

**GROTON-MYSTIC FALCONS YOUTH
FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

2026 BY-LAWS

TABLE OF CONTENTS



<u>TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
I. NAME	2
II. OBJECTIVE	2
III. GOVERNMENT	2
IV. BY-LAWS	2
A. Officers of the league	2
1. Executive Board	2
2. President	2-3
3. Vice-President	3
4. Secretaries	3
5. Treasurer	4
6. Football Director	4-5
7. Cheerleading Director	5-6
8. Flag Director	7
9. Football Equipment Manager	6-7
10. Concession Coordinator	7
11. Fundraising Coordinator	7
12. Medic	7
13. League Staff	7
14. Voting Members	8
B. Elections	8
C. Voting	8-9
D. Meetings	9
E. Practices	9
F. Games	9
G. By-Law Changes	9-10
H. Activities/Fund-raisers	10
I. Trophies	10-11
J. Application to Participate in League Activities	11-12
K. Awards	12
L. Scholarship	12
M. Volunteers	12
N. Attendance	12
V. Grievance Procedures	13
VI. Behavior/Discipline	14
VII. Coaches Code of Conduct	15
VIII. Certifications	15
IX. Community Service	15

GROTON-MYSTIC FALCONS YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE:
RULES OF OPERATION AND BY-LAWS

I. NAME:

The organization shall be known as the Groton-Mystic Falcons Youth Football League, Inc. Hereafter called the "GMFYFL."

II. OBJECTIVES

To promote the importance of sports in the Groton-Mystic Community. To pledge our cooperation with others in the field of education and sports and to administer a program that will always stress the best interest of the youth who participates in GMFYFL activities.

III. GOVERNMENT

The constitutional by-laws and playing rules are referenced herein for the regulation that will pertain to the administration of the league. GMFYFL shall adopt and adhere to all by-laws of the Southern New England Youth Football Conference, (SNEYFC), or as modified herein and approved by the SNEYFC.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the organization is organized exclusively for one or more of the purposes of as specified Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by organizations exempt from Federal Income Tax under IRC 501(c) (3) or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Tax Laws. No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of any member, trustee, director, officer or the organization, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the organization), and no member, trustee, officer of the organization or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the organization's assets upon dissolution of the organization. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided by IRD 501(h) or participation in, or intervening in (including the publication or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to and candidates for public office.

In the event of dissolution, all of the remaining assets and property of the organization shall after payment of necessary expenses thereof be distributed to such organizations as shall qualify under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal Tax Laws, or to the Federal Government or State or local Government for a public purpose, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court of the State of Connecticut.

In any taxable year in which the organization is a private foundation as described in IRC 509 (a), the organization shall distribute its income for said period at such time and manner as not to subject it to tax under IRC 4942, and the organization shall not (a) engage in any act or self dealing as defined in IRD 494 1 (d), (b) retain any excess business holdings as identified in IRC 4943 (c), (c) make any investments in such a manner as to subject the organization to tax under IRD 4944, or (d) make any taxable expenditures as defined in IRC (d) or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal Tax Laws.

IV. **BY-LAWS**

Officers of the League

1. Executive Board:

(President, Vice President, Football and Cheerleading Secretaries, Treasurer, Football and Cheerleading Directors)

- The Executive Board will handle all matters of GMFYFL between monthly meetings under the direction of the League President.
- The Executive Board will handle all disciplinary matters or problems that may arise in the interim.
- The actions or decisions of the Executive Board must be reported at monthly meetings when deemed necessary by the executive board.
- The members of the Executive Board shall provide interpretations of these by-laws in the event of any conflicts in this document.
- No member of the Executive Board will be allowed to hold a Head Coaching position during the playing season, unless discussed and approved by a vote of the Executive Board and it is necessary for the betterment of the GMFYFL and/or the children in the league.
- No person can hold more than One Head GMFYFL Staff position.
- At least three members of the Executive Board must be present at every GMFYFL function/game.
- All emails should be GMF, not personal. All passwords will be changed every term.
- In the event that an Executive Board member resigns, is removed, or is unable to complete their term, the vacancy shall be filled by a majority vote of GMFYFL members at the next league meeting. The individual elected shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term. If the next scheduled League meeting is not within a reasonable time frame, the President may call a special/emergency meeting of the league for the purpose of filling the vacant position. A quorum of eligible voting members must be present at the special/emergency meeting in order to conduct the vote.
- If any Executive Board position is vacated during the season, a Special meeting will be called to Vote on the new member.
- Any executive board or staff member that vacates their position will be formally notified of their ineligibility for the following season by certified letter issued by the league.
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2. President:

