ZEELAND RECREATION

AQUATICS
FITNESS
EVENTS
PROGRAMS
SPORTS

Youth Soccer League Information

Pre-Season Information:

- Youth Soccer League Rules
- Field Locations
- League Dates
  - 5yo-K:
    - Pre-season Practice ONLY: Sep 1, 2026 (Girls) & Sep 3, 2026 (Boys)
    - Practice/Scrimmage: Sep 8, 2026 - Oct 13, 2026 & Sep 10, 2026 - Oct 15, 2026
    - 6:00pm start, 6:30pm Scrimmage
  - 1st/2nd & 3rd/4th grade:
    - Practices: Week of Aug 24, 2026 (all schedules will be on Team Sideline).
    - Games: (6) Saturdays, Sep 12, 2026 - Oct 17, 2026
  - 5th/6th grade:
    - Practices: Week of Aug 24, 2026 (all schedules will be on Team Sideline).
    - Games: (7) Saturdays, Sep 12, 2026 - Oct 24, 2026 (pending schedule from Lakeshore League)
- Equipment:
  - Provided by Zeeland Rec: Team uniform, team socks, soccer balls, cones/practice gear
  - Other Equipment (not provided): Shin guards (required), cleats or tennis shoes
  - DICK's Sporting Goods Shop Weekend - 20% Off
  - Cleats for Kids Event: TBD
- Team Placements:
  - Finalized and communicated late August.
  - No evaluations practices will take place. All participants will be placed and receive balanced playing time. Regardless of skill level or experience.

League Communication:

- Zeeland Rec → Coaches → Participants
  - League Updates / Info; League Schedules / Modifications; League Wide Questions / Concerns
  - Team Sideline - Team Placement + Schedules
  - Weekly Reminders / Updates
- Weather Decisions:

    - Weekdays: Decisions by no later than 5:00pm
    - Saturdays: Decisions by no later than 7:30am
    - Communication: Team Sideline + website + social media + weather line
        - If no weather decision is announced, all events are on as scheduled
        - ZPS Policies: If ZPS cancels school due to inclement weather all K-8th grade events district wide are cancelled
- Reporting Concerns/Questions
    - Team Assigned Coach
    - Mandee Matzke: Youth Sports Coordinator | 616-748-3228 | mmatzke@zps.org
    - Robyn DeYoung: Programming Secretary | 616-748-3230 | rdeyoung@zps.org

5YO-K:

- *Practices*: One night per week, combining both practice and gameplay into a single evening session.
    - Girls - Tuesday Nights
    - Boys - Thursday Nights
- 6:00pm-6:30pm Practice (shared field)
- 6:30pm-7:00/7:15pm Scrimmage play vs opposing team
- All practices and games will be held at Zeeland Rec Soccer Field Locations

1st-4th grade:

- **Practices:** One Per Week, Aug - Oct - Schedules sent late August
- **Games:** Saturdays, Sept-Oct - Schedules communicated in late August
- Practice and games will be held at Zeeland Rec Soccer Field Locations
- Teams will be assigned using pre-season ratings and "home" school they attend, and will be designated with varying colors and team names.

5th-6th grade:

- **Practices:** One-Two Per Week, Aug - Oct - Schedules sent late August
- **Games:** Saturdays, Sep - Oct - Schedules communicated in late August
- Teams participate in the Lakeshore League and travel to compete against other local communities for games.
- Practices will be held at Zeeland Rec Soccer Field Locations
- Teams will be assigned using pre-season ratings and "home" school they attend

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Description	5yo-Kinder	1st-2nd grade	3rd-4th grade	5th-6th grade
# of players on field	4 v 4	5 v 5	7 v 7	9 v 9
Game Format	(30) min practice, (30) min scrimmage (4x) 7 min Q's	(4x) 10min Q's, Running Clock	(4x) 12min Q's, Running Clock	(4x) 12min Q's, Running Clock
Half Time	1-2 min break between each Q	4 min	4 min	4 min
Goalie	NO	NO	YES	YES
Team Size (Ideal)	6-8	10	12	12-14
Primary Field				
Adams Elementary F1, F2, F3, F4	Girls: Tues / Boys: Thurs			
Quincy Elementary F1, F2, F3		Boys		
Zeeland Christian F1, F2, F3		Girls		
Roosevelt Elementary F1 & F2			Boys	
Roosevelt Elementary F3 & F4			Girls	
ZE Grass Competition Field				Boys
ZW Grass Soccer Field				Girls
Equipment/Field Info.				
Field Size	50 yd x 20 yd	50 yd x 20 yd	55 yd x 35 yd	80 yd x 50 yd
Ball Size	3	3	4	4
Goal Size	4' x 6'	4' x 6'	6.5' x 18.5'	7' x 21'
Referee(s)/Staff	0	1	2	3

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Game Times (Range)	6:00pm practice, 6:30 scrimmage	9am-1pm	9am-1pm	9am-1pm

Core Values for Youth Sports Programs

- Build Character: Encourage teamwork, good sportsmanship, and resilience.
    - Teach players how to win and lose with grace, respect opponents and officials, and handle adversity by learning from mistakes, fostering a growth mindset.
- Have Fun: Promote an atmosphere where enjoyment is a key priority.
    - Use positive reinforcement and celebrate both small and large successes.
    - Prioritize the process and effort over results.
- Develop Skills: Focus on both sport-specific skills and competitiveness that contribute to success in future athletics.

Coach Expectations

- Be a Role Model: Treat all officials, participants, and spectators with respect.
    - Use positive language and model sportsmanship in both victory and defeat.
- Equal Playing Time: Provide all participants with equal opportunities for playing time in games, ensuring inclusion, focusing on development rather than the scoreboard.
- Multiple Positions: Ensure every child gets a chance to play and learn multiple positions and roles on the team.
- Winning Should Not Determine Decision-Making: Prioritize player growth and enjoyment over winning when making decisions.

Parent Expectations

- Be Flexible: Coaches, officials, and players are all human. Be flexible when mistakes are made in practices, games, etc.
- Be Respectful: Never acceptable to yell, curse, threaten, intimidate, or use physical aggression (coaches, opponents, refs, etc.)
- Enjoy the Game: Youth sports are supposed to be fun! Learn the game your child is playing and cheer them on!
- Addressing Concerns/Communication:
    - Wait 24 hours
    - Player and/or parent/guardian addresses coach (phone or in-person strongly recommended)
    - If not resolved after conversation with coach, contact Youth Sports Coordinator (phone or in-person strongly recommended)
    - If not resolved after conversation with Youth Sports Coordinator, contact Recreation Director (phone or in-person strongly recommended)