



Diocese of Pittsburgh Soccer League

Coaches Rule Book

Updated September 2016

Diocese of Soccer League Rule Book:

All coaches in the Diocese Soccer League must read this Rule Book. This Rule Book applies to all Diocese of Pittsburgh Soccer League (DSL) schools and teams. In addition, all DSL games will be played with the most current National Federation of High School (NFHS) soccer rules. All DSL rules in this Rule Book supercede any High School rules. Violations will result in penalty as stated in the Official High School Soccer Rule book. The DSL and Pittsburgh Diocese reserve the right to apply further sanctions, as deemed appropriate, against a player, coach, spectator, school or referee who is found violating any Official High School or DSL soccer rules.

Overview of League:

The Diocese of Pittsburgh Soccer League (DSL) is open to the Catholic Elementary schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. If a school does not have enough players to have a team or an entire program, then the players can play for another school's team as long as both schools are in the same vicariate/region. The underlying spirit of the League is participation and inclusion. However, it is important that schools try to develop their own school program. Also, schools are discouraged from recruiting from other schools.

The DSL plays by PA West and NFHS rules. The DSL website which is www.leaguelineup.com/dsl. The governing body of the League is the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Dr. Ron Bowes is the Assistant Superintendent of the Diocese and is responsible for all athletic programs. Mitch Riehle is the Director of the Diocese Soccer League Seasons: The DSL is open for all students in grades 1st through 8th. The Developmental League is grades 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. Junior Varsity (JV) is 5th and 6th grade and Varsity is 7th and 8th grade. The DSL plays two seasons – Fall and Spring. The dates of the seasons coincide with PA West. The Fall season runs from the first weekend in September to the last weekend in October. The Fall playoff Tournaments are the first or second weekend in November. The Spring season runs from the first weekend in April (sometimes the last weekend in March) to the last weekend in May. The Spring playoff Tournaments are the first or second weekend in June. Each team plays eight (8) games – four home and four away. A team's home games are played on whatever day that they have field availability. Most teams play on Saturday, some on Sunday, and a select few teams play on weekdays. The primary DSL rule regarding game days is that games cannot start before 1:00 PM on Sunday. If a school has weekday games, then they must ensure that their opponent has time to commute on a weekday evening to the game. Weekday game should ideally start at 6:00 PM. In an ideal word, a team would have one game every weekend. However, due to field availability and schedule requests by the schools, some teams play two games on a weekend. In rare instances, a team may have to play two games on one day.

Tournaments: As mentioned, the Fall and Spring Tournaments are held in early November and June respectively. The Tournament is held at various locations throughout the Pittsburgh area. The JV/varsity Tournament is a single elimination playoff tournament. Typically, there are more teams in the Spring Tournament than in the Fall Tournament due to the fact that there are more teams playing in the Spring. The size of the League will determine how many teams qualify for the playoffs. The DSL Director will announce this every season. The JV/Varsity Tournament will be 4-6 days long depending on the number of teams. The Championship games are always held on

Sunday. Each Championship game has a pre-game ceremony and a post-game awards ceremony. The Developmental Tournament is a one-day tournament where teams play at least 3 games small sided games. All teams can participate. This tournament is played on a Saturday only. The Developmental Tournament also features an awards ceremony for the semi-final teams. The cost of the JV/Varsity Tournament and the Developmental Tournament is \$100 per team. For planning purposes, the Top 3 teams from each Section make the playoffs in the Fall and the top 4 teams in the Spring. Organization:

League Organization: The DSL is co-ed. There are no “quotas” for the number of boys or girls on a team. However, it is important for all schools to encourage all kids, boys and girls, to play soccer. As mentioned, the DSL is organized into three (3) Divisions: Developmental (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Grade), Junior Varsity (JV) (5th and 6th grade), and Varsity (7th and 8th grade).

Developmental: The Developmental Division is considered to be instructional and thus scores and standings are not kept. The Developmental Division has various divisions depending on registration such as 1st grade, 2nd grade, 3rd grade, 4th grade, 1st - 2nd grade mixed, and 3rd – 4th grade mixed. The 1st and 2nd grade will play 6 v 6 (5 field players plus a goalie) and the 3rd and 4th grade will be 8 v 8 (7 field players plus a goalie). The Developmental Division is also organized by geography – for example 4th grade North, 3rd grade South, etc. This is done to minimize travel.

JV and Varsity: The JV and Varsity Divisions are competitive divisions and are organized in the same fashion which is in Sections. There are 4 Sections in the Fall and 5 Sections in the Spring, due to having more teams in the Spring (the League has less teams in the Fall due to football). The JV and Varsity Sections are organized by “strength of program” and change every season. Specifically, strength of program is calculated by combining the JV and Varsity records, assigning points for the record, and multiplying by a factor to come up with a final number. Teams are moved up or moved down every Season and can only move one section. The most competitive section is Section 1 and the least competitive section is Section 5. A new program always enters the DSL in Section 5.

