

Grayslake Colts

Football & Cheerleading



2026 Registration Packet

Welcome to Grayslake Colts Football and Cheer!!!

This information packet has been put together to help answer questions you may have for the 2026 season and provide you with information on the Colts in general. Please read this packet in its entirety. Should you have questions that are not answered in this packet, please visit our website at www.grayslakecolts.org or e-mail us at info@grayslakecolts.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board meetings usually take place the second Tuesday of every month in various locations, and times vary depending on football and cheer season. Please check the website and/or Facebook for exact dates, times and locations. We encourage all parents & guardians to attend and actively participate in the management and development of this great program.

Please note – any parent/guardian that attends four (4) or more Board Meetings per year is entitled to vote in the annual election in December.

2026 Board of Directors:

POSITION	BOARD MEMBER NAME
President	Katie Deinken
Vice President	Open
Registrar	Kevin McMahon
Treasurer	John Kavanagh
Secretary / Director of Communications	Ashley Mahoney
Assistant Director of Communications	Open
Director of Football	Mike Nieder
Assistant Directors of Football	Ivan DeLeon, Rob Lintner, Fatima Montes, Tim Fish, Ron Garbett
Director of Cheer	Open
Assistant Directors of Cheer	Alyssa Zamora, Open, Open
Director of Concessions	Open
Director of Wearables	Chloe Bustos
Director of Fundraising	Megan Henkels
Assistant Director of Fundraising	Melissa Fish

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

2026 Registration will begin in February through our online registration. We will post all registration information on our website at www.grayslakecolts.org, on Facebook, and communicate information via flyers and signs throughout the community. Our online registration system allows us to be able to provide a payment option for our registrations. These payments can be made only by Debit/Credit Card. Check, cash and money orders are not accepted for registration payments.

*****UNIFORMS OR PLAYER EQUIPMENT MAY NOT BE ISSUED WITHOUT PAYMENT IN FULL OR PAYMENT PLAN IN PROCESS*****

2026 registration costs:

Spring flag football	\$125 per athlete
Fall tackle football	\$450 per athlete through May, \$500 starting June 1
Fall cheer (grades 1-8)	\$675 per athlete
Fall cheer (kindergarten/sideline)	\$150 per athlete

Fees are reduced \$50 for each additional family member in the Colts (applicable only for Fall tackle football and Fall cheer grades 1-8. **If you are registering for different sports (e.g.: one in football and one in cheer), you MUST email the registrar** (registrar@grayslakecolts.org) **prior to registration** in order to receive the discount. Once your registration is submitted, the discount may not be honored.

Withdrawals and refunds

Our 2024 refund policy is posted on our website, and you should always visit our website for the most accurate information. Visit www.grayslakecolts.org and click on the Communications tab at the top of the page.

VOLUNTEERING & CONCESSION COMMITMENTS

The Colts program is made up entirely of volunteers. The members of the board are also volunteers and do NOT receive discounts or compensation of any kind for their service. Without the help of parents, none of this is possible. We are always looking for board members, head coaches, assistant coaches and team coordinators. If you are interested in coaching football, cheerleading, or being a team coordinator, please contact our Director of Football, Director of Cheer or the Director of Communications.

*****All board members, coaches and team coordinators are required to successfully complete a background check prior to engaging with children in any Colts capacity*****

All parents will be required to volunteer during the fall session in concessions or wearables for 2 hours per family. Additionally, for every home game, we must have football parents volunteer to operate a chain gang, clock/score keeper, down markers, clean-up crew etc. Chain gang, clock/score keeper, down markers do not count towards the 2 hours per family. Parents are required to sign up electronically via the Colts website for (2) one-hour shifts at the concessions or wearables area during home games. The shift that you sign-up for does not have to be during your child's game time. We offer a **buyout option** if you do not wish to participate in the concession or wearables volunteer program. The buyout is \$50.00 per family and payable during registration. Two hours of concession or wearables duty must be completed and all equipment returned clean and in good condition. **If your concession hours are not completed, and you did not pay the buy-out fee, you will be invoiced for \$50** following equipment return. Please note that only persons aged 18 and over are allowed to work concession duties. All volunteers will undergo a brief training course to familiarize themselves with the operations of the concession stand and/or the spirit wear area at the beginning of their shift.

