

GOPHER STATE FOOTBALL LEAGUE MEETING



APRIL 21, 2025
THE BALLPARK – BLAINE, MN

LEAGUE UPDATE

- **Gopher State Football League**
- **COMMITTED ASSOCIATIONS**



ANDOVER



ANOKA



APPLE VALLEY



ARMSTRONG



BLAINE



BLOOMINGTON



BROOKLYN CENTER



BROOKLYN PARK



BURNSVILLE



CENTENNIAL



CHAMPLIN



COL HTS



COOPER



COON RAPIDS



IRONDALE



FRIDLEY



MPLS PHELPS



OSSEO



SHAKOPEE



STP FROGTOWN



SPRING LK PK



WESTSIDE



WASHBURN



CHISAGO LAKES



ELK RIVER



FOREST LAKE



MONTICELLO



NORTH BRANCH



ST. FRANCIS



ROGERS



**7th/8th
Grade**

- **OTHER PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS**

MYAS LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVES



- **REGISTERPLAY PLATFORM**
 - **Association Home**
 - **Missing - Andover, Brooklyn Park, Burnsville, Frogtown, Shakopee, Washburn**
 - **Staff Member Capabilities**
 - **Inviting Association Staff Members**
 - **Creating Teams**
 - **Inviting Coaches**
 - **Roster Invitations**
 - **Team Enrollment – Opens 6/1**
 - **Support & Assistance – Football@myas.org**

ASSOCIATION GOVERNANCE

GSFL ADVISORY GROUP

- **Thank you to the nearly 50 individuals representing their association for Grades 2-6 and Grades 7-8.**
- **This Advisory Group will oversee the league, ensuring collaboration and effective decision-making among all participating associations. This Advisory Board would be facilitated by the Managing Directors of the League**



ASSOCIATION ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

✓ **The Gopher State Football League (GSFL) is a community-based league. Teams must be formed based on where players live or attend school. The GSFL only recognizes teams from:**



- **Bonafide community associations with multiple teams and year-over-year operations, or:**
- **School-based programs operating within defined boundaries**

(e.g. city limits or high school attendance area or district attendance area)

- **All-Star, Independent, or club/academy-style teams are **NOT** permitted**

ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ **Associations must be democratically structured, with elected leadership and open communication channels for parents and participants**
- ✓ **They must support multiple grade levels and operate with the intent to exist annually**



PLAYER ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

- **Players must compete for the community or school-based association aligned with their residence or school**
- **In the case of split households, the athlete may play in the association closest to either parent's residence**
- **If no association exists, or if an association cannot form a team due to low numbers, players may join a bordering recognized association without a waiver**



WAIVER PROCESS

- **If a player wishes to play outside of their home association or school attendance area, a GSFL Player Waiver must be:**
 - **Initiated by the family**
 - **Approved by both associations (home and receiving)**
 - **Signed by all associations geographically between the two associations, if applicable**
 - **Note: All waiver requests are subject to review and approval by GSFL Managing Directors, who have final authority on eligibility matters**
 - **Any exceptions to the above guidelines require the approval of the GSFL Managing Directors**



TEAM COMPOSITION GUIDELINES

To promote competitive balance and maximize player development, the GSFL strongly encourages youth football organizations with multiple teams at the same grade level to conduct an annual review of team composition. The purpose of this review is to assess team strength and ensure a more balanced distribution of talent across all teams - creating a fairer, more competitive league environment that benefits all players.

- **Conduct a full player evaluation and redistribution process between:**
 - **3rd to 4th Grade**
 - **6th to 7th Grade**
- **Publish your association's team formation and development process on your website to ensure transparency and consistency.**
- **Avoid keeping the same players together on the same team year after year. This practice can limit development and disrupt competitive balance.**

Each community is ultimately responsible for the composition of its teams and for ensuring all players are properly registered and safely equipped.



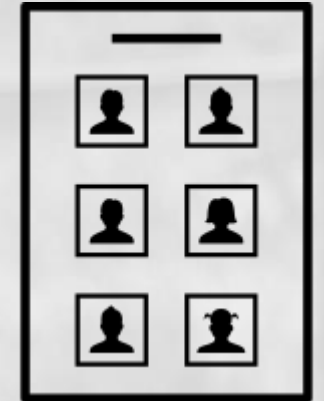
ROSTER SIZE GUIDELINES

An adequately sized roster is essential to maintain player safety, provide meaningful playing time, and meet league expectations.

KEY POINTS

- If a team is short players, they may **borrow substitute players from the opposing team**, but only:
 - For that specific game
- Associations are **strongly discouraged** from rostering more than **30 players** on a single team. Excessively large rosters often lead to limited playing time, which is not in the best interest of player development.

NOTE: Teams that choose to carry large rosters will be strictly held to GSFL playing time requirements. Excuses like “we only have one coach” or “this is what the parents want” are not acceptable. There are always solutions, and the GSFL is committed to supporting associations willing to split into multiple teams to do what’s best for the kids.