- Presides at League Meetings and assumes full responsibilities for the operation of the GMFYFL.
- He/She must see to it that all personnel are properly briefed on all phases of the rules, regulations, and policies of GMFYFL and of the SNEYFC.
- Appoint all committees other than the Coaches Committee, Cheerleaders Committee as necessary for the operation of GMFYFL.
- Be responsible for the arrangement and maintenance of GMFYFL insurance in conjunction with the Treasurer.
- Be responsible for getting facility use approved for practices and games.
- Be responsible to complete background checks for each staff member no later than the week after the July meeting.
- Is responsible to have a proper EMT and/or ambulance at all home games for the safety of the players. However, if it is not possible to secure an EMT with an official affiliation with an EMS provider organization, it will be required to secure an individual who is a

certified athletic trainer or someone who is certified in First Aid/CPR/AED either through the American Red Cross, American Heart Association or an equivalent organization.

- Secure fields for practices/games/league events. Accepts written appeals as a grievance by the deadline outlined in the by-laws.
- In the absence of the Football Director, responsibility will be given to the President followed by the Vice-President; any action taken will immediately be reported to and reviewed by the Executive Board.

3. Vice-President:

- Presides in the absence of the President, works with the other officers and staff within GMFYFL and carries out such duties and assignments as may be delegated by the President of the League.
- Acts as the Fundraising Committee Coordinator with the assistance of the Treasurer.
- All fundraisers must be approved by the Executive Board.
- Orders trophies and awards for athletes who attend the annual banquet.
- Schedules and sets up picture day.
- Schedules and coordinates the annual Fundraising event.
- Oversees Concession Coordinator with the assistance of the Treasurer
- Collects fundraising monies with the Treasurer
- In the absence of the Football Director, responsibility will be given to the President followed by the Vice-President; any action taken will immediately be reported to and reviewed by the Executive Board.

4. Secretaries:

Joint Secretary duties that will be delegated at the start of the secretaries terms:

- Voting rights sheet will be maintained by both secretaries, all other Board members can have read only access.
- Each secretary will handle the conference paperwork for their groups with their respective directors (Football/Cheer)

Football Secretary:

- Collect and organize paperwork required for football books
- Should have copies of League By-Laws available, if requested.
- Assist with pertinent League business
- Distribute announcements to football coaches/team parent during the season
- Keeps record of Football Coaches certifications and qualification
- Record minutes of Monthly League Meetings and Executive Board Meetings and send to President in the following days
- Will ensure that copies of all certifications are placed in the individual team books prior to the first day of practice.

Cheer Secretary:

- Collect and organize paperwork required for cheer books
- Should have copies of League By-Laws available, if requested.
- Assist with pertinent League business
- Distribute announcements to cheer coaches/team parent during the season
- Keeps record of Cheer Coaches certifications and qualification
- Record minutes of Monthly League Meetings and Executive Board Meetings and send to President in the following days.(Backup for Football Secretary)

5. Treasurer:

- Dispense League funds as approved by the Executive Board.
- Must keep up-to-date League Financial records and submit monthly written reports on the status of GMFYFL funds with a complete list of income & expenses with a detailed explanation for each and the beginning balance and ending balance.
- Emergency expenditures less than \$500.00 should be discussed between the Treasurer and President (Vice President if President is not available).
- Expenditures over \$500.00 will be voted on by GMFYFL with a majority vote.
- All reimbursements must be accompanied with a receipt and must have prior approval from the Treasurer and President (Vice President if President is not available).
- There will be no less than \$10,000.00 in the total treasury on the date of the Awards Banquet.
- All money coming into GMFYFL shall be counted by the Treasurer and an Executive Board member to verify amount (\$) collected.
- Each deposit must be kept separate, i.e. Concession Stand and Apparel, etc. In the event of a bounced check, GMFYFL will charge \$25 per deposit attempt per check. If the same person bounces more than 1 check at any time while a member of GMFYFL, they will lose their right to pay with checks.
- Brings change to each in-person registration date.
- Collects fundraising monies with the Vice-President.
- Makes sure there is change to begin on all game days.
- Is responsible for counting money upon each concession closing with another executive board member.
- Pays the refs at the games. Prepares spreadsheet for taxes for accountant for their tenure.
- Assist Vice-President with coordinating the fundraising committee along with Fundraiser Chairperson.
- Renews the GMFYFL insurance for the season and Competition in coordination with the President of GMFYFL.
- Maintains custody of all League funds and manages the League bank account(s). The Treasurer and Vice President shall be authorized signers on all GMFYFL bank accounts.
- Any debit cards issued for GMFYFL accounts shall be held by the Treasurer and Vice President and may only be used for approved League expenses.