Meetings, Administration and Fees: The DSL strives to have an organized and administratively simply league. All DSL paperwork and forms are available on the DSL website. Each season has one meeting via teleconference which is on the 3rd Thursday of August and March respectively. All coaches should attend this meeting. If a coach is not available to attend this teleconference, then they should get the information from other coaches from their

school. Minimally, there must be one representative per school, e.g. an AD or a Soccer Coordinator. Teams register each season by submitting the DSL Registration Form and the Registration Fee. The DSL Registration Form is self-explanatory yet it is important to note that the form should be filled out completely. The most important information are the Schedule requests and the proper number and grades of the teams. The fee is \$100 per team. Checks should be payable to the Diocese of Pittsburgh. The dates for the season are published months before the season starts. Then, at least two weeks before the season begins, the schedules for the season will be distributed. Schools will only receive the game schedule if they have paid their fees for the season. The DSL will schedule all referees however if there is a game that needs rescheduled after the schedules are released, the schools are responsible to reschedule those games and coordinate the referees. One important rule is that games can only be cancelled and rescheduled due to weather and due to Diocesan and Schools events. Although the DSL encourages players to play on Traveling and Classic teams, DSL games cannot be rescheduled due to not having enough players due to other games. Important note: Both teams must agree on a reschedule date. Once this happens, then the home team should contact the DSL Webmaster at dslpitt@gmail.com to have the game change posted on the DSL website. Posting the game change on the DSL website is not a substitute for coordinate with the opposing coach. Prior to their first game, teams must turn in a DSL Roster for their team. The roster must be signed by a pastor or principal verifying that all players go to that school and are in the grades listed. The DSL will coordinate all referees for JV and Varsity games and the JV and Varsity home teams are responsible for paying for referees. The fee is \$40 per ref per game so each home game would total \$80 (\$40 x 2 referees). The total for referee fees for a season would total \$320. Developmental teams are responsible for coordinating their own referees. It is recommended that Developmental teams use 8th graders or high school players to be the referees. The recommended fee is \$20-\$30 per Developmental ref. Teams are also responsible to have two DSL Game Cards for every game – one for the opponent and one for the referee. After the game, the winning team is responsible to e-mail (scan) or US mail the game cards to Mitch Riehle at 743 Winter Park Drive Mars, PA 16046 or e-mail mriehle@comdoc.com. League standings are posted weekly on the DSL website. Also, all directions to all fields are available on the DSL website. For planning purposes, the total cost per season for a team would not exceed \$520 (\$100 Registration + \$320 ref fees + \$100 playoffs), excluding uniforms.

League Operation

Length of Season and Schedules:

1. Two seasons will be offered: Fall and Spring. Schools can participate in one or both seasons.
2. Each season will be 7 or 8 weeks long, depending on holidays, daylight time for game play, make-up game

availability, and Playoff field availability. Start of Fall Season is immediately after Labor Day. Start of Spring Season will be determined by DSL Director prior to the season depending on the timing of Easter.

3. Schedules will be distributed after the mandatory coaches meeting teleconference, only if school team(s) fees are paid in full.

4. Practices may begin three weeks prior to the opening weekend. Violation of this rule will result in a school not being eligible for the DSL Playoffs.

5. The Diocese of Pittsburgh dictates that no DSL game may begin before 1:00 on a Sunday.

6. Teams' home game days will be determined by the schools. The DSL has no preference or influence in this area although it is recommended that home game day be on a Saturday or Sunday. If a home game day is a Sunday, then refer to #5 above. Home games must be 75 minutes apart. This enables referees to leave a field as soon as possible in order to referee other games.

7. For weeknight games and rescheduled games, schools must give adequate travel time to the visiting team. The earliest that a weeknight game can be scheduled is 6:00PM. Home teams should take into account that there is enough daylight for the game.

Game Balls: Varsity - Size 5 balls; JV and Developmental 3rd & 4th grade - Size 4 balls; Developmental 1st & 2nd grade – Size 3 balls

Length of Games: Junior Varsity and Varsity: Two 30 minute halves; Developmental: Two 25 minute halves recommended. A game shall be considered LEGAL after the kick-off of the 2nd half. The score will be considered final at this point if cancelled by the referee due to weather. There is NO OVERTIME in regular season games.

Field Conditions and Weather: The Home Team is responsible for determining playability of the field prior to the game. The referees are responsible for determining playability of the field after the game begins. The visiting team (also home team if referee makes the decision) must abide by the decision made by the home team/referee. The occurrence of lightening during a game is just cause to postpone and/or cancel a game. After lightning has left the area, game should not be resumed for at least 30 minutes and is at the discretion of the referee.

