coaching. Complaints and charges will be handled as outlined in the Bylaws.

Since this is a competitive league and future games with surrounding schools may be dependent on our ability to field quality teams, the Council's decision will be based on the training and experience of the coaches with an emphasis on Christian character. A stipend of one athlete fee per head coach or head coach position (not to exceed 19 total positions) will be offered.

## **Coaching responsibilities, expectations and obligations:**

In accordance with the bylaws, coaches are to require the athletes to memorize scripture, have devotions, pray together, as well as emphasize Christian character.

Coaches are to demonstrate Christian character in their actions both on and off the field of competition. It is the goal of YCCHAL teams to be the best example for Christ of any team we play on and off the court or field. Coaches are asked to develop and invest in all players. Players that feel valued will work harder and develop faster.

Coaches' and athletes' dress is to be modest, nice and in accordance with the bylaws. Coaches need to communicate dress expectations to their team for games & tournaments, whether that be uniforms, warm-ups, or dress attire.

## **Attitudes of Coaches:**

Coaches have a wonderful opportunity and a privilege! They are in a position that teaches, mentors, models, and has authority. These athletes have been placed in their care to be taught the skill of the sport, to be taught team building and team unity, and to be taught what it looks like to follow Christ in all circumstances. A coach's attitude should say, "I believe in you" to each member of the team. Coaches should not use words that degrade the players. Athletes look up to their coach for guidance, support, encouragement, and Truth, therefore the attitude of the coach should reflect his/her trust in the Lord. We pray our coaches remember the God of all Grace is faithful to give wisdom, creativity, patience and perseverance as he/she serves these young athletes of the YCCHAL. We thank you, coaches, so very much for the giving of your talents, experience, wisdom, time and especially of yourselves. For more on the responsibilities of the coaches, please refer to Article VI in the YCCHAL Constitution and Article 11 of the YCCHAL By-laws.

## **Assistant Coaches:**

Each head coach is required to have at least one assistant coach. All YCCHAL coaches give a tremendous amount of time, energy, talent, and sleepless nights for the benefit of their team. The Board would like to "lighten the load" of each coach by each having an assistant. The assistant coach is to respect, support, encourage, and when needed, possibly admonish the head coach. He/she may do this in a number of ways: by being an extra set of eyes and ears, by giving input at practices and games, by being a sounding board, by being an encourager, by protecting, and by offering accountability.

The head coach should seek and value the opinions of the assistant coach.

## **Coaches Evaluations:**

Coaches serve because they love the game & want to speak into our League athletes. Parents are asked to encourage & give positive feedback to our coaches & to live out the Parental Code of Conduct mentioned before, as well as a Coaches' Evaluation at the end of the season. These forms can be found online at [ycchal.org](http://ycchal.org) under documents. Forms can be filled out online and returned electronically. They are then given to the AD and the President and the feedback is shared with the Board and then the coaches.



## **Tournaments and Away Games:**

It is the intention of the League to encourage team participation in tournaments.

The Rules for dress is: to reflect well on the League, team uniform/warm-ups, and Christian conduct apply for the entire team for the duration of the trip, not just during games. The following will also be enforced:

- No members of the opposite sex in team member's rooms.
- Curfew will be enforced.
- All players are required to attend all practices, devotions, meetings, etc, during the tournament.
- A chaperone will be assigned to each room, preferably a team member's parent.
- Swimwear is to be modest, covering midriff, cleavage and buttocks.
- Any objectionable behavior may be cause for the team member's parents to be called, requiring them to be removed from the tournament and the player will no longer be eligible for playing on any YCCHAL team. Eligibility for future sports will require application and approval by the Board.

## **Equipment and uniforms:**

Equipment and uniforms are the property of the League. Players are responsible for returning their clean uniforms at the end of the season. Lost or unreasonable damage to a uniform will be cause for the charge of a uniform replacement fee. Each teams' coach is responsible for checking out the equipment from the equipment committee at the start of the season and taking reasonable care of the equipment during the season. Requests for additional equipment need to be addressed to the athletic director.

