

Westford Youth Soccer Association 2025 Annual General Meeting



September 3, 2025

Agenda

- Welcome
- WYSA Overview and Updates
- Treasurer's Report
- Board of Directors (Member Nominations and Vote)
- Open Forum/Discussion

WYSA Overview

Mission Statement

- Independent, VOLUNTEER community service organization
- Dedicated to:
 - Promoting the sport of soccer for the boys and girls of Westford
 - Fostering the ideals of good sportsmanship, fair play, teamwork and good health
- Core Values
 - **What is “best for the children” is best for WYSA!**
 - **Soccer is just a game**
 - **Children play soccer to have FUN!**
- Self-funded – no town taxes

Seasons

- 8 weeks
- **Fall**: Early September – Early November
 - Travel – developmental/non-competitive season
 - In-town programs
- **Spring**: April – June
 - Travel – competitive season (chance of post-season play)
 - In-town programs
- Winter – Some training sessions held through the winter as well as opportunities through Mass Futsal, Tyngsboro Indoor Sports, Millworks and Teamworks to name a few

Current Programs

- In-Town
 - Pre-K (clinic style; players are rotated through “stations” during the 1 hour Saturday session)
 - Grade K - 3v3 (clinic style – combined practice / game on Saturdays)
 - Grade 1 – 4v4
 - Grade 2 – 5v5 (including keeper)
- Travel
 - Grade 3/4 – 7v7 (introduces offside)
 - Grade 5/6 – 9v9 (introduces PKs)
 - Grade 7/8 – 11v11
- HS Age – Sunday games
 - Fall – 7v7 (BAYS)
 - Spring – 11v11 (MYSL – Grade 9/10 and Grade 11/12)

Program Size



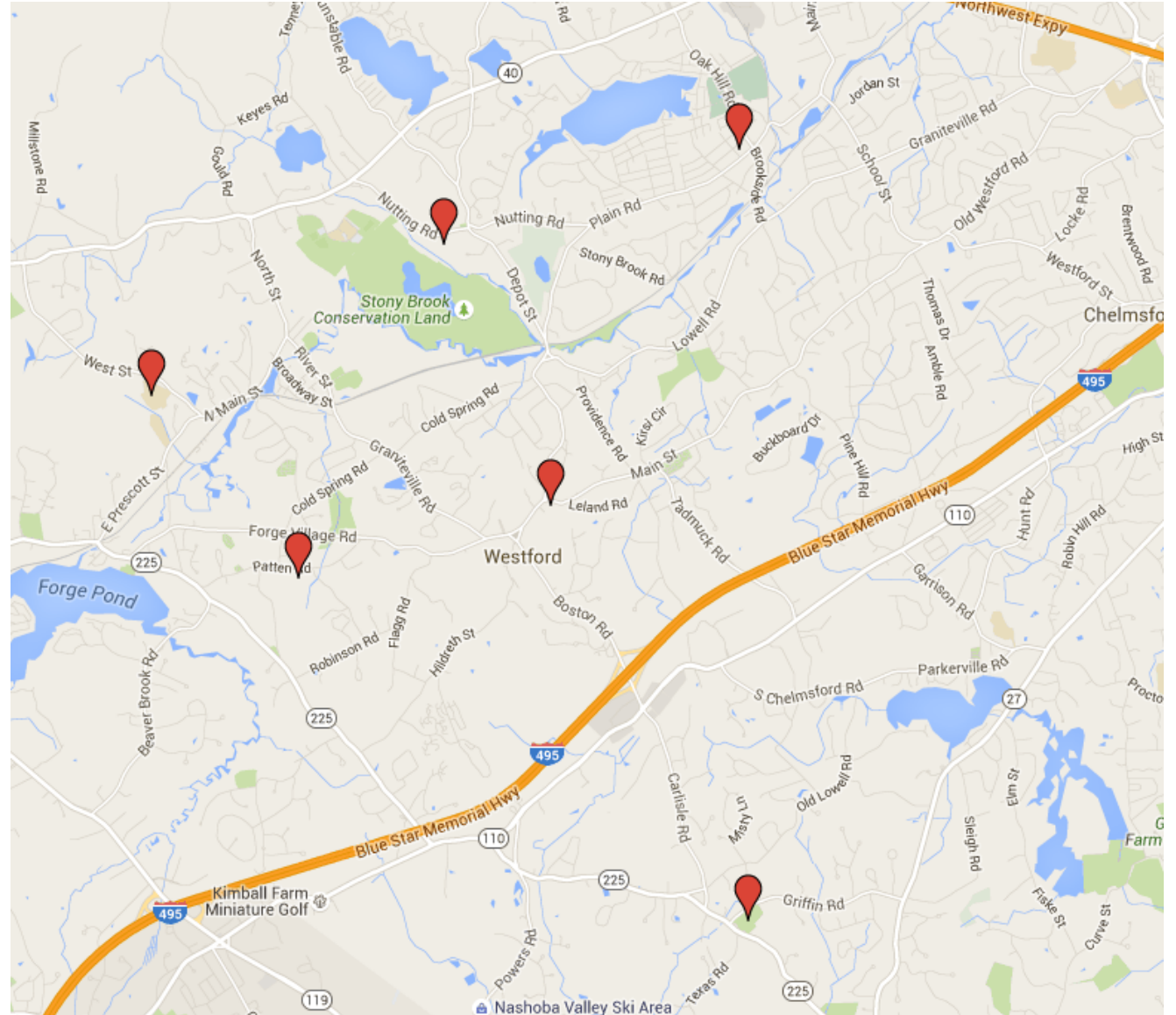
	Fall '24	Spring '25	Fall '25
Players	888	888	879
Coaches	185	197	204
Total	1,073	1,085	1,083