6. Football Director:

- Organize and be chair of the Football Coaches Committee.
- Develop training and Football directions for all divisions of football players and act as liaison between the coaches and the Executive Board.
- Accept responsibility and take immediate action on enforcing the *Coaches' Code of Conduct*.
- Any action taken will be immediately reported to and reviewed by the Executive Board.
- Acting as a liaison for all SNEYFC Meetings.
- Will determine placement of football players on proper squads according to the By-Laws. Executive Board will be notified of such placements.
- A report will be given on or before the March Executive Board meeting. Requests for equipment needed for the season must be submitted and voted on, on or before the March Executive Board meeting so all orders can be placed and received prior to the start of the season. Notice of approved football budget will be announced at the April League Meeting.
- Act as Equipment manager if the position is not filled.
- Enforce the By-Law that a representative from each team will be present at each monthly GMFYFL meeting.
- Will see that all adult Coaches are annually certified per the By-laws.

- GMFYFL staff will only wear league approved apparel on sidelines during game day.
- The Head Coaches will submit to the Director, a list of prospective Assistant Coaches at the June meeting. The Director will then submit the list of the Team staff at July's meeting. All Assistant Coaches will be introduced at a League meeting so they, and the rest of the GMFYFL staff, can become familiar with each other and to learn how GMFYFL functions. Each Football team is limited to one Head Coach and four Assistant Coaches. However, under the discretion additional helpers can be added as needed. Will compile rosters and submit to the rest of the Executive Board within two weeks of the first day of practice. The football director will have open communication with head coaches per the SNEYFC.
- A Football Committee meeting shall take place in November (after the end of the season) for the purpose of putting together any and all conference football rules and conference by-law proposals. Proposals for the SNEYFC are to be outlined and read at the monthly December league meeting. Proposals will then be submitted to the SNEYFC PRIOR to the Deadline.
- Flag Football Director is appointed by the Football Director with prior approval of Executive Board.

7. Cheerleading Director:

- Organize and be chair of the Cheerleader Coaches Committee.
- Develop training and cheering directions for all divisions of cheerleaders and acts as liaison between the coaches and the Executive Board.
- Accept responsibility and take immediate action on enforcing the *Coaches' Code of Conduct*. Any action taken will be immediately reported to and reviewed by the Executive Board.
- Act as a liaison for all SNEYFC Meetings.
- Will determine placement of cheerleaders in proper squads according to the By-Laws. Executive Board will be notified of such placements.
- Must be ACCA Certified (Conference By-Law).
- The Director will assess equipment and determine whether replacement or refurbishment is necessary. A report will be given on or before the March Executive Board meeting. Requests for equipment needed for the season must be submitted and voted on, on or before the March Executive Board meeting so any and all orders can be placed and received prior to the start of the season. Notice of approved Cheerleading budget will be announced at the April League Meeting.
- Shall act as Equipment Manager if the position is not filled. Is responsible for coordinating with the League President in getting facility use approved for Competition practices.
- Is responsible to turn in books to the SNEYFC to have each squad validated for the current season and competition.
- Enforce the By-Law that a representative from each team will be present at each monthly GMFYFL meeting.
- In the absence of the Cheer Director, responsibility will be given to the President followed by the Vice-President.
- The head coaches will submit to the Director, a list of prospective Assistant Coaches at the June meeting, the Director will then submit this list of the Team Staff at July's meeting. All Assistant Coaches will be introduced at the July League meeting so they and the rest of the

GMFYFL Staff can become familiar with each other and learn how GMFYFL functions. Each Cheer Squad is limited to one Head Coach, and four Assistant Coaches and/or Junior helpers as agreed upon by the Cheer Director and Executive Board. However, under the discretion additional helpers can be added as needed.