League Fees: Developmental, Junior Varsity and Varsity: \$100.00 per team. Team fees before the mandatory meeting each season. Checks should be payable to The Diocese of Pittsburgh. Failure to pay in full on or before the due date may result in the school not fielding teams in the DSL that season. The DSL Director reserves the right to

change League Fees. If a school registers and pays for teams, then has a team drop out, that school will not receive a refund or credit for that team(s). The purpose of this is to encourage accurate registering of teams.

Equipment and Uniforms: Each coach is responsible for ensuring that each of his/her players is properly equipped and in uniform. Per HS Rules, if a game starts and a player is not in the proper uniform, the coach will be warned with a Yellow card. The following equipment is not allowed:

- Shoes with metal tips, or any type of full metal cleats, will be considered illegal and are prohibited from use in any DSL practice, scrimmage, or game.
- Jewelry, with exception of medical bracelets or medical medals. Medical bracelets and medals must be taped to the body.
- Hair control devices not made of soft material and/or for adornment; and ankle bracelets, unless covered by a stocking or other suitable material.

The home team must wear white or a light color jersey. The home team must also wear white socks. In case of a uniform conflict, the home team must have an alternative colored jersey, or pinny, to avoid a conflict with the visiting team's jerseys. Team player jerseys must be of the same color. Team player shorts must be of the same color. Team jerseys and shorts do not have to be matching colors. All jerseys must be numbered. All jerseys must be tucked in at all times. Shin guards are required at all times at practices, scrimmages, and games. Players may NOT alter shin guards, wear them where protection is not provided to the shin, or wear shin guards that are not the appropriate size. Socks must cover the entire shin guard at all times. Socks must be of a single dominant color. Team players must wear the same colored socks. DSL recommends all male players wear an athletic supporter/protective cup. DSL recommends all players wear a mouth guard. Goalie helmets are not required, but the DSL encourages the use.

Player Rosters: Developmental, Junior Varsity and Varsity rosters must be submitted prior to the first games not later than the date established by the DSL each season. The final roster must be signed by the school principal or pastor. A game will not be credited to a team, if it is played before the roster, signed by the principal and/or pastor of the school, is received by the DSL. Players can be added to a roster up to and including the fourth game of the season. Players being rostered after that are not eligible for the DSL Playoffs unless players are needed to bring the roster up to 11 players. New players will be added by notifying the DSL coordinator by e-mail. Players from another school may play on a team for another school providing that school does not have a DSL team and the two

schools are in geographic proximity to one another. Geographic proximity is defined as being in the same region/vicariate. Permission must be given by the DSL for mixed school teams.

Coaches Accreditation: All coaches, assistant coaches and team aids/helpers are required to complete the Diocese Coaches Video Accreditation Program called “Protecting God’s Children” before conducting or participating in league practices, scrimmages and/or games. All coaches, assistant coaches and team aids/helpers are required to obtain Act 33/34 clearance and Child Abuse Check. Forms are available at the schools’ office. These completed forms must be on file in the school office prior to coaches interacting with players, conducting or participating in league practices, scrimmages and/or games. They must remain on file in the school office as long as the individual is involved with the DSL. All clearances and accreditations shall be valid as long as the coach remains active in coaching in the same school.

DSL Game Cards: Only the DSL game card on the DSL website is acceptable for use. One game card must be presented to the referee prior to the start of the game. Failure to do so could result in forfeiture of the game. One game card must be presented to the opposing team’s coaching staff prior to the start of the game. Every player on the field should have a name and number on the game card. The coach of the winning team should ensure that the referee signs both game cards after the game and includes the final score, winning team, yellow cards and red cards with player name and number, etc. The winning team is responsible for collecting both game cards from the referee after the game. If the game is a tie, the home team is responsible for collecting both game cards from the referee after the game. Game cards must be received by the DSL Director via US Mail or e-mail within six days of the played game. No credit will be given the winning team until the game card is received. Game results can be e-mailed to the DSL webmaster at DSLPItt@gmail.com but the original game cards must still be sent to the DSL coordinator within 6 days of the game being played. If you anticipate a problem submitting the game cards on time, then e-mail the DSL Director with the reason for the problem.

League Standings:

Winners for each section shall be determined by a point system:

Win = 3 points; Tie = 1 point; Loss = 0 points; Forfeit Win = 2 points; Forfeit loss = -2 points

Determination of Sections: At the end of each season, each schools program (Varsity and JV together) will be scored using the following formula. Teams will be awarded points based on the following: Win = 3 points; Tie = 1 point; Loss = 0 points. If a team has un-played games, there will be no points awarded. The combined point total of both the Varsity and JV will then be added together, this will be known as the “Total Program Points”. If a program only has 1 team (Varsity or JV), that team’s points will be doubled to determine the “Total Program Points”. All 2nd and 3rd teams will be treated as separate programs and have their own “Total Program Points”. The “Total Program Points” will then be multiplied by the following factors based on the section the program has competed in that season: Section 1 = 4.00; Section 2 = 3.00;