FUNDRAISING

As a non-profit organization, the Colts are completely dependent on the parents and community businesses for funding. The Colts primary fundraiser each year is called "Charity Mania", which is our largest source of income aside from registration. Each family will receive 10 Charity Mania tickets for sale at \$20.00 per ticket. Each athlete is required to sell a minimum of 5 (five) Charity Mania tickets at \$20 each. Alternatively, you may opt to pay the buy-out fee of \$100.00, which can be paid during registration. If you choose to sell the minimum of 5 tickets, but do not fulfill this requirement, the \$100 will be added to your 2023 registration balance. Grayslake Colts functions based on fundraising, donations and registration fees, so we ask that all families work to sell at least 10 tickets or more per athlete, but the minimum requirement is 5 per athlete. In addition to Charity Mania, from time to time, the organization may also participate in additional fundraisers throughout the season.

The Colts also utilize concessions and spirit wear sales as fundraising opportunities for the organization. There is no outside food allowed at any of the Colts utilized facilities during practices or home games without the prior approval from the President or Director of Concessions. Your team may schedule a team snack, lunch/dinner, and/or party by

contacting our Director of Concessions at concessions@grayslakecolts.org. Our spirit wear designs are generally exclusive to the Grayslake Colts. As such, vendors of Colts merchandise must be preapproved prior to each order. Teams and individuals are NOT allowed to place their own direct orders with our or other vendors unless approved in advance by the Director of Wearables. Profits from our concessions and spirit wear fundraising programs help offset your registration fees by helping to cover operational expenses. ALL of the Grayslake Colts intellectual property is protected by law and may not be used, edited, or reproduced in any way without advance written permission from the Board of Directors. This includes, but is not limited to, The Grayslake Colts Name (in any form or abbreviation), logos, and cheers.

The Grayslake Colts also reach out to local businesses for Sponsorships. If you or the company you work for have a business that would be interested in a sponsorship, please visit our Sponsorship section on the Colts website or email at info@grayslakecolts.org for more information.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our primary communication vehicles are our website, email, and Facebook/Instagram and the Sports Engine app. You may receive calls, texts or e-mails from the team coordinator or coaches when necessary. PLEASE NOTE: When completing your registration form, please be sure to completely fill in ALL the fields under parent/guardian contact information. If these fields are not filled out correctly or left blank, no information will be sent. If you have a change of information or no longer want to receive the information at a specific email address or phone number, please email us at registrar@grayslakecolts.org with the updates.

POLICIES

Code of Conduct

The Grayslake Colts is a quality organization. You and your athlete will be required to sign the “Code of Conduct” at registration and/or at subsequent parent meetings. The Colts want to educate and communicate to both parents and athletes alike what we consider to be appropriate behavior both on and off the field, and make sure we have your understanding and commitment that you will conduct yourselves appropriately. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of the Board Members if we may be of service to you or your athlete.

By-Laws

The Colts are governed by the “Constitution & By-Laws of the Grayslake Football & Cheerleading Association” which can be found on the Colts website at www.grayslakecolts.org. We require all parents to become familiar with and follow our by-laws, acknowledging their receipt via the athlete registration form.

Heat

The Colts have a heat policy that addresses what we do when the weather gets warm. The important points to remember including:

- We will assess conditions usually around 4:00 pm using the heat index in Grayslake as our guide.
- If practice needs to be adjusted or cancelled, we will blast out a phone message and post to Facebook by 4:30.
- For a heat index under 100, practice will be held as normal.
- For a heat index between 100 and 104, practice will be modified and limited.
 - Athletes dress in T-shirt, shorts, and shoes.
 - Football players will NOT wear helmets or pads.
 - Water breaks will be every 15-20 minutes.
 - Practices will be limited to light activity.
 - Coaches will focus on instructional training and walk-through drills.
- For a heat index 105 or above, practice will be cancelled.
- Parents ultimately have the discretion of determining when to send their children to practice. If your child is unable to make it to practice, please let your coach know.

Lightning

Please see the Colts website www.grayslakecolts.org for the most up-to-date policy around lightning.