Playing Fields – Fall 2025

- [Blanchard Middle School](#)
- [Captain Hamilton](#)
- [Jack Walsh](#)
- [Community/Nutting Fields](#)
- [Westford Academy](#)
- [Frost Field](#)

No Pets – WA and town fields

Turf fields – no food, drinks, chairs



SAVE NUTTING FIELD!



SAVE THE DATE!

Special October Town Meeting is
Monday, October 27, 2025 @ 7:00PM
@ Westford Academy

There will be an article asking to approve
funds to re-turf the synthetic playing surface
at Nutting Field.

We need LOTS of people to show up AND
vote! APPROVE the funds!!



Registration Deadlines

- Impacts Travel.
- Deadlines are in place so that we can accurately forecast the number of teams we will need in an age group.
- MYSL had a deadline the 2nd week of July to submit the number of teams we needed in an age group, and also our desired division placements (Spring season deadline will be mid-January).
- There is a maximum number of players that can be placed onto a roster. NOT UNLIMITED!
- Register by the deadline and guarantee a roster spot.

Travel Rosters

- WYSA travel rosters are built grouping "like-skilled" players onto teams.
- All players are assigned a "score". This score is calculated using the previous season's Coach Evaluation plus the June Skill Assessment data.
- Team rosters are always built first, then the coaches are assigned to the teams.
- Your child's placement will not be impacted, if you volunteer to coach a team.

Code of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy

The Mass Youth Soccer unified Codes of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy can be found at:

<https://www.mayouthsoccer.org/codes-of-conduct/>

When you registered to coach and/or registered your child to play, you agreed to abide by these codes of conduct.



Volunteer to Coach

I really, really want to coach. What is the commitment?

Simple: Keep things FUN and keep the kids SAFE. If the kid(s) want to play again next season, then you did a GREAT job. The one thing you NEVER want to be is a kid's LAST coach.

At the Pre-K and K-2 grades, it is ALL about ball touch. The more touches the kids can get on the ball, the better. Practices should have lots and lots of dribbling. Any type of game the kids might play at recess... Duck Duck Goose, Mother May I, Simon Says, Red Rover Red Rover, Freeze Tag, Capture the Flag, etc... all these games can be played with a soccer ball at their feet.

You're not in this ALONE.