- Will see that all adult Cheer Coaches are annually certified per the By-laws. The Cheerleading secretary will ensure that copies of all certifications are placed in the individual team books prior to the first day of practice. Also, is responsible to ensure Head Coaches will be ACCA, NYCC and First Aid certified. Assistants will be NYCC and First Aid certified.
- A Cheer Coaches meeting shall take place in November for the purpose of putting together any and all Cheer rules and By-law proposals. Proposals will then be submitted to the SNEYFC at the December Conference meeting.

Competition: A committee made up of the Director and Head Coaches whose responsibility will be to participate in the selection of the cheerleaders to participate at Competition. All cheer squads will practice through the conclusion of the regular season games. All regular season cheerleaders will not participate in the Competition practices, but will be required to participate in all half-time routines. Only the Competition squads will continue to practice for Competition routines at selected practices and two weeks prior to the Conference Cheer Competitions.

Competition Criteria: At or near the end of the season, the Conference hosts a Cheer Competition. Participation in the Cheer Competition is not mandatory. Competition selection for the Mini, Micro, Junior and Senior squads is based on the following factors.

- (1) Selection: - Squads can consist of a maximum of up to 25 cheerleaders (Conference By-Law). Coaches will determine the number of participants based on the Coach's prepared routine.
- (2) Attitude: - Positive attitude portrayed. Respectful of self and others.
- (3) Ability: - Must be able to learn quickly and be able to carry out routines with sharp motions and accuracy (see Competition Criteria in Constitution)
- (4) Dependability: - Must not have been absent more than 5 practices prior to competition selection. All Competition practices are to be attended as practice is very rigorous. If an athlete is absent for reasons other than an "extreme emergency", determination if the athlete should or should not remain on the Competition squad will be at the discretion of the Cheer Director.
- (5) Enthusiasm: Must be willing to work hard without complaints. Not one person sustains the team. Each and every person makes the team a whole.

Outside Competitions: The Competition squads may compete in additional competitions after the current playing season. Decisions to further compete will be at the discretion of the Senior and Junior Head Coach and Cheer Director with the approval of the Executive Board.

8. Flag Football Director:

- Will organize and be Chair of the Flag Football Coaches.
- Develop training and playing directions for Flag Football players.
- Act as a liaison between the Coaches and the President.
- Accept responsibility and take immediate action on enforcing the *Coaches Code of Conduct*.
- Responsible for constructing the current season Flag game schedule with Board approval by the end of the 2nd week of August.

9. Football Equipment Manager:

- Maintains and distributes all equipment.
- Communicates to all Coaches to schedule the return and storage of equipment.

- Set up and breakdowns practice field and home games.
- Brings all required equipment to games.
- As directed by the Football Director every other year makes sure that helmets are reconditioned
- Repair equipment when required and submit report when equipment needs to be professionally replaced.
- Will assess equipment and determine whether replacement or refurbishment is necessary
- Distribute any GMFYFL purchased seasonal apparel to the appropriate Coaches and players.
- A voted position and then appointed if not filled

10. Concession Coordinator:

- Maintains the upkeep and organizes the concession stand for the season.
- Compiles budget for upkeep of equipment which will be approved by the Executive Board.
- The auxiliary will consist of the Coordinator and the Executive Board.
- Responsible for scheduling parents and/or volunteers to work the concession stand at games.
- The Concession Coordinator is appointed by the President with prior approval of the Executive Board.

11. Fundraising Coordinator:

- Planning and managing fundraisers. Is responsible for sending out Sponsorship Letters in coordination with the Vice-President.
- Works on securing available grants and other sources of revenue.
- Sends out Sponsorship letters to prospective sponsors.

12. Medic:

- expectations include
- must be Basic Life Support certified in first aid, CPR and AED.
- Required to be at every home game and as many practices as possible.
- Encouraged to attend away games for sideline care for the players.
- Responsible for carrying and restocking the Medic bag and AED. Carry a list of any player's health conditions and phone numbers for all player's emergency contact.
- Document and keep records of any injuries occurred during practice and/or games.