Section 3 = 2.00; Section 4 = 1.00; Section 5 = 0.5 (if necessary)

The result will be the “Final Program Points Total”. Each program will then be ranked according to their “Final Program Points Total”. The DSL will then decide the number of sections for the upcoming season based on the total number of teams registered. Every effort will be made to keep the section sizes as equal as possible with 6-9 teams in each section. The programs will then be placed in sections according to their ranking. If a program only participates in 1 season a year, their “Final Program Points Total” will be used from the most recent season they fielded a team, going back a maximum of 3 seasons. If a program has not fielded a team (Varsity or JV) in the past 4 seasons, they would then be considered a new program. New programs will be placed as follows: Total enrollment of 250 students or more – Section 3. Total enrollment of less than 250 students – Section 4 or 5 (lowest section available for that season). If a new 2nd or 3rd program is entered from a school, it will be placed 2 sections below the current lowest ranked program from that school. If it is not possible to separate them by 2 sections, then they would play in the section just below the lowest ranked program from the same school.

Determination of Teams: The determination of placement of players on first and second teams is made by the school’s soccer program. Teams will be divided by grade: First Varsity team is 8th graders and second Varsity team is 7th graders. First Junior Varsity team is 6th graders and second Junior Varsity team is 5th graders. Teams will be divided by skill: First Varsity and/or Junior Varsity teams are most skilled players. Second Varsity and/or Junior Varsity teams are less skilled players.

Tie Breakers for Section Champ: If two teams have the same number of points, and the head-to-head competition between the two teams during the season results in a tie game, then the teams will be co-champs. If one of the teams won the head to head, then that team will be Section Champs.

Tie Breaker to Determine Playoff Seeding: The following tie breakers will be used to determine playoffs seedings:

- Goal differential between two teams that are tied
- Goals against between two teams that are tied
- Goal differential overall for the season
- Goals against overall for the season

Two Divisions In Which Sections Will Be Placed: In the Fall Season, Section 1 and 2 will make up the Olympic Division and Section 3 and 4 will make up the World Cup Division. In the Spring Season: Section 1 and 2 will make up the Olympic Division and Section 3 or 4, and 5 will make up the World Cup Division. The number of sections will depend on the number of teams registered. There will be two Varsity champs and two Junior Varsity Champs each season. One of each will come from each division.

Coaches, Parents, Players, Spectator, and Team Helper Conduct: The following are prohibited during games and practices: SMOKING, SWEARING, ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, ILLEGAL DRUGS, OR INAPPROPRIATE ATTIRE ON SIDELINES. ANYONE EJECTED FROM A GAME BY REFEREES OR DSL PERSONNEL IS SUBJECT TO A ONE TO FIVE GAME SUSPENSION. THIS CARRIES OVER TO THE NEXT SEASON. Each school must designate field monitors for each home game. They will patrol the home team spectators and the away team spectators. These field monitors will answer spectator questions and deal with inappropriate spectator conduct and/or language, etc. These field monitors will notify the appropriate coach(s) as well as the game referees, if a spectator(s) does not comply with their suggestions or demands. A field monitor can recommend to the coach(es) and referees that a spectator be ejected from a game. The Field Monitor is considered an extension of the DSL.

Player Eligibility: The following players are eligible: Eighth grade and under; Enrolled member of sponsoring school or geographically close Diocese Catholic School without a DSL team. As stated earlier, 7th and 8th grade comprise Varsity. 5th and 6th graders can play up on Varsity however coaches are responsible to ensure that the 5th and 6th graders have the necessary size and skill to play up on Varsity. 4th graders are not allowed to play on Varsity. Junior Varsity is comprised of 5th and 6th grade. 4th graders are allowed to play up on JV however coaches are responsible to ensure that the 4th graders have the necessary size and skill to play up on JV. 3rd graders cannot play up on JV. As mentioned, coaches should ensure that the player is skilled and a competitive size for the team

he/she moves up to. The DSL suggests coaches get written permission from the player's parents to move players up. All players must have personal health insurance; permission form completed by parent/legal guardian; and a physical exam/release no greater than one year old, signed by physician; and athlete emergency form.

Playing Time: The DSL encourages coaches to give maximum playing time to all players. However, since the DSL is a competitive league, it is understood that playing time will not be equal. Coaches should consider the following when allocating playing time: attendance at practice, effort at practice, attitude at practice, and teamwork displayed. With this in mind, for any game, the number of players "playing-up" (e.g. 4th Grade on JV, 5th / 6th Grade on Varsity) will be limited to that number which brings the number of players present at the game to 16. You may still put as many of these "under-classmen" on your "DSL Roster" as you feel necessary to allow for game-day call-ups. Coaches should still look to give equal playing time to the upper-classmen when underclassmen are being used to bring the game day roster to 16. The "spirit" of this rule is as follows: Playing time for Varsity games should be given to 7th and 8th graders and playing time during JV games should be given to 5th and 6th graders. Varsity coaches are discouraged from giving 6th graders more playing time in Varsity games than 7th and 8th graders. Likewise, JV coaches are discouraged from giving 4th graders more playing time than 5th and 6th graders in JV games. When a team has 15 or fewer players, then 6th graders can receive similar playing time in a Varsity game and 4th graders can receive similar playing time in a JV game.