Field Conditions

If the fields are too wet due to inclement weather or other issues, practice and/or games may be cancelled at the discretion of the Board of Directors and/or the field owners. If practice needs to be adjusted or cancelled, we will blast out a phone, email, and/or text message as soon as the decision is made.

FOOTBALL

Colts & TCYFL

The Grayslake Colts are a member of the TCYFL (The Chicagoland Youth Football League). The TCYFL is currently made up of 45+ communities and is still growing. The TCYFL communities range as far south as Plainfield, Illinois and as far north as Wilmot, Wisconsin. The TCYFL is broken into two competitive levels: Big10 and Pac10. Athletes are placed into the appropriate competitive level based on player evaluations and is determined by the coaches and player draft. Neither parents nor athletes may request to play at a specific level or for a specific coach. The Director of Football and all Assistant Directors of Football oversee this process and are responsible for final approval of team selections and scheduling for our organization.

PLEASE NOTE: The TCYFL is the organization which provides the platform in which we compete. The TCYFL does not resolve or address complaints from parents related to the Grayslake Colts. Any issues, complaints or concerns you may have must be directed to a board member. Please bring your concern to your Head Coach, Assistant Director of Football, Director of Football, or the President. Parents MAY NOT contact TCYFL directly for any reason.

Games & Schedules

Game schedules are established by the TCYFL. We ask your patience as scheduling all of the games is a very difficult process for the TCYFL. Big10 game schedules are usually available first; they are easier to schedule since all towns have only one team at each level. Pac10 games pose the greatest challenge since many towns have 2 or more teams at each level. The TCYFL not only juggles scheduling games but must also work with the various communities to find available field space for all required games each weekend. This is not an easy process; it requires a lot of coordination and takes time.

Games at either level may be played on Saturday or Sunday, although competitive games are mostly played on Sundays and instructional games on Saturdays. The TCYFL posts game schedules as soon as all the logistics have been worked out. Please be patient. Typically for the first four weeks of the season the game schedule for that weekend will come out the Thursday before game day. Keep in mind all members of the TCYFL are volunteers.

All teams play 9 regular season games, unless there is an uneven number of teams, in which case, each team will play 8 games and receive 1 bye week; the first game of the season is usually the last weekend of August. The TCYFL play-off games begin the last weekend of October and conclude in mid-November.

You may check www.grayslakecolts.org at any time for updates on game schedules. Directions are also provided to each venue under Field Locations on the Colts website as well as on the TCYFL site. In addition, Coaches and/or Team Coordinator may also provide scheduling information and directions.

TCYFL Divisions

Big 10

The Big 10 division emphasizes competition at a high level. Big 10 teams are composed of the best and most capable players at each level. Each Big 10 team must roster a minimum of 18 players. The TCYFL does not impose a minimum number of plays per athlete at the Big 10 however the Grayslake Colts do require each Big 10 coach to play each player a minimum of 10 plays per game. The age restrictions are based on a player's age on September 1st.

Pac 10

The Pac 10 emphasizes instruction, development, and participation. The Pac 10 has an Eleven On – Eleven Off rule. This is provided to promote balanced playing time for all players. Pac 10 teams are drafted from the pool of players who did not get selected for the Big 10 or MAC team at their respective weight class. The Pac 10 division has provisions for younger heavier players known as the striper rules. The TCYFL is continually evaluating the striper rules and may make some adjustments to these rules. If you are a parent of a double striper, please be sure to contact the Director of Football for an explanation of the current player exception process. If the TCYFL does make any changes to the striper rules, we will be sure to notify the parents of any player who may be affected by the rule change as soon as possible.

Flyweights

Flyweight Players must be no older than six (6) years old as of September 1, weighing no more than 77 pounds for week one, including minimum clothing and pad requirements for weigh-ins. This weight limit will increase by one-half pound per week for the entire season. The Flyweight Level does not provide for Older/Lighter or Younger/Heavier players. There will be no score-keeping by any official, coach, player, team, parent or other person and no posting of the score of any Flyweight game or scrimmage. Additionally, there will be no Post Season for Flyweight – no playoff or Championship games.

Before the school year begins, flyweight team practices are limited to a maximum of six (6) hours per week, and a maximum of three (3) days per week. While school is in session, a

flyweight team practices are limited to a maximum of four (4) hours per week, and a maximum of two (2) days per week.