RECOMMENDED ROSTER MAXIMUMS

GRADE LEVEL

MAX ROSTER SIZE

2nd-6th Grade – 9-Man

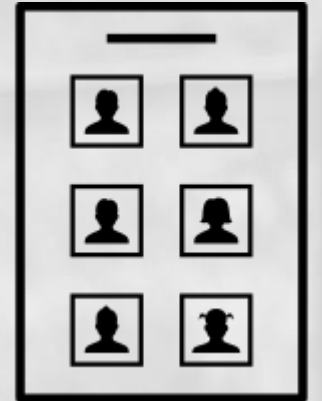
18 Players

2nd-6th Grade – 11-Man

22 Players

7th-8th Grade – 11-Man

33 Players



TRUSTED GSFL COACHES' REQUIREMENTS

- Two (2) members of a team's coaching staff (entire coaching staff is recommended) must be recognized as **Trusted Coaches** or an equivalent program that provides verified concussion certification, child safety training and background checks. These requirements ensure that all coaches meet the highest standards for player safety, well-being, and development.
 - **Background Checks:** All coaches and administrative personnel must pass a background check within the last three (3) years. Best Practices recommend an ANNUAL Background Check.
 - **Concussion Certification:** Per Minnesota State Law, all coaches and administrators must complete an accredited concussion course that needs to be renewed every three (3) years.
 - **Child Abuse Training (aka SafeSport):** Coach are in compliance with mandates directly related to the SafeSport Act of 2017, which is federal law.



TRUSTED GSFL COACHES' EXPECTATIONS

- Two (2) members of a team's coaching staff are required to complete a **FREE** GSFL Coaches Training course through Trusted Coaches, prior to the start of the season.

NOTE: Many GSFL organizations are already using Trusted Coaches for all coaching certification requirements.

- All members of a coaching staff are *encouraged* to complete a **minimum level of sport-specific training** through one of the following approved programs:
 - **USA Football**
 - **The GSFL in-person coaches' clinic** (held annually in late July)
 - **A coaches' clinic hosted by the high school football program** and sponsored by the association

This fosters standardized training for all coaches' to enhance player development, safety, and overall program integrity.



**Protect Your
Athletes and
Organization
with Trusted
Coaches**

**BETTER
COACHES.**

SAFER KIDS.

GAME HOSTING PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

Key Dates for Game Planning: 6/1- 8/1



- **Schedules Release: Starts 8/17**
- **Representatives will receive Game Day Survey for Team Hosting, Special Dates, and No Play Dates/Times**
 - **No later than 6/1**
- **All requested information must be returned by 8/1 for consideration as scheduling grid work begins.**
- **Field/Facility Preparation**
- **Help us Help you!**

PLAY DATES

- **FLEXIBLE START DATES**
- **REGULAR SEASON/BOWL GAMES:**
(August 25-October 12)
- **ADDITIONAL LEAGUE OPPORTUNITY:**
 - **Extended Season (October 21 – November 2)**



2025 GSFL PLANNING CALENDAR

2025 Gopher State Football League Planning Calendar - Key Dates

**Subject to Change*

Day/Date	Grade 2 - 6 Event/Activitiy	Grade 7-8 Event/Activitiy
MON 4/21	GSFL Meeting - Advisory Group @ Ballpark	GSFL Meeting - Advisory Group @ Ballpark
MON 5/19	GSFL Meeting - Advisory Group, if needed	GSFL Meeting - Advisory Group, if needed
Beginning 6/1	Request for Association Game Hosts- Opens Request for Special Play Dates- Opens Host Officials Assigners Identified and Confirmed	Request for Association Game Hosts- Opens Request for Special Play Dates- Opens Host Officials Assigners Identified and Confirmed
MON 7/21	GSFL Meeting - Advisory Group if needed	GSFL Meeting - Advisory Group if needed
Week of 7/28-7/31	GSFL Coaches Clinic	GSFL Coaches Clinic
FRI 8/1	League – Enrollment Deadlines Team Entry -Registrations Due Game Hosts/Play Dates -Request Due	League – Enrollment Deadlines Team Entry -Registrations Due Game Hosts/Play Dates -Request Due
SUN 8/3	Grade Level Coaches Meeting 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM Grade 5/Grade 6 Two groups split/Rotate half way. *Need 2 coaches/ reps per team	
MON 8/4		Grade Level Coaches Meeting, 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM Grade 7/8 Two groups split/Rotate half way. *Need 2 coaches/ reps per team
WED 8/6	Grade Level Coaches Meeting 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM Grade 3/Grade 4 Two groups split/Rotate half way. *Need 2 coaches/ reps per team	
MON 8/11	Grade Level Coaches Meeting 6:30 - 7:30 PM Grade 2 *Need 2 coaches/ reps per team	
Week of 8/11	Week of Schedules Posting to Website by: August 17 – Grade 5-6 (First games week of 8/25) August 24 – Grade 2-4 (First games Sept 7)	Week of Schedules Posting to Website by: August 17 - First Games week of 8/25



GRADE LEVEL BREAKOUT SESSIONS



- **7th-8th Grade Representatives**
 - Led by John and Dawson, with League Rep Eric Rathke
- **2nd-6th Grade Representatives**
 - Led by Kevin with League Rep Adam Cook

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND DEDICATION

- **Questions?**
- **Next Meeting if needed- May 19, 2025**