Players playing on multiple teams: As mentioned above, there are situations when players will "play up" on a team with older players, e.g. a 6th grader playing Varsity or a 4th grader playing JV. The following are the rules governing players playing on other teams other than the primary team they are rostered on.

- a. Playing "across" sections is not allowed - from one JV or Varsity team to another JV or Varsity team. For example a Section 1 JV player cannot play on a Section 3 JV team.
- b. Playing "up and across" is not allowed - from JV team in one section to a Varsity team in another section. For example a Section 1 JV player playing on a Section 3 varsity team.
- c. Playing "up" is allowed (from JV to Varsity in the same section)
 - i. No need to list player on Roster
 - ii. Do need to list them on the Game Card for that game
- d. 4th Graders are allowed to play JV on only one JV team. Must be on Roster and Game Card
- e. 3rd grader cannot play on JV (for safety reasons)
- f. 4th Graders cannot play on varsity (for safety reasons)
- g. 1st Grade cannot play against 3rd or 4th Grade
- h. 2nd Grade cannot play against 4th Grade

Game Score Control: At the core of sportsmanship is ensuring that the score is under control. Very few things are as debilitating for a young player as a lopsided game score. With this said, coaches are responsible to ensure that game scores are under control. An example of a game that is “under control” is a 5 or 6 goal lead. In other words, if a team is leading by 6 goals, then the coach should take action to ensure that the score differential does not increase beyond this number. The DSL will inquire when game scores are 8 goals or more. If a game score is over an 8 goal difference, then that game will likely NOT be credited to that team.

Some examples of the actions that coaches can take are as follows:

- Switch player positions
- Play possession soccer; Increase the passing by the team; do not have team move into
- offensive 1/3 of the field
- Do not allow players to shoot on goal
- Pull 1-2 players off the field
- If the 2nd half has started, the game is official. The team with the big lead is the winner. Ask the referee to call time out; bring both teams in together and mix the schools allowing the players to play together in the 2nd half starting with a 0-0 score.

Developmental: The “spirit” of the Developmental League is teaching the skills and a love for the game. With this said, we have certain “unwritten” rules such as not keeping score, playing down players if the opponent does not have enough, etc. However, the Developmental League continues to grow and get more competitive. Also, it is important to teach the game to these younger players and we cannot teach the game if there are not any rules. Here are some rules guidelines:

- Teams should play down if the opponent does not have enough players
- If a throw in is done wrong, give the player a 2nd chance BUT not a third chance
- We should be calling off-sides. Otherwise the players will be 20 yards behind the last defender.
- Likewise, we should be calling goal kicks and corner kicks.
- Do not award penalty kicks. This might be emotionally overwhelming for the team that committed the offense, not to mention the goalie. If there is an offense which would justify a “PK” then I would suggest that a direct kick be awarded 20 yards from the goal.

Rescheduling Games: The reasons that a game can be rescheduled are as follows:

1. A School or Diocese event
2. Field Conditions. Note that a game should not be cancelled due to rain. Soccer can be played in the rain. The referee will make a determination if a game needs to be cancelled due to lightning.
3. Field Closure

Notification must be made directly to the DSL via e-mail. If a home team needs to cancel a game on game day or the day before, it is important that they contact their opponent and the refer coordinator via phone and e-mail. Further, it is important that the home team gets confirmation that the opponent knows of the cancellation. This will ensure that players and families do not show up at the field. If a team shows up at a field after a game has been cancelled, then the home team will be subject to a forfeit. If referees show up at a field and the game has been cancelled, then the home team must pay the referee. Payment should be mailed to the DSL Director who will forward the money to the referees. To a reschedule a game, they must give the opponent three optional dates and times to play another game. The visiting team **MUST** choose from one of these options, providing it does not conflict with existing schedule or school functions. When agreement for new game time is made, DSL coordinator must be notified within seven days of originally scheduled game. Notification of the referees of the game changes is the responsibility of the home team. If mutual decision cannot be obtained by the above procedure, the home team and the visiting team must report this to the DSL Director immediately, who will then decide which action to take, i.e., reschedule the game, forfeit, or, if game is not needed to determine standings it could be deemed unnecessary to reschedule. Failure by either team to follow the above guidelines in the prescribed time, or to notify the DSL Director within the prescribed time period, will result in both teams losing any right to demand the game be rescheduled and it will be eliminated from the schedule-no exceptions. If a visiting team cannot play a game, they must notify the DSL Director and the home team at least seven days before the originally scheduled game. The home team should try to reschedule, if possible, but they are not required to. It is in the best interest of both teams to reschedule, not to forfeit. The DSL coordinator must also be notified of changes. Changes in game dates and times are not permitted to accommodate team players who play on other community soccer teams, i.e., Travel, Classic, etc. Changes in game dates and times are only permitted for conflicts with school or church functions or loss of field time. Teams that are unable to supply the DSL coordinator with home game information (dates, times, field, etc.) in time for inclusion on the schedule, are required to notify the DSL coordinator, referee association and all 8 opponents as soon as this information is available. Any and all known dates that a team cannot play must be

submitted to the DSL Director on the Registration Form The DSL will give priority to these dates and try not to schedule team games for those dates and times.