13. GMFYFL Staff:

- GMFYFL Staff consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretaries (Football/Cheer), Treasurer, Directors (Football/Cheer), Football/Cheer Coaches, Concession Coordinator, Equipment Manager, Fundraising Coordinator, Fundraising Football representative, Fundraising Cheer representative, and Medic. All positions voted on by the executive board.
- If you leave or are voted out of a position you must return all GMF keys, electronics, equipment and access.
- Head coach vacancies for any reason shall be filled by Board Vote
- If any Staff member (non-executive board) position is vacated during the season, at the next monthly meeting a vote be called for new member
- Head coaches are required to be on their team's Band channel
- 6 *Assistant Coaching* staff not counting the Head Coach on the sideline.
- Appointed positions cannot be a coach of any kind
- Any board/staff member that leaves their position also will lose their voting rights for the season.
- All coaches, including assistant coaches need to be approved by the executive board.
- GMFYFL will pay for 5 coaches apparel, including Head coach, Per team

14. Voting Members:

Voting members shall consist of eligible GMFYFL Staff and general membership. GMFYFL Secretaries will be responsible for verifying eligibility to vote at the beginning of all League meetings.

ELECTIONS:

1. DECEMBER:

- a. Vice-President shall receive verbal or written nominations for the Executive Board.
- b. Prior and during the nomination meeting, anyone may submit a name along with position(s) wanted. At the conclusion of the nomination/December meeting, the ballots will be closed until the Election/January meeting. Nominations will be announced at the end of the December meeting.

2. JANUARY:

- a. Those nominated must be present to accept the nomination.
- b. Vote: Ballot sheet shall be distributed to all present eligible-voting members.
- c. The President and the League Secretary will count the votes for each position.
- d. The nominee who receives the majority votes wins the position and shall take office at the conclusion of the January meeting.
- e. In the event of a tie, the President shall cast the deciding vote unless it's a tie for the president then the current Executive Board will make the decision.
- f. Absentee ballots will not be accepted.

3. HEAD COACH SELECTION PROCESS

- a. Applications for Head Coach positions will be available December 1st.
 - b. Applications for Head Coach Positions must be completed and turned into the Executive Board by the January league meeting.
 - c. Applicants will be interviewed in the month of February by the current Executive Board and 1 additional person, selected at the Boards' discretion.
 - d. Applicants will be voted upon by the Executive Board with majority vote.
 - e. In the event of a tie, the President shall cast the deciding vote.
 - f. Absentee ballots will not be accepted.
- Voted Positions that are left vacant shall be refilled by special meeting (voted by any person with full voting rights at time of vote)
 - Nominee for Executive Board shall have been to a minimum of 2 meetings the prior year

Any Coach/staff members who have not completed their term in office and vacates their position during the season must provide proof of an emergency in doing so. If no proof is provided, or the Board does not agree, the Coach/staff members cannot be voted in or appointed to take any position within the League the following season. The vacating staff member must take 1 season off before consideration will be given by the current Bard about their return.

VOTING:

1. Obtaining the Right to Vote:

- a. Must be 18 years and older to carry a GMFYFL vote.
- b. All members must attend (3) consecutive meetings to obtain general voting rights. (All votes cast with the exception on the staff elections.)
- c. Any Staff member elected or appointed at anytime during the season shall automatically become eligible voting members upon accepting their position and will take office at the end of the League meeting.
- d. In order to obtain electoral voting rights, you have to attend 7 out of 12 meetings starting February through January without missing 3 consecutive meetings. To begin in 2027

e. Have to attend 50% +1 meeting to have voting rights on the Executive Board.

2. Relinquishing the Right to Vote:

Staff and GMFYFL members that fail to attend (3) consecutive meetings shall forfeit their general voting rights.

Staff and GMFYFL members that relinquished their general voting rights shall not regain them unless re-attending (3) consecutive meetings.

Staff and GMFYFL members that fail to attend 7 out of 12 scheduled monthly meetings shall forfeit their League elections voting rights.

3. Approval of Motions:

It shall require approval of a majority of the voting members present to pass any motion made by due process with a show of hands which will be counted by the secretary to report in the minutes.

- The Board can vote to temporarily fill the duties of vacancy if needed, or the duties can be shared by existing board members. Vote will take place at the next scheduled League meeting. Nominees can be submitted leading up to and at the League meeting.
- If you lose electoral voting rights you lose general voting rights.