Board of Directors

2025/2026 Board Nominations

President – Matt Cotter

Treasurer – Bruce Burk

Registrar – Bonnie Neuhardt

Equipment Coordinator – Matt Cotter

Travel Coordinator – Mark Ottesen

Grade Pre-K –

Grade 1 – Melissa Meyer

Grade 3/4 Boys – Jamie Holmes

Grade 5/6 Boys – Aaron Hakenson

Grade 7/8 – Mark Ottesen



Vice-President – Rachel Salvato

Secretary –

Referee Coordinator – Paul Pickersgill

Field Coordinator – Susan Tashji

Event Coordinator – Rebecca MacDonald,
Bethany Slanda

Grade K – Kaley Vescuso

Grade 2 – Rachel Salvato

Grade 3/4 Girls – Danielle Conway

Grade 5/6 Girls – Andrew Pokrovski

Grade 9-12 –

Open Forum / Discussion

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Coach Training

Agenda

- Fall 2025 Overview
- Communication
- Coaching
- Registrar Update
- Player Safety
- Break Out Sessions
 - Grade Pre-K, K, 1, 2
 - Grade 3-8

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Fall 2025 Overview

Fall 2025 Dates



- 8 weeks
- Practices started 8/25
- Season runs from 6 September – 1 November
 - No Pre-K and K-2 In-Town games Columbus Day weekend
 - Travel teams – NO games Columbus Day weekend. Teams may choose to participate in local tournament (e.g. Pepperell)
 - Travel schedules will reset for the final 3 weeks.

Logistics



- Pre-K, Grade K/1 - Combined genders, games and practices at Blanchard. Practice and games on Saturday.
- Grade 2 - Practice and games at Captain Hamilton.
- Grade 3/4 - Practice and games at Jack Walsh
- Grade 5/6 & 7/8 - Practices at Jack Walsh and Nutting. Games at Nutting for both age groups, Nutting and WA for 7/8
- Practice times will change during the season due to fading daylight. Coaches will be informed of these updates and will communicate to their team.
 - Please be considerate of other teams and only use field times that you are assigned

Coach Checklist



- Print off all player Emergency Contact Forms (ECFs) and bring with you to all practices/games. Or make sure you can access them quickly from your phone.
- Communicate – Relay Practice/Game information to your parents. Consider using the Stack Team App to push out practice/game notifications to parents.
- Prepare – Have a Practice Plan ready. Have a Sub Rotation ready. All coaches will receive an age appropriate practice plan to their Inbox, starting today, from YouthSoccer101.
- Wear your Lanyard Credential at ALL games. You should also wear it at practice. You will NOT be allowed on the sideline during games without your Lanyard Credential.
- Playing Time - Players must play at least 50% of the game.
- Keep it FUN!
- Survey your field. Make sure goals are anchored with a sandbag.
- NO climbing on goals!!
- NO earrings!!

Coach Checklist



- Be a positive role model
 - If you yell at your players, parents and fans will do the same
 - Handle concerns in an appropriate manner at half time or the end of the game
- Coaches are responsible for parent and fan conduct
- Parents/spectators should remain on side opposite team benches
 - No spectators behind the goal
- Coaches **MUST** remain with their team bench (from bottom of circle to top of penalty box). Do not enter field, travel sidelines or stand at mid-line
- Be a Positive and Encouraging presence! Players take the lead from their coach's behavior and actions.

Coaching Resources

General Information

- WYSA website
 - <https://westforyouthsoccer.org>
- MYSL website
 - <https://middlesexsoccer.org>



