

# South Metro Youth Football League (SMYFL)

## 6<sup>th</sup>– 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Rules & Regulations

(Modified: July 2025)

### 1. Organization

- 1.1. The SMYFL is a youth community-based football league for students who attend sixth, seventh, and eighth grade and live or go to school within one of the SMYFL high schools: Eagan, Eastview, Farmington, Lakeville North, Lakeville South, and Rosemount.
- 1.2. The SMYFL is founded around the 6A South Metro District teams.
- 1.3. Within the group defined in 1.1, a subdivision of the SMYFL also exists for students in third-fifth grade and live or go to school within one of the SMYFL high school feeder areas.
- 1.4. Each SMYFL sports association (as defined in 1.1) has its own governing body. Each member association will provide one individual as the main representative and at least one or two additional individuals to provide support with league activities and tasks.
- 1.5. SMYFL Commissioner will rotate between SMYFL communities annually. Each community will be expected to be commissioner once every sixth year unless otherwise proposed and approved by majority vote by the SMYFL Executive Committee.
  - 1.6. Scheduled rotation TBD
- 1.7. The Executive Committee will consist of one member from each community who will be the point of contact for the SMYFL. This member must be a member of the community's youth football board and can't be held by a High School Head Football Coach.
- 1.8. The SMYFL Governing Committee consists of a Program Representative from each association and the high school head coaches (as a liaison where needed).
  - 1.8.1. The SMYFL will meet monthly. Agenda items must be sent to the Commissioner before the board meeting.
- 1.9. Rules: The SMYFL Governing Committee establishes the rules and regulations of the SMYFL. Grades 3-5 will follow a SMYFL version of the USA Football FDM model including rules and regulations. See Grade 3-5 Rulebook for 7v7 or 9v9 football.

1.9.1. Insurance and Release: The SMYFL is not responsible for the condition of any player equipment, team equipment or football fields. Equipment and fields are provided by the member associations. The SMYFL is not responsible for providing health, accident or liability insurance to any player, coach, official or spectator or other person. Insurance, if any, is provided by the member associations. The SMYFL is not responsible for any bodily injuries or damages sustained by any player, coach, official, spectator, or other person while participating in or attending league games or tournaments. In consideration of being permitted to participate in the league and for other good and valuable consideration the sufficiency of which each league member has acknowledged, each league member agrees to release, defend, hold harmless and indemnify SMYFL and its respective incorporators, officers, directors, shareholders, Governing Committee members, agents, employees, staff, sponsors, legal representatives, administrators, subsidiaries, affiliates, divisions, owners, operators, successors and assigns (collectively referred to herein as “Releases”) from and against any and all liability for any and all losses and damages of any type or kind, and from any and all claims, suits, demands, actions or rights of actions, of whatever kind, either in law or in equity, arising from or by reason of death, bodily injury or property damage which may occur to persons while participating in, or while attending, league games and tournaments, whether caused in whole or in part by the negligent act or omission of the Releases. The league member associations agree to provide Liability Insurance Coverage of not less than \$500,000 and agree to provide a certificate of Insurance listing the SMYFL as additional insured.

## **2. Registration and Player Eligibility**

- 2.1. The player must satisfy the participation guidelines of his or her home association.
- 2.2. Players must play at the grade level they are currently enrolled in.
  - 2.2.1. In the event of a community requesting a player to play up in grade level, the respective community will provide justification and gain approval from the SMYFL.
- 2.3. Team rosters must be submitted to the SMYFL on the roster submit date.
  - 2.3.1. Rosters must include the following information to ensure your team or association is eligible.

- 2.3.1.1. Full Player Name, Accurate Recording of Weight, Jersey Number, and team assigned to.
- 2.3.2. Roster accuracy is a critical part of league integrity and quality of experience, failure to do so may result in forfeits of games, and league suspension.
- 2.3.3. Late participants after the submission date must be filed to the SMYFL with an updated team roster.
- 2.3.4. Teams that have not submitted a roster to the SMYFL prior to first game may be subject to penalties up to and including forfeiture of the game(s) involved.
- 2.4. The weight of a player is recorded at the beginning of season and listed on SMYFL website (South Metro 6 Youth Football League (myas.org)) and will remain the official playing weight of the player for the duration of the season.

