

GRACEAC Mission Statement

The mission of GRACEAC is to foster the physical, spiritual, and emotional growth of our student-athletes through Christ-centered athletic experiences.

We are committed to teaching teamwork, discipline, integrity, and respect—both on and off the field—while encouraging each child to develop their God-given talents to the fullest. Through competitive play, guided by the teachings of the Catholic/Christian faith, we strive to cultivate virtue, build community, and inspire lifelong habits of health, service, and sportsmanship.

Frequently Asked Questions: Catholic United Regional Sports Model (Grades 7–8)

Timeline and process

1. When will this model take effect?

We will implement this model with boys basketball in winter I of 2025-26. Other 7th and 8th grade sports will transition to this model based on participation levels and scheduling logistics. It is important to note that not all sports will move to this model, since it will also be based upon participation numbers.

2. How will my child be placed on a team in the new Catholic United regional model?

If participation numbers require multiple teams within a region, try-ins will be held for all athletes. Team placement decisions will be made collaboratively by coaches, the school administrator, and the GRACEAC program director.

3. What sports will be affected besides basketball, and when will those changes take place?

All 7th and 8th grade sports will eventually follow the Catholic United model. The number of teams per sport will depend on participation rates. Based on current participation rates, the sports that are projected to move to this model are volleyball, boys basketball, and possibly girls basketball. We aim to launch the model with Winter I sports, beginning with boys basketball.

K-6th grade sports remain school-specific without a try-in process.

4. Will there be opportunities for parents to give feedback or ask questions before changes are implemented?

Absolutely. We invite parents to collaborate with us in this change. We will have meetings ahead of this rollout where you can learn more about the process and ask additional questions. . We are committed to open communication and will offer in-person and virtual meetings where parents can ask questions, share feedback, and learn more. We will host a meeting date on Wednesday September 3rd at the Diocese, 360 S Division Ave GR 49503. We will meet at 6:30pm. You will have the option to watch virtually on Google meet. [Click here for the link](#)

Try-in process

5. What does the try-in and placement process look like, and who evaluates the athletes?

Try-ins typically take place over three days. Athletes are evaluated by coaches, the school administrator, and the GRACEAC program director, who will place players on a team based on skill and developmental level. The try-ins will be established after registration has closed and participation numbers are set.

6. What happens if my child can't make try-ins?

Every effort must be given to attend the try-in. In the event a student athlete is unable to participate, consultation for placement will be made in conjunction with the school AD and previous coach.

7. Can our child opt out of try-ins and choose to play on a team of their choice instead?

No. All athletes must participate in the try-in process to be evaluated fairly and placed on a team that matches their developmental level. Team placement decisions will be made by the coaches and evaluators to ensure each athlete has the best opportunity to grow and succeed alongside similarly skilled teammates. This process helps promote fairness, balanced competition, and a positive experience for everyone involved.

8. Will my child still be able to play with their classmates from the same school?

Possibly. Athletes will be placed according to skill level, so all classmates may not be on the same team.

9. Can our child choose to play on a different team to be with more friends?

No. Players will be assigned to teams based on their skill and developmental level. Prior to try-ins, each athlete will be required to sign an agreement acknowledging that they will participate on the team to which they are assigned. This ensures fairness and supports the integrity of the placement process.

10. What if my child is placed on a B team—how will their development be supported?

Our goal is to ensure all athletes grow in skill and confidence. Players placed on B teams will be matched with peers at a similar developmental level (to the extent possible), allowing for focused instruction and appropriate pacing that supports everyone's overall growth and engagement.

11. If my child is placed on a B team and doesn't want to play, can we get a refund?

No. Prior to try-ins, each athlete and parents will be required to sign an agreement acknowledging that they will participate on the team to which they are assigned. This ensures fairness and supports the integrity of the placement process. This also ensures that there are no last minute unexpected team changes.

Transportation and logistics

12. How will transportation work for practices and games under the regional model?

Parents will remain responsible for transporting their children to and from practices and games, as is currently the case.

13. How far can we expect to have to travel for practices and games?

You will be based regionally with schools in your area.

14. Who will the coaches be, and what qualifications or training will they have?

Coaches will be hired and assigned by the GRACEAC program director. We value parent involvement and will continue to welcome parent coaches while also seeking qualified external coaches to support our teams. All coaches must have training in Protecting God's Children, concussion awareness, the Virtues of Greatness Program, and sport-specific rules and procedures. Each coach will be guided and supported to uphold the mission of GRACEAC.

15. How will this model ensure fair play and reduce skill gaps among teams?

By grouping athletes according to their skill and developmental level, this model promotes balanced competition. This approach is designed to reduce large score disparities, enhance engagement, and foster skill growth across all teams.

16. What happens if a school did not vote in favor of this model—will it still participate?

Yes, all schools will participate in the Catholic United model regardless of how they voted. GRACEAC is a membership organization with each school getting a vote. There have been many decisions implemented over the years when the vote has not been unanimous.

17. Can a school keep all of its players together on the same team?

No, not all. In the Catholic United model, team placement is based on each athlete's individual skill level and developmental needs. All players must participate in the try-in process and will be placed on a team that best supports their growth. While we value the school community, this approach ensures fair and balanced teams that provide the best environment for learning and development. GRACEAC will consider distance as a factor in making decisions impacting outlying schools. We will place all athletes from the same school, at the same level, onto the same team during team formation.