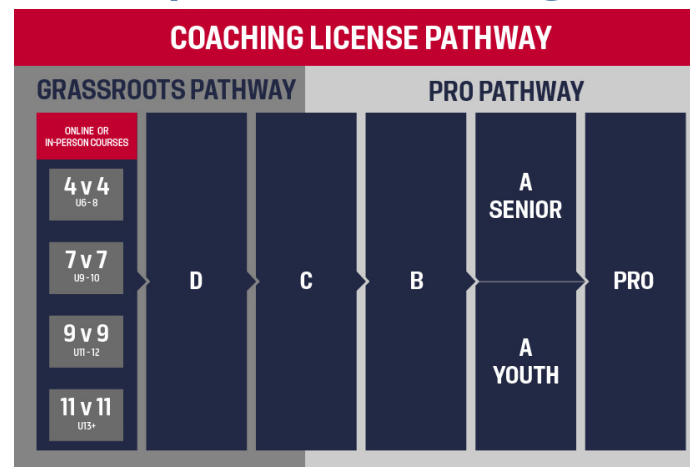
Coaching

- Mass Youth Soccer website
 - [Practice Plans](#)
- US Soccer
 - [I volunteered to coach, now what do I do?](#)
- [Youth Soccer 101](#)
 - Weekly practice plans via email
- [1,000 Touches](#)
- WYSA website
 - [Curriculum Document](#) – Details the skills that each age group should know.

Coaching Education Courses



- The US Soccer Federation (USSF) provides a pathway for coach education from beginners to advanced certifications
 - [*Introduction to Grassroots Coaching*](#) is a free course and takes approximately 20 minutes (highly encouraged)
 - Courses from 4v4 through 11v11 are available, and WYSA will reimburse any costs
- For more information, visit <https://learning.ussoccer.com/>



Coach Evals



- We NEED your player evaluations! Evals are needed for Grade 2 through Grade 8.
- Important piece of the total player profile. Don't hurt your players' rankings. Return the completed evals on time.
- Forms will be sent to coaches around Week 5. Please submit to development@westforyouthsoccer.com by the established deadline.

Travel Coaches



- **Bring 2 printed copies of your “OFFICIAL” team photo roster to games.** This will be provided to you by your Age Director. You will hand the 2 copies to the referee at pre-game team check-in.
- **Display your Lanyard** while on the sidelines at ALL.
- **Mid-Week Games** – Placeholders. Work with the opposing coach to find an agreeable makeup day/time. Do this ASAP. If stars align, try for a 2nd game on a Saturday.
- **Score Your Game!** The “head” coach should receive a “Scoring” email the day after the game. Make sure you complete it. Helpful tip, make sure you keep an eye on the MYSL website and make sure your game results are correct.
- **NO lopsided games!** Keep the goal differential to 7 goals or less. Teams will lose standings points for running up scores. The head coach will face a suspension for repeated violations.
- **Communicate** to your AD, if you encounter issues on game day. Let us know if you do not have a referee.

Travel Notes



- Coaches must have lanyard and 2 printed photo rosters
- The ball can be kicked in any direction, including backward, at kick-off
- Grade 3/4 – 7v7 (minimum 5 players for game)
 - Offside Rule applies
 - No deliberate heading or attempt to head the ball in games or practices
 - On goal kicks the non-kicking team must be in their own half (kicking team does not have to wait)
- Grade 5/6 – 9v9 (minimum 7 players for game)
 - No deliberate heading or attempt to head the ball in games; limited heading in practices
- TRAVEL Coaches – read the [MYSL handbook](#) including rules of the game at the back of the handbook

Incident Reporting



- For other issues (a referee did not show or you want to provide feedback without going through MYSL) or if you have questions concerning referees or the laws of the game . . .
 - Contact:
 - Paul Pickersgill
 - Referee Coordinator/Assignor
 - ppickersgill@comcast.net

Tournaments



- Players pay \$20 each – WYSA sponsors remainder
- Options for payment
 - Coach pays tournament fee (** Preferred method)
 - Coach collects \$20 from each player payable to Coach
 - Coach submits request to WYSA treasurer via email for reimbursement of balance
 - Coach pays tournament fee
 - Coach submits request for full reimbursement
 - Coach collects \$20 from each player payable to WYSA and submits to WYSA Treasurer
 - WYSA pays tournament fee
 - Coach collects \$20 from each player payable to WYSA and submits to WYSA Treasurer
 - Check requests should be submitted a minimum of one week in advance of due date

Travel Teams – Town Pass Program

- To create development opportunities for players and to create a “Town” mentality over individual “team” goals
- Decisions should be based on collaboration and cooperation for the good of WYSA and its members
- A discussion between the coach needing players, the coach providing players and the appropriate Age Director (coordinated through the age director).
- Final decision regarding player selection shall rest with the Age Director
- NOTE: All TPPP players MUST play for their primary team AND the TPPP team on the day of play

Communication





stackteam app

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- TeamApp is the mobile app version of SportsConnect
- Team members and schedules will download automatically
- News lets you send messages to your team through the app and emails to members who have not set up the app
- Chat feature

Website



- Coaches Tab
 - Links to useful information
- For help
 - Manager's Manual
 - Age Director
 - registrar@westforyouthsoccer.com
- Your feedback is wanted! How can we improve the website?