### 3. **Weight Limitations**

- 3.1. The player's official weight will be identified on the official team roster by their respective associations.
- 3.2. Players not eligible to play Running Back or Quarterback (see 3.3) shall have a full stripe down the middle of the helmet. Any player can wear the team logo on the helmets, but no stripes are allowed on the helmets of eligible offensive players.
- 3.3. Running Backs and Quarterbacks: Players are eligible without restrictions to play these positions who weigh (without equipment) less than or equal to the following weights
  - 3.3.1. **6th Grade** - 125 lbs
  - 3.3.2. **7th Grade** - 150 lbs
  - 3.3.3. **8th Grade** - 175 lbs
- 3.4. Players over the playing weights listed above can play quarterback with a restriction. The restriction is that they are not allowed to advance the ball past the line of scrimmage. The play will be blown dead immediately once they cross the line.
- 3.5. An offensive end that exceeds the weight restriction may advance the ball only by catching a forward pass beyond the line of scrimmage. Upon receiving a

forward pass, any offensive player who exceeds weight restriction may run (advance) the ball. Play will be blown dead when an ineligible offensive player has the ball.

- 3.6. On kick returns, players with stripes WILL be allowed to advance the ball if they are playing on the front line and the ball is kicked directly to them. They will NOT be allowed to advance a ball if the ball is a lateral to them. The play will be blown dead and the ball will be spotted where the lateral occurred.
- 3.7. Punters/Kickers: A player of any weight can be used; however, a kicker exceeding the weight limit rule outlined in Rule 3.2 may not advance the ball by running or pass.

#### **4. Team Size and Selection**

- 4.1. Each team shall consist of no more than thirty-four (34) players, but the SMYFL strongly recommends no fewer than twenty (20) players. Each association may add players to teams if they are placed in a talent-balanced manner. In the event of determining fielding one team versus two teams, a conversation MUST be had with the league to determine approval of team size outside the limits named above.
- 4.2. After rosters are final, the exchange of players between teams MUST be approved by the SMYFL Executive Committee.
- 4.3. Each member association will create teams from his or her association by draft or similar means. Each association must form talent-balanced teams to the best of their ability (no stacked or "A" / "B" teams). Subsequent players added after the distribution of players must also be added in a talent balanced manner. The goal for each association is to construct teams in each age group that are equal in talent and/or ability.
- 4.4. Member associations may roster any player who resides within the geographical boundaries of their association's high school. Players who reside outside of the geographical boundaries of the association's High School must:
  - 4.4.1. Attend a public or private school within the geographical boundaries of the association's High School; or,
  - 4.4.2. Have played football for the association's youth program for two (2) consecutive years preceding their 7th grade season. The High School attendance boundaries will be used for purposes of ruling on disputes between associations and determining a player's eligibility to

participate with a SMYFL member association team.

4.4.3. Any player wishing to play outside of the “default” feeder system may do so if a waiver is obtained from their “home” Association, or if the SMYFL Board supports the player with a majority vote of all participating associations.

4.5. Each association is responsible for providing coaches for each team. Only association-sanctioned coaches are allowed on the sidelines during a game. Only the head coach may talk to the referees.

4.6. Each Head Coach for associations must complete the USA Football and Heads Up Certification or equivalent (Review with SMYFL if another vendor is used). Certification must be sent to the league for each coach by the league start date [ex: August 5<sup>th</sup> 2024]

4.6.1. Each Head Coach MUST attend the preseason meeting and assistant coaches will be strongly encouraged to attend. SMYFL Committee Members will review league rules, points of emphasis, and important dates at this meeting. This is to ensure alignment and improve quality of game experience.

## 5. **Game Rules**

5.1. SMYFL will provide coaches and referees with a point of emphasis guide highlighting key focal points.

5.2. Minnesota State High School League (“MSHSL”) rules will be followed except as noted below. The MSHSL rules apply to players, coaches, parents, and referees. Go to [www.mshsl.org](http://www.mshsl.org) for information.

5.3. League rules do not permit videotaping of opponents for the purposes of scouting (ie - cannot film games where your team is not playing). The league allows the sharing of game film with future opponents amongst coaches if agreed upon.

5.4. Playing Time Rules: The SMYFL encourages teams to play all players on their rosters as much as possible. From a league standpoint, each player on the roster must play a minimum of twelve (12) plays in a game (offense, defense, and/or special teams). Each member association may also set their own minimum playing time rules in excess of the league minimum.

5.5. Game Time: Four quarters of fifteen (15) minute running time (during running time, the clock does not stop except for time-outs, injuries, and touchdowns).

Stop time applies during the last two (2) minutes of each half. During the last two minutes of each half the clock will stop for time outs, injuries, penalties, touchdowns, incomplete passes, first downs, change of possession and out of bounds. However, if a team is leading by 28 points with 4:00 minutes left in the fourth quarter, there is no stoppage of time (except for injuries and penalties). Each team will get two timeouts per half.

5.6. The option for a 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter will be offered for the last game of the day/evening. Head coaches will discuss this BEFORE the game. This will be a 15-minute running time quarter that is an exhibition (score is not kept) and is officiated by one coach from each team. The concept of this is to get players more playing time that may only see 12 plays per game.