## **Traveling Teams/Outside Tournaments:**

Outside experience and tournaments are encouraged for all players. Use of League equipment or uniforms will be considered on a case by case basis. General considerations are that the majority of the players are active in YCCHAL, the games or tournaments do not interfere with the YCCHAL scheduled games, practices or season, and the team agrees to present Christian character. Uniforms and equipment may be recalled at any time should the League decide that the team or its coach is not within the guidelines required.

## **The Philosophies of Play with the YCCHAL are:**

Play Time:

In the 5th/6th grade, play time should be equitable between all players: This level is for developmental purposes. With a competitive coach, this may be difficult to enforce, yet please try to give game time to all players. In the home school league, we do not know which athletes will stay with us, so please develop all players.

In the 7th/8th grade, the level of competition increases as does the level of play. However, all athletes need game time to be developed. So, please think beyond this year's season as you develop players. Again, we need to be developing those players that will stay with the Knights.

In the Junior Varsity program, the level of competition increases dramatically. Playing time is still important to each player to prepare them for the varsity level.

In the Varsity program, the goal is to win games, earn a good seed for tournament, and ultimately, win the MCAA State Tournament, while still conducting ourselves in Christ's likeness and with good sportsmanship. Coaches are to make a conscious effort to play all team members for a portion of each match of competition. The athlete is encouraged to make every effort to improve their game throughout the year. If the athlete feels their playing time needs to be adjusted, it is the player's responsibility to individually approach the coach and ask what they can do to increase their playing time while remembering to be coachable. These are life lessons athletics instills in the individual, and the parents should allow room for their child to grow in this communication.



## Parents Involvement:

Parent's involvement is necessary in order to successfully run this league. All parents are required to help with parental team responsibilities during their season such as keeping the book, score clock, concessions, taking stats, clean-up, and set-up. Parental involvement with the team during practice, games, and team-building activities will be at the coach's discretion. All outside activities for a team should be approved and coordinated with the coach.

## Committees:

All families are encouraged to contribute to the running of the YCCHAL by serving in some capacity outside of parental team responsibilities. The idea behind committees is to allow everyone to be a part of the daily functioning of the athletic league, as well as prevent burn out from any single family that is carrying too much of the load. The committee service is separate from the parental duties performed during games. Our desire is not to burden anyone, but to include everyone. Our goal is to allow and encourage each family to contribute to the league in a way that would "fit" their gifting, and be a blessing to the one serving as well as the ones being served.

## Uniform Responsibility:

- Laundering Instructions: Wash uniform in cold water only, treat stains as needed.  
Wash like colors together and hang to air dry.
- Return your athlete's full uniform(s) freshly cleaned, in a zip-lock bag.
- If the uniform, or parts of the uniform, have to be replaced due to damage or loss, you will be charged for replacement costs.

## Fees:

Fees may vary from year to year depending on the expenses of the YCCHAL. Fees are used to pay for officials, equipment and facilities, and high school coaches. Our desire is to keep fees down so that all that would like to participate can do so. In order to do this, it is vital that we have the entire league involved in fundraising activities. Fees for the 2025/2026 season are as follows: High School \$400, Jr. High and Elementary \$200.

## Fundraising: YCCHAL is a 501c(3) Tax Deductible Charity

Forms can be found at [www.ycchal.org](http://www.ycchal.org) under Documents then Fundraising.

**YCCHAL is greatly blessed by our corporate & family donors. Please thank & patronize our sponsors.**

**Team:** In an effort to encourage a league vision & volunteerism, each athlete is encouraged to participate in team fundraising. These events are planned within individual teams at the present time. Funds from team fundraisers are typically used by teams to help cover expenses for the team. At times they are used to purchase special team apparel and equipment. Sometimes they are also used to provide athlete scholarships for play.

**Individual:** Different opportunities are available each season to help athletes pay for their fees or traveling costs associated with participating in YCCHAL athletics.

## End of Year League Meeting:

Because we are a parent-led league, each family needs to make every effort to participate in the board elections and recap of the year in April or May. Board responsibilities can be found on [ycchal.org](http://ycchal.org) and are for a 1 year term. All parents are encouraged to pray about how God would use them to grow and serve this league. Any member of the YCCHAL is welcome to run for a board position at the year end meeting.