MEETINGS:

1. Quorum:

All meetings shall consist of at least seven (7) eligible League voting members including at least one Executive Board member.

2. Schedule of Meetings: GMFYFL will meet each month. The Executive Board will determine the time and location. To receive credit for attending a league meeting, you must be present for 75% of the meeting.

3. Special Meetings: The President shall have the right to call special meetings for all matters deemed necessary for or in the best interest of the League.

PRACTICES:

Practices will be held weekdays starting on August 1st or 4 weeks prior to the first game, as determined by the Conference, and continue throughout the playing season. Practice schedules will be at the discretion of the Head Coaches with the approval from the appropriate Director.

GAMES:

Coaches will only be allowed on the field of their own team/squad games unless that Coach has been asked to be a fill in Coach for that game. (Director must be notified of the change prior to the start of the game.)

Mandated playing time unless safety concerns and communicated with parents. 8 plays per game, not including special teams. Time to be kept by an assistant coach with Football Directors knowledge.

BY-LAW CHANGES:

- 1) All requests for changes to the GMFYFL By-Laws must be given to the Vice-President, in writing, one week prior to the April League meeting. The proposed changes will be discussed at the April

League meeting and voted on at the May League meeting. Dates may be changed to coincide with dates for Conference by-law changes.

- 2) Emergency changes deemed to be in the best interest of the GMFYFL may be requested and made at any time during the year, provided they are submitted to all Executive Board members for review and voted on by the Executive Board and then presented at the following League meeting.
- 3) The most current and approved version of the League ByLaws shall be made available to all members. Any updates or amendments to the ByLaws must be posted on the League's official website within a reasonable time after approval so that all members have access to the most up to date version.

ACTIVITIES/FUNDRAISERS:

- 1) Any proposals for new fundraising activities must be presented to the Vice-President and Fundraising Coordinator for review. After approval, fundraising idea(s) will be presented at the monthly League meetings.
- 2) No person associated with the GMFYFL shall make any representation or conduct any activities/fundraiser on behalf of the League without the approval of the Executive Board.
- 3) All football players and cheerleaders must participate in mandatory GMFYFL Fundraisers (as stated in the registration packet). Other fundraisers are encouraged but optional.
- 4) Any items (i.e. apparel, awards, pictures, etc.) or money not claimed by the participants will be nollied by January 31st from the previous season and not rolled over to the following season.

Banquet

- 1) Have a committee for the banquet, made up of at least one parent/coach from every team (preferred team parent) and the VP to organize
- 2) A banquet committee will be formed by September 1st consisting of any athletes's parent/guardian and any member of staff.
- 3) Banquet planning committee will schedule their own meetings however they see fit to accommodate as many members as possible.
- 4) Updates, if any, will be given at league meetings throughout the season.
- 5) The final proposal/s along with the budget will be voted on at the December league meeting by any persons with general voting rights.

TROPHIES:

1. No awards, apparel or other items indicating participation in GMFYFL will be given or worn without the approval of the Executive Board.
2. All participants who attend the end of season banquet will receive a participation certificate or medal if no trophy is received.
3. There will be an option if a team would like a Trophy or a ring at the same value

Trophy sizes will be of equal size for both football and cheerleader participants.

- a. GMFYFL will mimic conference placing for both football and cheer. The Groton-Mystic Falcons will recognize this accomplishment with a trophy, the size being determined by place finish. Only those cheerleaders competing and listed on the competition squad at roster validation in the conference competitions will be awarded a conference place trophy. All other cheerleaders will receive a participation Certificate/Medal.

- b. Only players or cheerleaders who attend the end of the year banquet will receive their earned trophy/certificate/medal.
- c. Apparel will be purchased for Championship winning teams

APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN LEAGUE ACTIVITIES:

Each application shall be accompanied by a registration fee which will cover registration for one playing season. The entire registration fee is returnable immediately, if the applicant is found to be ineligible. Registration fee refunds for participants will not occur after two weeks from the first day of practice. Hardship cases will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and the Executive Board will determine whether to waive the registration fee. The League will pay Registration fees for two children for Executive Board members and one child for Head Coaches. All Executive Board members and Head coaches will pay subsequent registration as well as participate in all mandatory fundraisers.

Medical Waiver Requirements. Each football player and cheerleader applicant must have a medical waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian in order to participate. No player or cheerleader may participate in any practice, conditioning, games, or team activities until the completed medical waiver form has been submitted to GMFYFL.