Week 9 of the season, our flyweights participate in “The Flybowl” games.

Teams are compiled based on the TCYFL Age/Weight parameter for the current season. Age/Weight parameters for each season are posted to The Grayslake Colts Website as they are updated by TCYFL.

Football Equipment

Equipment handout is held at the Colts Equipment Barn located behind the building at 31 S. Seymour in downtown Grayslake (across from the police station). Players must appear at their scheduled date and time (details will be posted on the website and on Facebook) to be fitted for their equipment. The equipment distributed includes a helmet, shoulder pads, girdle, game pants, practice pants, belts, practice jersey, game jersey, and 1 mouth guard. The game jersey is given out before team pictures and will have the player’s name on the back. All players will keep their game jerseys. The player is expected to provide his/her own cleats, an athletic supporter, and any additionally required mouth guards. Also, if your child requires an orthodontic mouth guard, that is the responsibility of the parent. Before being outfitted for equipment, your athlete will be weighed and assigned to the appropriate weight class. **A parent MUST be present at equipment pick-up to sign the check list and pick up your Charity Mania Fundraising Tickets.**

Equipment return is normally scheduled shortly after each teams’ last game of the season. Players will be charged for any equipment not returned in original, clean & undamaged condition at that time. **There is a \$25 charge if all equipment is not properly cleaned prior to return.**

Riddell Speed Helmet	\$175.00
Practice Pants	\$15.00
Riddell Revolution Little Pro Helmet	\$100.00
Practice Jersey	\$15.00
Riddell Little Pro Helmet	\$50.00
Girdle	\$150.00
Shoulder Pads	\$30.00
Belts	\$3.00
Defend Your Head Shell	\$135.00
Game Pants	\$30.00

Conditioning

There is a mandatory TCYFL rule that all players must complete 10 hours of football conditioning before being allowed to participate in full contact drills. This is a league requirement and participation in other sports does not eliminate this requirement. This is to allow players to prepare for the rigors of the game of football. Players who are not able to attend all 5 days of conditioning will be required to attend make-up dates with the Directors of Football before being allowed to participate in contact drills. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!! Drink plenty of water to hydrate.** Dates will be announced on the website when available.

Evaluations

Players are evaluated during the conditioning camp and the 5 days of contact drills. Players will be in full pads during all contact drills. These evaluations will be the basis on which the Head coaches will make their player selections. Dates will be announced on the website when available.

Pick-Up Policy

Football Parents may not wait in their cars for the kids to come to them after practice. All parents must physically be at practice pick-up to gather their athlete and walk him/her/them to the car. The athletes are to make sure they let the coaches know their parents are there, and then they will be allowed to leave. Please remember that you can be ticketed for parking in the no parking areas.

PARENTS: Please make sure you have the SportsEngine app and you are receiving notifications. This is the sole approved manner in which coaches, TCs and Board Members will/may be in contact with you. The coaches only have access to your email and phone # if you have updated your SportsEngine profile, but they don't have a way to send out mass texts. Also, please have a conversation with your athlete(s). The coaches will be having the same conversation with the teams. There is always someone at the fields until all football athletes have been picked up, so please make sure your athlete understands that they are not allowed to leave alone.

Football Practice

Once the teams have been selected/drafted your player will practice with his/her assigned team. Practices generally start at 5:30 PM and end at 7:30 PM and are held Monday thru Thursday each week. The TCYFL allows us 8 practice hours a week; we will be practicing 6-8 hours. Times and dates will be announced once teams are picked and posted on the website. Football is a team sport. The goals of the organization are to teach teamwork, sportsmanship, enthusiasm, responsibility and commitment. Football is a huge time

commitment on the part of both the athlete and the athlete's parents. It is important that your child attend every practice. An athlete who misses practice penalizes the entire team, not just himself. Athletes who miss practice may be penalized playing time during games. If your athlete will miss a practice or game, please notify the head coach as soon as possible so he/she may make any necessary adjustments.