5.7. Defensive Alignment

**5.7.1. 6th Grade**

5.7.1.1. Linebackers and Safeties: must line up at least three (3) yards off the line of scrimmage and may not move forward until the ball is snapped

5.7.1.2. Corners: must line up at least three (3) yards off the line of scrimmage and may not move forward until the ball is snapped

5.7.1.3. No defensive player may be lined up over the center or in the A gap on the line of scrimmage (LOS) - must be lined up on the offensive guards or wider and engage the guard before playing the A gap. No shooting the A gap or attacking the center

5.7.1.3.1. "Engage" means contact with two hands pushed into the opposing player's chest and/or shoulder area.

5.7.1.4. Defensive Lineman: A maximum of six (6) defensive linemen are allowed. This rule does not apply if the ball is inside the defensive team's ten (10) yard line; however, linebackers, corners and safeties may not move forward until the ball is snapped.

**5.7.2. 7th Grade**

5.7.2.1. Linebackers and Safeties: must line up at least three (3) yards off the line of scrimmage and may not move forward until the ball is snapped

- 5.7.2.2.   Corners: can play press coverage and line up on the line of scrimmage
- 5.7.2.3.   Defensive Lineman: A maximum of six (6) defensive linemen are allowed. This rule does not apply if the ball is inside the defensive team’s ten (10) yard line; however, linebackers, corners and safeties may not move forward until the ball is snapped.

5.7.3.   **8th Grade**

- 5.7.3.1.   Linebackers and Safeties: follow MSHSL rules
- 5.7.3.2.   Corners: can play press coverage and line up on the line of scrimmage

5.8.   Offense

- 5.8.1.   **6th Grade** - the quarterback cannot run behind the center or in the A gaps. Running backs are allowed to run to the areas after a handoff has taken place, however that can NOT be the focal point of the play - No midline run plays allowed.

5.9.   Punting

- 5.9.1.   **6th and 7th Grade** - Any 6th or 7th grade player may punt in a game. On any down, the offense can call a “punt”. Teams do not rush the punter. This must be declared as early as possible to allow for defensive substitution. The offensive team must announce that they are going to punt (no fakes allowed). The offensive or defensive team cannot rush the punter or leave the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The punter may take the ball from the center in any manner. Even if the ball is dropped, the punter may pick it up and punt the ball. The Punter must punt the ball between the tackle positions. Punt coverage cannot take place until the ball is kicked. Receiving team must not be more than 5 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is kicked other than up to two return players. Once the ball is kicked, normal MSHSL rules apply.

- 5.9.2.   **8th Grade** - follow MSHSL rules

5.10.   Onside Kicks

- 5.10.1. Onside kicks must be declared
- 5.10.2. Onside kicks only allowed in the 4th quarter and only can be utilized if the team is losing
- 5.10.3. If a kick does not go beyond 20 yards, receiving team is allowed to request a re-kick or take it as it lies as it is spotted as a dead ball
- 5.11. Coaches on Field
  - 5.11.1. **6th Grade** - One (1) coach for offense and one (1) coach for defense will be allowed on the field as teams transition to 11-man formations for the FIRST regular season games (coaching ends when the huddle breaks and the coach must step back 10 yards).
- 5.12. Play Clock - Thirty-five (35) second play clock will be enforced by the refs to ensure pace of the game
- 5.13. Extra Points and Scoring
  - 5.13.1. Following a touchdown, the coach will have the choice to go for 1 point or 2 points. (The coach will tell the referee his choice.) 1- point conversions will be from the 3-yard line. 2-point conversions will be from the 8-yard line. Once the choice is declared and a play is run or a penalty occurs prior to the play, the choice cannot be changed.
  - 5.13.2. For any game field with goal posts, kicking the extra point is permitted, and a successful try is 1-point.
  - 5.13.3. Rushing the Kicker for Extra Points
    - 5.13.3.1. **6th and 7th Grade** - No rushing the kicker. No fakes..
    - 5.13.3.2. **8th Grade** - Follow MSHSL rules
- 5.14. Kicking Field Goals (3 points)
  - 5.14.1. **6th and 7th Grade** - Not permitted
  - 5.14.2. **8th Grade** - allowed, follow MSHSL rules
- 5.15. Overtime
  - 5.15.1. In case of a tie at the end of regulation, each team will have four (4) plays to score from the 10- yard line. Same extra point rule (5.7) will apply. If the score remains in a tie, a second overtime round will be

played, using the same rules. There is a maximum of two overtimes during the regular season. If the score remains a tie, it will be a tie. In the playoffs, teams will continue to play until there is a winner.