To participate in contact football activities, the applicant must be 6 years of age as of June 1st of the current year. However, GMF will evaluate any interested applicant turning 6 after June 1st on a case-by-case basis. Flag football players must be 5 years of age as of the first day of practice of the current year. Under the current playing structure outlined by the SNEYFC, football players will be playing with their same age group.

Athletes in good standing with the GMFYFL will be able to Lease Equipment for use outside of the fall season with signed agreement and deposit. If equipment is damaged or not returned the full price of equipment will be added on to next fall season's sign up minus deposit money. Athletes must register with GMF for the upcoming Fall season.

- Seniors (ages 12-14) (must not have obtained their 15th birthday before 12/31 of the current year)
- Juniors (ages 10 and 11)
- Micro (ages 8 and 9)
- PeeWee (ages 6 and 7)

Any parent may request that a player plays "UP" with the advisement of the Football Director, but no player may play lower than their age group under the current Conference structure

To participate in cheerleader activities, as annotated in the SNEYFC By-Laws, the applicant must be five years of age as of December 31st of the current year. Mini's must be 7 years old or under as of December 31st of the present year and entering 2nd grade

- 1) Registrations will be accepted as long as there are uniforms available. Once a squad reaches maximum capacity, player and cheerleader applicants will be placed on a waiting list. Previous registration in the league does not guarantee a player/cheerleader a spot the following year.

Squads for cheerleading can be a maximum of 30 participants.

Squads are composed as follows:

<u>Cheerleader</u>	<u>Age</u>	
Seniors:	12-13-14	(must not have obtained their 15 th birthday before 12/31 of
		2026 GMFYFL By-laws APPROVED May 14, 2026 Last Updated May 30, 2026

Juniors:	10-11-12	the current year and is entering 7 th or 8 th Grade) (must not have obtained their 13 th birthday before 12/31 of the current year and is entering 5 th or 6 th Grade)
Micros:	8-9-10	(must not have obtained their 11 th birthday before 12/31 of the current year and is entering 3 rd or 4 th Grade)
Mini's:	5-6-7	(must not have obtained their 8 th birthday before 12/31 of the current year and is entering kindergarten, 1 st , 2 nd Grade.)
PeeWee's:	5-6	(current year entering kindergarten, max 10 for participants)

- 2) If any child has an outstanding uniform and/or equipment or any money owed to the Groton-Mystic Youth Football League they will not under any circumstances be permitted to attend any League functions, nor will they be allowed to register for the following season. No Exceptions will be made. A certified letter will be sent out which will include a breakdown of the uniform charges. If the family is mistakenly allowed to register, the moment the mistake is discovered the child will be given a warning to return the uniform or pay the fee. If this fee is not paid or uniform returned, the child will be suspended from all further League activities until the matter is resolved.

AWARDS:

The G.M.F.Y.F.L. Executive Board will be advised if any child's participation is hindered by financial difficulties. Decisions by the Executive Board will be made no later than 2 weeks from the first day of practice.

The Mikayla McElewee Award: A micro cheerleader will be selected every year by the Coaches and Cheer Director. That best exemplifies the passion of cheerleading and positive attitude that Mikayla showed. The recipient will receive a plaque at the end of the year banquet.

The Raheem Carter Award: A Senior Football player will be selected every year by the Coaches and Football Director. That best exemplifies the meaning of being a true Falcon. The recipient will receive a plaque at the end of the year banquet.

VOLUNTEERS:

All GMFYFL volunteers and staff members are required to fill out a volunteer form. They must also agree for a background check to be conducted by the President of the League. Any league volunteer or staff member who is found to have a pending civil or criminal cases can be suspended from the position until the case is resolved. If they are found guilty of the charge, it is up to the discretion of the Executive Board to determine the length of the suspension.

ATTENDANCE:

Head Coaches will be responsible to keep an attendance record for each athlete at practices & games throughout the season. Attendance sheets must be turned in to the corresponding Secretary at the end of each week.