Parent Meetings

The President of the Colts in partnership with the Director of Football will conduct a parent meeting before the session begins. Attendance is required by at least one parent of every athlete. Hopefully, these meetings will provide you answers to many of the questions you may have before and during the session. Please check the website and/or Facebook for the date, time, and location. Each Head coach is required to have a meeting with his/her team parents prior to the first game to explain his practice attendance requirements, and in the case of the Pac 10 the eleven-on-eleven-off rule. If you have any questions that the Head coach is not available to answer or is unable to answer, you may ask the Director of Football or any of the Assistant Directors of Football at any time. Please check the website and/or Facebook for the date, time, and location.

CHEERLEADING

Summer/Fall Session

What you get with your Fall Cheer registration: Game uniform, competition uniform, competition bow, game bow, practice wear, all non-state competition gifts, indoor facility rental, organizational gift, choreography, team music, non-state competition entrance fees and end of year party money. Teams are determined based on the number of athletes who register in each grade. Grades may be combined up to three consecutive grade levels, competing at the highest grade level, or split to ensure a successful team.

Safety

The safety of our Cheerleaders is our number one priority. We are not a gym and do not teach tumbling. A cheerleader may only practice a tumbling technique that has been perfected at a gym or at home. Stunting progressions will also be followed. All stunts and tumbling need to be performed on the grass or on a mat with a junior coach or parent coach present. Also, strict drop off and pickup guidelines for all ages will be enforced.

Attendance

GAMES, PRACTICES, COMPETITIONS, COLTS EVENTS ARE MANDATORY. Attendance plays a big role in cheerleading and team building. Cheerleading utilizes every athlete on their team. When an athlete is not at practice it affects their entire team. Please be considerate of the effect your child's absence has on the rest of their teammates. Please communicate in advance with your coach when you will be planning vacations. Excused absences are illness, pre-planned vacations, school, religious activities, and family crisis. Cheerleaders may have up to three (3) unexcused absences once school begins and still participate in competition. Athletes that have more than three (3) unexcused absences may not be able to compete, until the athlete has explained in writing why he/she missed practice/games and has received the approval of the Director of Cheer to participate in competition.

Parent Meeting

The President of the Colts in partnership with the Director of Cheer will conduct a Colts organizational parent/guardian meeting before the session begins. Attendance is required by at least one parent/guardian of each athlete. All teams will also have a parent meeting no later than the first practice of the session. Please check the website and/or Facebook for the date, time and location.

Summer/Fall Session

All cheerleaders will be issued a game jersey and bow. Athletes should arrive to game day and competition uniform fittings in a bathing suit and/or sports bra/spanks and flip flops. Parents are responsible for the replacement cost of lost or damaged attire. A parent/guardian MUST be present at pick-up to sign the check list and pick up your Charity Mania Fundraising Tickets.

Additional Summer/Fall Session Expenses

All cheerleaders will need the following that are not covered in the registration fee:

- Game Shoes – a pair of plain white shoes to be worn to outdoor practices and games. Game shoes do not have to be new but cannot have any other colors on the shoe – all white.
- Competition Shoes – all athletes will need to purchase a specific shoe that is to be only worn to indoor practices and competitions/showcase. These shoes will be available for pick-up/purchase at our shoe fitting which are tax free when purchased during our shoe fitting; please know that taxes will apply if you are purchasing in store rather than during our shoe fitting.

Estimated additional expenses:

TACKLE FOOTBALL - COMPETITION CHEER - FLAG / 7on7 FOOTBALL - SIDELINE CHEER

Competition shoes	\$65.00-\$130.00
Game shoes	\$20.00-\$50.00
State entrance fee	\$165.00
State/end of season gift	\$25.00-\$30.00

Fall Session Team Placement/Practices

Athletes are placed on a team based on their Fall grade in school. Teams are determined based on the number of athletes who register in any particular grade. Grades may be combined up to three consecutive grade levels, competing at the highest grade level, or split, to ensure a successful team.

All practices will be held outdoors/indoors at one of the following locations – D46 schools, D127 High Schools, Gymnastic Factory, Twisters, Venture Athletics or Aquatic field.