5.15.2. Overtime Possession - Teams will flip for first possession and then alternate possessions.

5.16. Game Balls Size (Any brand of ball is accepted)

5.16.1. **6th Grade** - Junior

5.16.2. **7th and 8th Grade** - Youth

5.17. Personal Fouls - Players called for an unsportsmanlike or targeting penalty will be removed from the field of play for remainder of that series before being allowed to return to play

5.17.1. The officials may eject any player or coach who receives an unsportsmanlike penalty from the game with no warning. A player or coach who receives two unsportsmanlike penalties in one game is automatically ejected. Any player or coach who is ejected from a game is suspended for the next game. The ejected team member's coach must inform his or her Program Director of the ejection within 24 hours of the ejection. The Program Director will notify the SMYFL Commissioner within 48 hours. The Commissioner will notify the SMYFL Executive Committee of the incident and final ruling. The SMYFL Executive Committee may remove a player or coach for chronic misconduct or egregious behavior during league activities from an official team roster, rendering the player or coach ineligible to participate in the league.

5.17.2. See Player & Parent Code of Conduct for the official statement.

5.17.3. Players, coaches, parents and fans will abide by SMYFL sportsmanship guidelines and listed on SMYFL web site (South Metro 6 Youth Football League (myas.org)) including the SMYFL Code of Conduct which is followed by all associations.

5.18. Game Cancellations - The Program Director of the association where a game is scheduled to be played will determine whether a game should be cancelled because of weather or field conditions before the start of the game. Each member association is responsible for the condition of the fields and field equipment needed for the games. The officials have the authority to cancel a

game or delay a game that is in progress.

- 5.19. Game Score Reporting - ALL HEAD COACHES (winners AND losers) must report scores via MYAS site within 24 hours of game completion. Coaches should confirm the final score with referees after the game has completed.

## **6. SMYFL Regular Season**

### **6.1. 2025 League Dates**

- 6.1.1. League Start - August 4th, 2025
- 6.1.2. Jamboree Scrimmages - August 18th, 2025
- 6.1.3. Regular Season - Games start August 20th, 2025
- 6.1.4. Post-Season - Games start Saturday October 4th, 2025
- 6.1.5. League Ends - October 11th, 2025

### **6.2. Postseason Locations**

- 6.2.1. Host city locations will be determined by the Executive Committee prior to the league start date each season

- 6.3. Official league activities may begin on the official start date as determined by the Executive Committee.

- 6.4. Rosters are due by the date as determined by the Executive Committee.

- 6.5. Team divisions by grade will be created based on the number of teams by grade level.

- 6.6. First games will begin roughly the third week after the start date; six (6) regular season games and two (2) post-season games.

- 6.7. Number of Games/Practices: SMYFL will attempt to schedule no more than two (2) regular season league games per week. However, more than two (2) games in a week may be necessary due to weather related issues and/or playoffs. A schedule resulting in more than three (3) games in a seven (7) day period will require board consideration.

- 6.8. A team may not have more than five (5) events (games/practices) per week

- 6.9. During the regular season, efforts will be made to ensure teams from the same high school are not playing against each other, provided there are

enough teams to complete a schedule.

- 6.10. During the regular season, every effort will be made for each team to have at least one game with a team from each association. In some instances, this may be impossible..
- 6.11. Chains & Markers - Chains are to be on the home field side and crew provided by the home team.

## **7. SMYFL League Postseason**

- 7.1. The SMYFL governing committee will seed teams for the postseason using the following criteria in order:
  - 7.1.1. Overall record determined by winning percentage.
  - 7.1.2. Head-to-head competition (where applicable).
  - 7.1.3. Record vs. common opponents (where all teams tied played the same teams)
  - 7.1.4. Defensive points allowed.
  - 7.1.5. Point differential (maximum 14 points per game).
  - 7.1.6. Coin Flip
- 7.2. Postseason Structure - Postseason will be determined at the start of the season based on the number of teams in each grade level. Postseason brackets will be decided based on records. Teams will play within a 4-team bracket based on seedings with Executive Board discretion in conjunction with MYAS support for bracketing. The postseason host cities determined at the beginning of the season will host both games for all teams in the grade. If necessary, a play-in game may be on the Tuesday before the start of playoffs at the highest seeds home field for the lowest tier bracket.
- 7.3. In the postseason, each team is expected to play anyone even if the team is from your own association
- 7.4. Field equipment and chains - supplied and set up by host city
- 7.5. Chains and Down Markers - managed by team on highest seeded team

## **8. League Fees and Expenses**

- 8.1. League fees will be determined and approved by the SMYFL Executive

Committee each year. Fees will include Referees, EMTs, League Management fees, etc.

- 8.2. League Participation Fee - Each member association pays a proportionate amount of the league expenses to be determined by the SMYFL Executive Committee. The per-team fee will be determined based on expenses.
- 8.3. Three (3) officials will be scheduled for all games. The officials will be MSHSL certified. The home team is responsible for payment. Postseason gameday referees will be paid for by SMYFL. Agreed and signed by each Association's Representative on behalf of their Athletic Association.