DSL Administration: The most important administrative items are as follows:

- a. DSL Director home address and phone number is on the DSL website
- b. Website www.leaguelineup.com/dsl
- c. Webmaster e-mail address dslpitt@gmail.com
- d. Directions to Fields – on website
- e. DSL Rule Book – on website
- f. Schedules – on website
- g. Roster Form – on website
- h. Game Cards – on website; **only DSL Game Card is allowed.**
- i. Accident Report – on website. Must be submitted if player goes to hospital/urgent care

Referees: A central scheduling referee association will be used to supply high school referees to all games of schools who reside in the referee association area. All schools outside that referee area must supply their own referees. Referees have control of the game from the time they enter the field area to the time they exit the field area. Yellow and Red cards can be issued at any time during this period to whomever the referees deem appropriate. There is to be NO verbal or physical abuse of referees from coaching staff, players, spectators or parents. This will not be tolerated by the DSL or referee association. Sanctions will be imposed by the DSL to the offending team(s) for the actions of the coaching staff, players, spectators and/or parents. If no referees are present at a game, it is allowable for both teams to agree upon substitutions to be used as referees. There MUST be two substitute referees, one from each team. Both teams must agree to the two referees. This constitutes a legal game. If both teams do not agree to using substitutes, the game MUST be rescheduled. The above rule does NOT apply to teams who are outside the referee area. Substitute referees MUST be scheduled prior to the game.

DSL Rules Clarification: (Changes from HS Rule Book)

Slide Tackling: Proper slide tackling is permitted at the Varsity level only when contact with the ball is made. Slide tackling is not permitted at the JV or Developmental level. For Varsity players, no slide tackling from behind is permitted.

Heading: Heading is not allowed for Developmental and JV players. For Varsity players, heading is allowed with one exception which is that heading is NOT allowed on goal kicks and goalie punts. Note that these are two separate situations. A “goal kick” is after the ball goes over the end line and the goalie or other

team member places the ball and kicks it. The second scenario is when the goalie catches the ball with their hands and punts it. Heading is not allowed in either of these scenarios. Infractions will result in the opposing team receiving an indirect kick at the spot of the infraction.

Disputed Games: The referee rulings on the field are final. If there are any concerns by coaches with the rulings on the field, then it is important for the coach(s) to have a respectful and professional discussion with the referees. In the event that a coach wants to complain, dispute a call, or protest a game, then the first action would be to wait 24 hours so the emotion of the game can wear off. The next action would be to send a detailed e-mail statement to the DSL Director. Assistant coaches can also send e-mail statements. However, statements from parents are not necessary and will not be read. Following receipt of that statement(s), the DSL Director will acknowledge receipt and will then get statements from the referees and opposing coaches. Based on all of that information, a decision will be communicated back to the coach/school who submitted the dispute within one week.

Coach Expectations

1. All games will be considered important. Attention to detail, timeliness, and good communication are essential. The players take their games seriously. Coaches should take their responsibilities seriously.
2. The coaches should check the field for playing conditions, lining of the field, condition of nets, etc. before each game, especially if the weather has been questionable. The home team is responsible to ensure that the playing field is playable, is properly lined, and the goals are in good condition.
3. All players will be checked for proper uniforms and equipment before each game.
4. All substituting players will wait at midfield until called onto the field by a referee.
5. Slide tackling is only permitted at the varsity level. Slide kicking is permitted at all levels. Slide tackling and slide kicking are two totally different things.
6. All coaches should meet prior to the opening kick-off to introduce themselves. Referees will receive payment AFTER the game when 2 game cards are given to the winning coach. In the case of a tie, the home team coach receives the game cards.
7. Coaches should supervise the post-game handshake. All coaches and players are to participate in the post game handshake.
8. If there is any issue before, during, or after a game, coaches, with referee assistance, should make every attempt to resolve the issue before leaving the field after the game. There are too many instances of issues being reported to the DSL with no conscientious effort made by coaches to resolve the conflict/issue at the game.

9. The home team coaches are responsible that there are at least two properly inflated game balls (Varsity: Size 5; JV/Developmental Size 4 and Dev/1st-2nd Grade Size 3) for each game.

