

# **GSSA TEAM FORMATION POLICY**

## **YOUTH RECREATIONAL**

Adopted: March 9, 2026

### **I. ADHERENCE TO NTSSA BYLAWS FOR TEAM FORMATION**

1. GSSA follows the North Texas State Soccer Association Bylaws and Rules, specifically NTSSA Chapter 4.7 Recreational Team Formation Rules.
2. Age Group Commissioners are responsible for the development of team rosters. Commissioners will follow the process in accordance with the NTSSA Recreational Team Formation Rules.

### **II. GSSA TEAM FORMATION POLICIES**

1. To be placed on a team roster, each player must be completely registered and in the system.
2. Age groups are designated by the seasonal year age-group formation period (August 1 - July 31) as required by US Soccer for the Fall 2026 season and forward.
3. Players will be placed in priority based on registration timestamp and their player status with the following priority order:
  - a. Returning Same Team
  - b. Open Draw
  - c. New Player
4. Players who register during the wait list period of registration may lose their priority status as designated above and may be considered a “new player” for team formation purposes.
5. **RETURNING PLAYERS:** Returning players are automatically placed on their previous team if (i) the player remains age-eligible for that team’s age group under the seasonal year age-group formation, and (ii) there are enough players to form that team. Returning players may return to their team for one seasonal year as long as there is roster availability and the team still exists. A returning player may return to their previous team only if the player is age-eligible to play for that team’s age group.
  - a. For U9+ returning players, an “age-eligible player” is defined as any player who is not too old to play on the team.
  - b. For U4-U8 returning players, an “age-eligible player” is defined as any player who was born within that team’s seasonal-year range (August 1 through July 31). U4-U8 returning players who are either too old or too young to fit within their previous team’s new age group will be placed on a different team within the player’s new age group.

6. Any returning player can request “Open Draw” and will be placed on a different team if another team exists and has space. Play up requests for a returning player requesting “Open Draw” will follow the Play Up Protocol below even if the player was already playing up.
7. Players skipping more than one season are placed in the “Open Draw” pool.
8. Players from the Open Draw pool are placed based on “Public School District Elementary Zone”: Due to factors such as different numbers of players from each school, players from different schools may be placed on the same team. Additionally, to help make the team formation process unbiased and maintain fairness across all team rosters, there will be a degree of randomness and therefore a player may be on a different team than his/her neighbor, even if they are of the same age. This team formation process promotes objectivity and allows timely completion.
9. Academy Players: playing on recreational teams: Academy players may select to play recreational soccer only up to U10 age category with the following exceptions.
  - a. Each team may have no more than four Academy players on their rosters; a former Academy player will be considered an “Academy Player” if they were still an active Academy player the previous season).
10. Buddy Requests: In order to promote soccer participation, all players may make a “buddy request.” There are “No Guarantees” for this request.
  - a. Buddy requests from returning players who are inviting a buddy who was not registered with any Member Association during the last 2 seasons will be given priority.
  - b. Coaches are prohibited from guaranteeing roster spots to new players.
  - c. Buddy requests have a higher likelihood of being granted if on a territorial basis around the nearest elementary school to their home or relative of family.
  - d. Only one buddy may be requested.
  - e. Linking requests between multiple player registrations WILL NOT BE ALLOWED. Buddy requests between two players may be considered.
  - f. Abuse of the buddy request may result in placement denied or registration invalidated.
11. Play Up Requests: Play up requests MAY be granted for players requesting to play up one calendar year. For example, for U10, the age group contains players born from August 1, 2016, to July 31, 2017. U9 players born August 1, 2017 to July 31, 2018 may request to play up. No two year play up requests will be granted.
  - a. U4 – U6: Play up requests are discouraged and may be approved only for returning GSSA players and only with specific approval of age group commissioner based on competitiveness determination. Generally, players will be placed strictly in their seasonal-year age group. A play up request is NOT GUARANTEED to be approved.

- b. U7-U8: Play up requests are discouraged and may be approved only for returning GSSA players and only with specific approval of age group commissioner based on competitiveness determination. Generally, players will be placed strictly in their seasonal-year age group. A play up request is NOT GUARANTEED to be approved.
- c. U9 and above: Play up requests are based on availability at the older age groups after all players in their age group have been placed. A play up request IS NOT GUARANTEED to be approved.
- d. Exception: A younger sibling may request to play up two age groups to play with an older sibling. The request will only be honored if there is space on the roster and it does not disrupt the team forming process.
- e. Exception: Returning players on U9+ teams as described in 5a may play up to continue to play with their team.

12. Play Down Requests: A player may request to play down in age group but must have each of the following:

- a. A letter of request from the parent or guardian
- b. Must present a doctor's recommendation letter
- c. GSSA board approval
- d. NTSSA approval

13. Once the rosters become final, players will not be changed to another team for any reason. The only changes that will be made to the rosters are to add/drop players. Adding players must follow the age commissioner's team formation rule process.

14. A team not formed of players assigned as defined above is considered a select/competitive team and shall not participate in a recreational soccer league.

15. Players may be added after the beginning of the season at the discretion and approval of the Age Group Commissioner and President if there is available roster space.

16. If a player is registered with incorrect data, that may affect the player's team formation priority and placement. GSSA is not responsible for discovering registration errors.