**US Soccer Mandates- Changes Ahead**

Changes are ahead for FPSA due to two recent mandates from U.S. Soccer, the national governing body for youth, amateur, and professional soccer in the United States. Our local leagues, OHTSL and AASL, are required to adopt these changes for the 2016-2017 season so these changes will be made by our organization and all other soccer organizations across the state and country. The two changes are briefly listed below. You can find more detailed information at ussoccer.com.

**Change 1 -- Small-Sided Games**

At younger ages, US Soccer is calling for fewer players on the field at a time so each player sees more of the ball and is a more integral part of what the team is doing. Field sizes are also being reduced to help players learn at younger ages to play in tight spaces rather than to rely on kick-and-run soccer. The new standards:

U6-U8: 4v4, no goal keeper, 30 x 20 yards
U9-U10: 7v7, includes goal keeper, 47 x 30 yards
U11-U12: 9v9, includes goal keeper, 75 x 47 yards
U13 & Up: 11v11, includes goal keeper, 112 x 75 yards

**Change 2 -- Birth Year Registration**

US Youth Soccer will begin using calendar years rather than school years to divide teams, following the practice of most if not all of the rest of the soccer world. The age groups we will use, starting with the 2016-2017 season:

U8: Born in 2009

U9: Born in 2008
U10: Born in 2007
U11: Born in 2006
U12: Born in 2005
U13: Born in 2004
U14: Born in 2003
U15: Born in 2002 *(Note – U14 & U15 age groups will be combined into one age group for travel soccer so 8th graders with fall birthdays will be able to play their 8th grade year with their classmates).*

**FPSA Implementation of the new guidelines**

While FPSA must support these new initiatives we also understand that many parents and families are comfortable with our current structure. There will not be a simple “one size fits all” approach to creating teams this fall. We will take parent & coach preferences along with registration numbers in order to determine the best rosters for our teams this fall. Some teams may still remain primarily intact while others may change. We do plan to start using birth year teams with the current U8 players (born in 2009 & 2008) and all new players starting this fall.

**Parent Preference for players born in 2002 – 2007.**

Please read the choices below and when you register you will be able to indicate your preference. While we can not guarantee any type of placement in the fall we will definitely consider your preference when selecting teams.

|  |  |
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| **Players born …** | **Action required …** |
| August 1 – December 31 (2002 – 2007) | Do nothing, your child cannot play down and must follow birth year registration |
| January 1 – July 31 (2002 – 2007) | At registration time, indicate your child is willing to “play up” in the fall, skipping an age group in order to remain with the majority of your current team (ex: if you are a U9 now you will play in U11 in the fall). |
| January 1 – July 31 (2002 – 2007) | At registration time, indicate your child does not want to “play up” in the fall and you want to play on a birth year appropriate team (ex: so if you are a U9 now you will play in U10 in the fall) |