10. All players are to be in proper uniform following DSL and NFHS rules, i.e., all socks same and one dominant color, all shirts same, etc. The home team is responsible to change jerseys should both teams have the same color or similar colors.

Note: These expectations are not intended to replace the NFHS rule book. They supplement the rule book.

Crime Code of Pennsylvania: A person who violates section 2701 (relating to simple assault), where the victim is a sports official who was assaulted during a sports event or was assaulted as a result of his or her official acts as a sports official, is GUILTY OF ASSAULT ON A SPORTS OFFICIAL and is a misdemeanor in the First Degree. It is punishable by up to five years imprisonment and \$5000.00 fine

Diocese Prayer (said before every game): God, you have blessed us with many gifts and talents. We thank you especially for the ability to participate in sports today. Help us to play in a Christ-like manner. Help us to play in a way that will foster teamwork. Help us to play to the best of our ability. Win or lose, we hope to have fun, make friends, and celebrate life, Amen

Appendix A: Coach's Code of Conduct: The following is a recommended coaches code of conduct to be used by DSL teams

1. Understand that as a coach, I must be a positive role model for the players and parents. I will exert tremendous influence, either good or bad, in the education of the players. For example: Coaches' language should always be exemplary.
2. Never place the value of winning or my own personal satisfaction, above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character and Christianity, that is consistent with a Catholic School Education.
3. Strive to instill in every child a sense of self-esteem, responsibility, confidence, dignity and self-discipline, through an emphasis on fair play, teamwork, leadership, scholarship, respect and the rules of sports.
4. As a coach I will have an introductory meeting with the parents at the start of the season and be accessible to the parents during the sport season.
5. Ensure that players are familiar with and sign the Players Code of Conduct.

6. Devote time, thought, planning and study to the rules and teachings of the game.
7. Attend all DSL meetings.
8. Under no circumstances will partake or allow any drug, alcohol or tobacco activity during practices and/or games.
9. Teach the children that both teams and opponents are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.
10. Will not run up an excessive score of a game so as to prevent potential humiliation and encourage sportsmanship.
11. Encourage and Foster Good Sportsmanship.
12. Respect officials.
13. Any coach who is guilty of any physical or verbal attack shall be banned from sporting events.
14. Understand participation is not a right, but a privilege that carries with it the responsibility of reflecting Christian ideals.
15. Understand that it is never allowed to use participation in sports as an excuse for non-Christian or unsportsmanlike behavior.
16. Showing of disrespect for the property of another team, their transportation or facility used by the team will be looked upon as an act of vandalism and punished accordingly.
17. Obligated to follow all rules.
18. Understand that an effort on my part to undermine these aforementioned values may be reason for my suspension from the league.
19. Recognize parents may attend practice for viewing.
20. Head coaches may recommend assistant coach for approval by board and principal.

Appendix B: Player Code of Conduct

1. Understand participation is not a right, but a privilege that carries with it the responsibility of reflecting Christian ideals.
2. Treat my teammates, coaches, referees and all/or all officials, opponents, spectators and all others involved in our athletic events with respect at all times
3. Give my best efforts and full attention to my coach, and do my best to follow their instruction.
4. Attend all practices and games detailed on my schedule to my best ability.
5. Encourage and help my teammates.
6. Work to improve my skills each day.
7. Understand that I am representing my school and I am responsible for my conduct at all times during practices and games. I agree to conduct in a Christian manner and to show Good Sportsmanship at all times.
8. Understand there is a disciplinary procedure for unsatisfactory behavior which may cause me to miss practices, games, possible suspension and removal from sport. Disciplinary action will be determined by the principal. UNSATISFACTORY BEHAVIOR IS DESCRIBED AS BUT NOT LIMITED TO:
 - Rude or discourteous behavior to the coach, referee, teammates, opponents or spectators
 - Displaying an attitude, which shows I am not taking responsibility for my own behavior
 - Any use of inappropriate language to coach, teammates, referee, opponents or spectators

- "Fooling around" at practice or game
- Being "red carded" or ejected from a game
- Behavior which would place my teammates and myself in an unsafe situation
- Showing disrespect for property of another and will be looked upon and treated as vandalism
- Laying hands upon, biting, spitting, shoving, striking, or threatening another is not allowed or tolerated
- Teasing or ridiculing no-team members

1. Realize that attendance, behavior, effort, attitude and a team based orientation are factors that may effect playing time.

