

Meeting Summary – Gopher State Football League Update

Date: March 3, 2025

Attendees:

- Managing Directors: Dawson Blanck, Kevin Johnston, and John Swanson
 - MYAS League Representatives: Adam Cook, Lance Klinkhammer, Eric Rathke
 - Football Association Leaders Present: Representatives from Andover, Anoka, Apple Valley, Armstrong, Blaine, Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Burnsville, Centennial, Champlin, Coon Rapids, Fridley, Osseo, Shakopee, Spring Lake Park, Chisago Lakes Area, St. Francis, and Rogers.
 - Not present: Brooklyn Park, Columbia Heights, Cooper, Mpls. Phelps, St. Paul Frogtown, Elk River, Forest Lake, Monticello, and North Branch
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1. Introduction- John Swanson opened the meeting with an update on the league’s progress.

- Key Announcements:
 - 27 youth football associations have officially committed to joining the league.
 - Discussions are ongoing with Metro East Youth Football League leadership and other community associations about potential collaboration.
 - The Big Norse Youth Football League has formally joined the GSFL and will serve as the league’s southern division.
- The league has been officially named the “Gopher State Football League (GSFL).”
Next Steps: Development of the league logo – associations are encouraged to submit design ideas.

2. Association Governance

- Each participating association will appoint a representative to serve on the GSFL Advisory Group. Associations enrolling teams in both Grades 2-6 and Grades 7-8 must designate two representatives.
 - The Advisory Group will oversee league operations, foster collaboration among associations, and support effective decision-making. The League’s Managing Directors will facilitate the group’s efforts, ensuring alignment with the league’s mission and goals.
 - Members of the Advisory Group may be assigned to subcommittees responsible for evaluating and recommending rules, policies, procedures, and best practices. These recommendations will be presented to the full Advisory Group for review and implementation.
 - Playing Rules: Will be finalized in the upcoming April-May meetings.
 - Action Item: Associations, please confirm their advisory group representatives before the next meeting.
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3. RegisterPlay Platform & Association Support- Led by Adam Cook & Lance Klinkhammer (MYAS)

- Overview of *RegisterPlay*, the league's digital platform for streamlined team and association management:
 - Association Home – A central hub for organizational management.
 - Team Creation & Enrollment – Simplified team registration process.
 - Roster Submission – Easy player registration and tracking.
 - League Management – Tools for associations to update schedules, rosters, and announcements.
 - Website- The league landing page will be hosted on **myas.org**, while schedules, standings, and other GSFL management tools will be accessible via **myasrp.com**.
 - Associations are encouraged to explore the platform and begin setting up their portals. A "**Welcome**" email, including *RegisterPlay* set-up instructions, should have already been sent to the leaders of committed youth football associations.
 - Do not hesitate to contact football@myas.org, or call Adam, Lance or Eric.
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4. Youth Football League Best Practices & Participation Requirements- Presented by Dawson Blanck

- Association Criteria: To ensure long-term sustainability and competitive integrity, all participating associations must meet the following standards:
 - Bona Fide: Must field multiple teams at different grade levels.
 - Perpetual: Structured for year-over-year continuity with sustainable leadership.
 - Democratic: Governed by bylaws, elections, and a transparent coach selection process.
 - Eligibility Guidelines:
 - Teams must be community-based, consisting of players who reside in or attend school within the association's area.
 - Recognized teams must adhere to association/school district bylaws.
 - Independent, All-Star, and Open teams are ineligible to maintain a level playing field.
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5. Key Policy Discussions & Next Steps

- Addressed concerns and clarifications regarding policy implementation.
 - Upcoming Advisory Group Discussions (April-May):
 - Team Composition Policy – Structuring guidelines to ensure fair and competitive team formations.
 - Roster Size Recommendations – Standardized team sizes to promote equitable playing time and participation.
 - Action Item: Association leaders are encouraged to provide input during the month of March, as it relates to team composition and roster size policies to prepare for the April League Advisory Group meeting. Please do not hesitate to send feedback to Dawson, Kevin, or John.
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6. Association & Team Management Guidelines- Led by Kevin Johnston

- Pending Decisions: Finalization of Team Composition Policy & Roster Size Standards.
- Coaching Standards:
 - Coaches must adhere to best practices outlined by:
 - Trusted Coaches or similar programs (concussion certification, child safety training, and background checks).
 - All coaching staff must 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
 - Mandatory coaching meetings in early August.
- Game Officiating:
 - The Supervisor of Officials will oversee the officiating assignments and training to ensure quality control.
 - The league will recognize the following certification/registration pathways:
 - **Trusted Officials Registered** – Officials who fulfill minimum requirements through the MYAS/Trusted Officials Central Hub via ArbiterSports.
 - **MSHSL Certified** – Officials who complete certification through the MSHSL Central Hub via ArbiterSports.
 - **GSFL-Verified** – Officials approved by league assignors who can demonstrate that their training, screening, and education meet or exceed the standards of the Trusted Officials program through an association or assigning service.

7. League Operations & Play Dates

- Regular Season: August 25 - October 12.
- Extended Season Option: October 21 - November 2.
- Flexible Start Dates available for teams as needed.
- Action Item: Associations should review their availability and plan accordingly.

8. 2025 GSFL Planning Calendar

- Please review the updated planning calendar to ensure that your association knows the upcoming timeline and deadlines.

9. Comprehensive League Entry Fees- Presented by Dawson Blanck

- Fee Breakdown:
 - Managing Director oversight.
 - MYAS League Management Services.
 - Game Officials & Assignors.
 - Officiating Oversight & Training.
 - Financial transparency through MYAS bookkeeping.
 - League website support & updates.
- The fees ensure a professionally managed league with consistent operations and fair policies.

Next Steps

1. Follow-up Communication: input on Team Composition and Roster Size.
2. Refinement of Playing Rules: To be finalized in upcoming Advisory Group meetings.
3. Advisory Group Representatives: Associations must finalize and submit their representatives for GSFL governance.
4. RegisterPlay Platform: Associations should begin setting up their Association Portal and become familiar with the platform's functionality.