Typically, athletes will practice as follows:

- K – 3rd Grade: 1-2 hours, 2 days/week
- 4th – 5th Grade: 2-3 hours, 2-3 days/week
- 6th – 8th Grade: 2-3 hours, 2-3 days/week

Athletes in grades K – 3 will generally practice between 5-8pm, while 4th – 8th graders will generally practice from 6-9pm. The first week of practice will focus on technique and allows the athletes a chance to bond with their team, learn sideline cheers and safe stunting.

Illinois Cheer Association (ICA) state competition takes place before Thanksgiving. ICA requires all organizations to adhere to a mandatory 2-weeks of no contact/practice throughout the season. We intend to take those throughout the summer and near July 4. dates will be available on the calendar.

Practice

Practices may be adjusted at the discretion of your athletes Team Coaches and Directors. Additional practices will be added during the summer before school starts AND in the weeks leading up to competition for preparation.

Practice Attire

Please come ready to practice i.e., hair pulled up, proper athletic wear (Please note: practice wear provided by Colts that was included in the registration fee will be utilized, and communicated by your athletes Coaches to what designated days they are to be worn at practices), proper athletic shoes, bug spray and sunscreen if needed, and a water bottle. **NO JEANS, NO SKORTS/SKIRTS AND NO JEWELRY IS TO BE WORN AT ANY TIME FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL THE ATHLETES!** Please see Code of Conduct.

Choreography

This is mandatory attendance practices where the team will work with an outside coach who is being paid to teach the girls their competition routine for the season. Every athlete on the team is required to be there for the entire duration of each session. These dates will be announced by the end of March.

- K-3 will be 2-3 sessions at 2-3 hours per session
- 4-8 will be 2 sessions 4-5 hours per session

Football Games

We are a traveling organization; therefore our teams will cheer for our Grayslake Colts Football teams at home and away games. Games are played on either Saturdays or Sundays late August through November. Football game schedules are established by the Chicago Youth Football League (TCYFL). We ask for your patience, as scheduling all the games is a very difficult process for the TCYFL; it requires a lot of coordination and takes time.

Cheerleading teams will cheer the entire home or away football game which may include overtime and perform a half time routine.

GAMES MAY SOMETIMES BE DELAYED DUE TO INJURIES ON THE FIELD, OVERTIME, WEATHER, ETC. PLEASE NOTE – IF YOUR ATHLETE’S TEAM IS NOT SCHEDULED TO CHEER AT AN AWAY GAME, THERE MAY BE A MANDATORY PRACTICE IN PLACE OF IT.

Spring and Summer/Fall Session Competitions and ICA

Competition is a privilege. Attendance and punctuality as well as Good Sportsmanship will determine participation. The Directors and Coaches reserve the right to pull an athlete from a competition. Colts Cheer is a member of the Illinois Cheer Association (ICA), and they are sister organizations. All of our competitions are hosted and run by the ICA, and they are the organization which provides the platform in which we compete. The Grayslake Colts take great pride in being a member of their organizations. Should there ever be a question regarding any of our competitions, a concern at or about a competition and/or complaint, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE should a member of the Grayslake Colts or family and/or friends of the Grayslake Colts member, communicate via email, phone, social media, in person and/or approach any ICA Member, Staff or Affiliate. Please see Coach, Liaison, Board Member or go directly to the Director of Cheer. The Director of Cheer is the only person to be in direct communication with the ICA.

Please note: ICA/Grayslake Colts reserves the right to request birth certificates from all registered athletes.

Competitions

A signed competition contract will be required for each child to participate in any competition. All athletes will attend 3 regular season competitions. Additionally, all teams who earn a bid to state will have the privilege of competing at the State competition in November. Regular season competition gifts are covered in registration costs. STATE is a Privilege. Should your athletes' team advance to state, you will incur additional costs associated with your athletes ICA State Competition fee of \$165 and State Gifts \$25-\$30.

Games, Competition and Colts Events Etiquette and Attire

Cheer athletes, as well as parents, are expected to act as it states in our Colts Code of Conduct. Please see the Code of Conduct. In addition, Cheer athletes are to wear proper attire to ALL of our Colts events. Athletes are expected to have the following: Hair pulled back with proper Bow, No jewelry, No Make-up, No nail polish (competition ONLY), designated socks, designated bra and proper shoes.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be a NSF charge of \$25.00 for ALL returned checks.