Safety

- SafeSport/Credentials
- Concussion Awareness
- Goals
- Player Equipment
- Weather



Keeping Kids Safe



- Federal Law: Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017
- U.S. Soccer established US Soccer's Safe Soccer Framework
 - a comprehensive program of policies and process, screening, education and training, reporting, monitoring and enforcement designed to help participants detect and report abuse, respond to it, and prevent future occurrences.
- MA Youth Soccer uses SportsAffinity to coordinate this training
 - SafeSport and CDC Concussion Training
 - Any adult interacting with amateur athletes in the program has a duty to report abuse and or suspected abuse within a 24 hour period. EVERY adult is a mandatory reporter.



Adult Credentials



- Once training and reporting requirements are completed, you will be issued a Mass Youth Soccer credential
 - Should be worn at all times during practices and games
 - If you don't have it, you will not be allowed to be on a practice field or coaching sideline
 - **Will** be checked by officials, and reported if not compliant

Concussion Awareness

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▶ "IT'S BETTER TO MISS
ONE GAME, THAN THE
WHOLE SEASON."

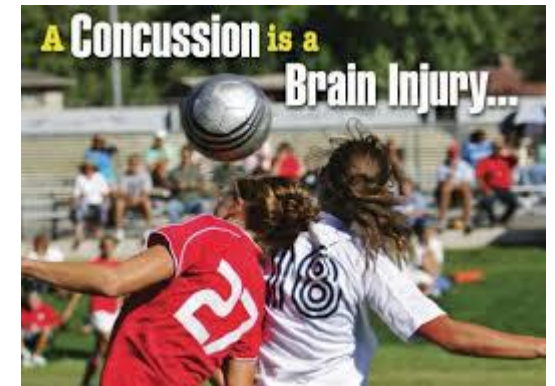


Limited teaching of heading in practices may start in U12 – teach proper technique using a soft ball

IF IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT.



No deliberate heading or attempts to head a ball in games before Grade 7/8



Goal Safety

- Please keep all players and children off goals and nets.
- Sandbags should be on back of goals or staked
- Nets should be secured to posts with clips



Equipment



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Soccer cleat Football cleat



Weather Policy



- Safety is the number one priority of coaches and referees
- In the event the game is suspended, ALL participants MUST clear the field immediately and move into their cars or other permanent shelter.
- Severe storms – high winds, heavy rain, hail, lightning, thunder and/or tornados
- If lightning is within five miles, with or without hearing thunder, the game(s) or practice(s) should be suspended and shelter sought. A rough guideline is to measure the time between the lightning flash and hearing the corresponding thunder. If it is 30 seconds or less, seek shelter. It may not be possible to determine which lightning strike generated which roll of thunder. A simple rule: If you can see it or hear it, clear it!

Thunder and Lightning



- If lightning is within five miles, with or without hearing thunder, the game(s) or practice(s) should be suspended and shelter sought.
- A rough guideline is to measure the time between the lightning flash and hearing the corresponding thunder. If it is 30 seconds or less, seek shelter. It may not be possible to determine which lightning strike generated which roll of thunder.
- A simple rule: If you can see it or hear it, clear it!
- **Games should not be restarted for at least 30 minutes** after the last lightning strike is seen or roll of thunder is heard.

Temperature



- Hot Weather - Games need to be adjusted as the heat index rises:
 - Mandatory water breaks
 - Go to quarters
 - Shorten the games
- Cold Weather
 - Allow additional clothing
 - Hooded sweatshirts, ear muffs and scarves NOT allowed
 - Watch field conditions

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Questions?