2. Recognize, that athletics are just one part of my total growth, and that God, family and academic

Appendix C: Parents Code of Conduct

1. Support my child unconditionally.
2. Teach my child that doing one's best is the most important outcome of a game.
3. Respect the coach in their efforts to teach skills, teamwork, and good sportsmanship to the players.
4. Help the team whenever possible by providing my services as requested by the coach or team parent.
5. Respect all players, coaches, fans, and opponents at all times.
6. Responsible for ensuring my child/children maintain academic eligibility as defined by school policy.
7. Respect for attendance of practice and games. Inform coaches of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
8. Realize that athletics at my school are a privilege and not a "right".
9. Obligated to follow all rules.
10. Respect the officials and their authority during and after games.
11. Showing of disrespect for the property of another team, their transportation or facility used by the team will be looked upon as an act of vandalism and punished accordingly.
12. Realize that irresponsibility and disrespectful behavior will result in sanctions up to, and including, dismissal from all involvement of sporting event.
13. Any participant who is guilty of any physical or verbal attack shall be banned from sporting events.
14. While parents may attend practice for viewing they may not interrupt the coaching.

Appendix D: Team Division. The Diocese Soccer League (DSL) not only strives to reinforce and reflect Christian and Sportsmanship values but also to provide a unique and rewarding experience for the players, parents, and coaches. The DSL seeks to provide “the greatest good for the greatest number of people”. In and of itself, the DSL is unique in that it is co-ed, it is organized with multiple grades, and the potential exists for skilled players to play with recreational “beginner” players. The DSL is also organized as a competitive league. A team that performs well will likely get moved into a higher section the following season. Further as soccer becomes more popular and players are involved with multiple teams, the skill of players continues to increase. Thus, the potential exists for players to be mismatched against more skilled players. The topic of whether a school should divide by skill or divide by grade often surfaces. The DSL is a proponent and strongly recommends that teams divide by skill. The table below highlights the positives and negatives associated with each option:

Teams divided by Skill - Positives

1. Players play against competition of equal/comparable skill level. For example, if a school has 2 teams, and that school divides by skill then the more skilled team would play in the Upper Section
2. The more skilled younger players are challenged more. For example, a more skilled 5th grader playing with and against 6th graders
3. Players getting to know and playing with players that are not their classmates, e.g. 5th with 6th and 7th with 8th.
4. The school being more competitive because the more skilled players are on the same team playing against similar skilled albeit larger schools.
5. The lesser skilled players are playing against similar competition and this are competitive and do not get frustrated. If a school has 2 teams, then the 2nd team would be in a lower Section playing against other #1 teams.
6. The lesser skilled players get more playing time and thus are happier and improve their skills. A school's #2 team plays a full schedule of 8 games and has the opportunity to make the playoffs.

7. It allows the school to have more teams, more players playing, and players that improve their skills enough to play in high school.

Teams divided by Skill - Negatives

1. Players being disappointed when they are not selected for the #1 team. However, this emotion quickly subsides when they start practicing and playing (more).
2. Players might quit due to not being selected for the #1 team. (note: Hopefully parents do not allow this to happen and this can be an important life lesson)

Teams divided by Grade - Positives

1. It satisfies the "social issue" of players wanting to play with their friends/classmates

Teams divided by Grade - Negatives

1. The teams and school tend to be less competitive. For example, if a JV team divided by grade, then the possibility exists that there would be lesser skilled 6th graders on the higher section team and thus playing against more skilled team that have divided by skill
2. The playing time of the players is less. This has been studied. For example, a 6th grade JV team would play in a higher section against more competitive teams, and in the interest of winning, the coach might not play his lesser skilled 6th graders as much. Conversely, a more skilled 5th grader would get in the game and further that same 6th grader would play more on the lesser skilled team. More than anything else, kids want playing time.
3. The more skilled younger players are not challenged. For example, a 5th grade team would play in a lower Section against smaller and lesser skilled teams and these more skilled younger 5th graders are not challenged

Appendix E: Coach Quick Reference List: Coaches in the DSL are volunteers and their time and effort is appreciated. Nevertheless, it is important that coaches perform their responsibilities in a timely and effective manner. With this said, the list below can be used by coaches.

1. Home team head coach should send an e-mail to the opposing head coach to confirm the game time.
2. Home team coach is responsible for field condition
3. Winning coach should US mail or e-mail both game cards to the DSL Director. Game cards need to be received within 6 days of the game date. If the game was a tie, then the home team sends the game cards.
4. Red cards must be reported via a phone call by the team's head coach who received the red card.
5. Injuries that require a hospital or urgent care visit must be reported on the DSL Injury Report
6. If a game needs cancelled due to field closure and/or field conditions, then the coach must ensure that their opponent and the referee coordinator get notified.
7. Cancelled games need rescheduled within one week of the cancelled game. Note: the game does not need played within one week, just rescheduled.
8. Roster additions can ne made by sending an e-mail to the DSL Director with the school name, player name and grade.

Division	Grades	Ball Size	Format	Field Size	Direction	Goals
Jr Developmental	1 st and 2 nd	3	6 v 6	¼ Field	Length wise	Miniature
Developmental	3 rd and 4 th	4	8 v 8	½ Field	Width wise	Miniature
JV	5 th and 6 th	4	11 v 11	Full Field	Length Wise	Regular
Varsity	7 th and 8 th	5	11 v 11	Full Field	Length Wise	Regular