V. **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES:**

- 1) All grievances shall be submitted in writing to any member of the Executive Board for review by the Executive Board.
- 2) The Executive Board will respond, in writing, within 14 days with a decision.
- 3) Appeals, submitted in writing, will be presented at a special meeting of the League. Voting members will cast a final decision regarding the appeal.
- 4) Any decision made by the Executive Board can be appealed. Any appeal must be made in writing and delivered to the President within 72 hours (3 days) after the decision of the Executive Board. A special meeting of the League voting members within 48 hours (2 days) after the appeal is received shall take a majority vote of the eligible voting members in attendance to overturn the decision of the Executive board. The person submitting the appeal does not have the right to vote.

VI. **BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE**

Athletes are expected to listen to their Coaches at all times while participating at GMFYFL events. **GMFYFL will have a Zero tolerance policy for bullying, racism & sexual harassment (in person or social media).**

The League works on a 3-strike policy with the exceptions of A & B.

1. The first time there is a problem the athlete will be given a verbal warning by the Head Coach and a phone call will be made home to inform the parents/guardians of the problem. This will be documented by the Head Coach.
2. The second time, an official letter from the President of the League will be sent home stating the problem still exists and any further occurrences will result in dismissal from the League. The Executive Board reserves the right to issue one (1) game suspension at any time, which may or may not be in conjunction with a "strike" and will be handled by the appropriate Director.
3. If a third incident occurs, the participant will be asked to turn in their uniform and equipment.

Exception A. If a player is suspended from school the player will also be suspended from games and practices for the time equal to that of the school suspension.

Exception B. If a player is expelled from school or arrested for any reason, the player will be Suspended indefinitely from play until approval to participate is given by the Head Coach and the Executive Board. Approval can only be granted after a request to remain in the League is submitted in writing to the Executive Board from the player's parent/guardian. The Head Coach will keep a written log of any discipline problems.

Repercussions for bad treatment of staff and board members by anyone

Parents and Players need to understand three (3) things when it comes to how they act:

1. They represent their community.
2. They represent their league.
3. Most important the players, THEY represent YOU, the parents.

Conference Fines

- Conference fines shall be paid by the coach/spectator that received them.
- The person responsible for the fine will be ejected from the game and suspended for the following game.
- Second offenses will be responsible for the fine by the due date provided and suspended for the rest of the season.
- If fines are not paid by the due date, the person responsible will be suspended until the fine is paid and the board approves the person's return.
- Each Head Coach should be made aware of the Conference Fine Policy during interview process
- The Board reserves the right to propose a vote be taken by all eligible "General Voting" rights holders to have the fine paid by the league funds if ejection/fine is deemed unwarranted
- Payment plans can be available and must be paid prior to end of season (Conference Super Bowl day)
- Payment plans will be full transparency, and status can be requested at League meetings

Our **LEAGUE MOTTO** or standard that we have adopted is as follows:

***Always do the right thing
Whether it's on the Playing Field or
The classroom or in your social life
If you do the right thing,
you'll not only be a better player***

YOU WILL BE A BETTER PERSON

VII. COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1) All Head Coaches and Assistants shall sign and abide by all articles listed in the *Coaches' Code of Conduct*.
- 2) The *Coaches' Code of Conduct* shall become part of the GMFYFL By-laws.
- 3) The Executive Board will enforce the *Coaches' Code of Conduct*.

VIII. CERTIFICATIONS

- 1) GMFYFL will pay for certification and re-certification of ACCA Safety for the Head Cheer Coach and up to two assistants from Minis, Micros, Juniors and Seniors along with the Cheer Director (per Conference by-laws) annually when necessary.
- 2) GMFYFL will pay for First Aid Certifications of all Head Coaches, up to two assistants per team and Executive Board Members annually, when necessary, as treasury funds allow.
- 3) GMFYFL will pay for NYCC Certifications of all Coaches on a roster.
- 4) All Coaches must attend the current year's Conference *Coaches' Instructional Clinic* as per the Conference by-laws.
- 5) All Coaches must have **ALL** certifications required in order to be on the field.
- 6) All adult Cheer Coaches must be certified through NYCC annually each season.
- 7) All adult Coaches must complete concussion certification through ACCA.
- 8) All adult Coaches must provide copies of all certifications to the League Secretary within 10 days of completion.
- 9) GMFYFL will pay for USA Football Certification for All Head Coaches and up to four assistants per team along with any Executive Board Members.

IX. COMMUNITY SERVICE

- 1) High School students may do community service for school/college applications within the League under the direction of the Directors.