



**EXCEL**

**EXCELLENCE CENTER FOR ENHANCED LEARNING**

***SOCCKER  
LEAGUE  
RULEBOOK***

## **Mission:**

**The mission of Terrell ISD ExCEL is to enhance student development, promote staff wellbeing, and support its senior community by providing access to programs and resources that strengthen the mind, body, and character.**

## **League Goal & Values:**

The overall goal of every *ExCEL* Youth Sports League is to positively impact the lives of our student-athletes through physical, social, emotional, and educational growth opportunities that accompany participation in sports.

In order to accomplish this goal, it takes commitment, great effort, and “buy in” toward the following key values:

- **Players Have a Great Experience:**  
All of our student-athletes should get to play in a safe & positive environment
- **Adults Focus on Development:**  
Right now, getting better is way more important than getting trophies  
We should strive to recognize and foster the development of both hard and soft skills:
  - Sport-specific skills, character, problem solving, teamwork, leadership, communication, resilience, and work habits
- **Everyone Takes Responsibility:**  
We all contribute to the success of the league
  - Being Present, Prepared and On Time
  - Being Cooperative, Supportive, Knowledgeable, and Respectful
  - Being your Best

## **Final Note for Parents & Coaches:**

Always remember that our players are impacted by all we say and do; whether at practices, games, in the car, or at the dinner table.

So, before saying or acting upon what may be on our minds...

Let's ask: *Is what I'm about to say or do going to make my Player or Team better at this sport? Will it make them better as a person?*

If not, we should move on to more important things so we can make sure, to the best of our abilities, that these athletes are developing as players, and young men & women.

Together, through our combined efforts, we can maintain these values, accomplish our goal, and fulfill the mission.

Thank you for being part of the ExCEL, and thank you for the investments you have decided to make toward the success of our youth.

Respectfully,

A.J. Knight  
ExCEL Director

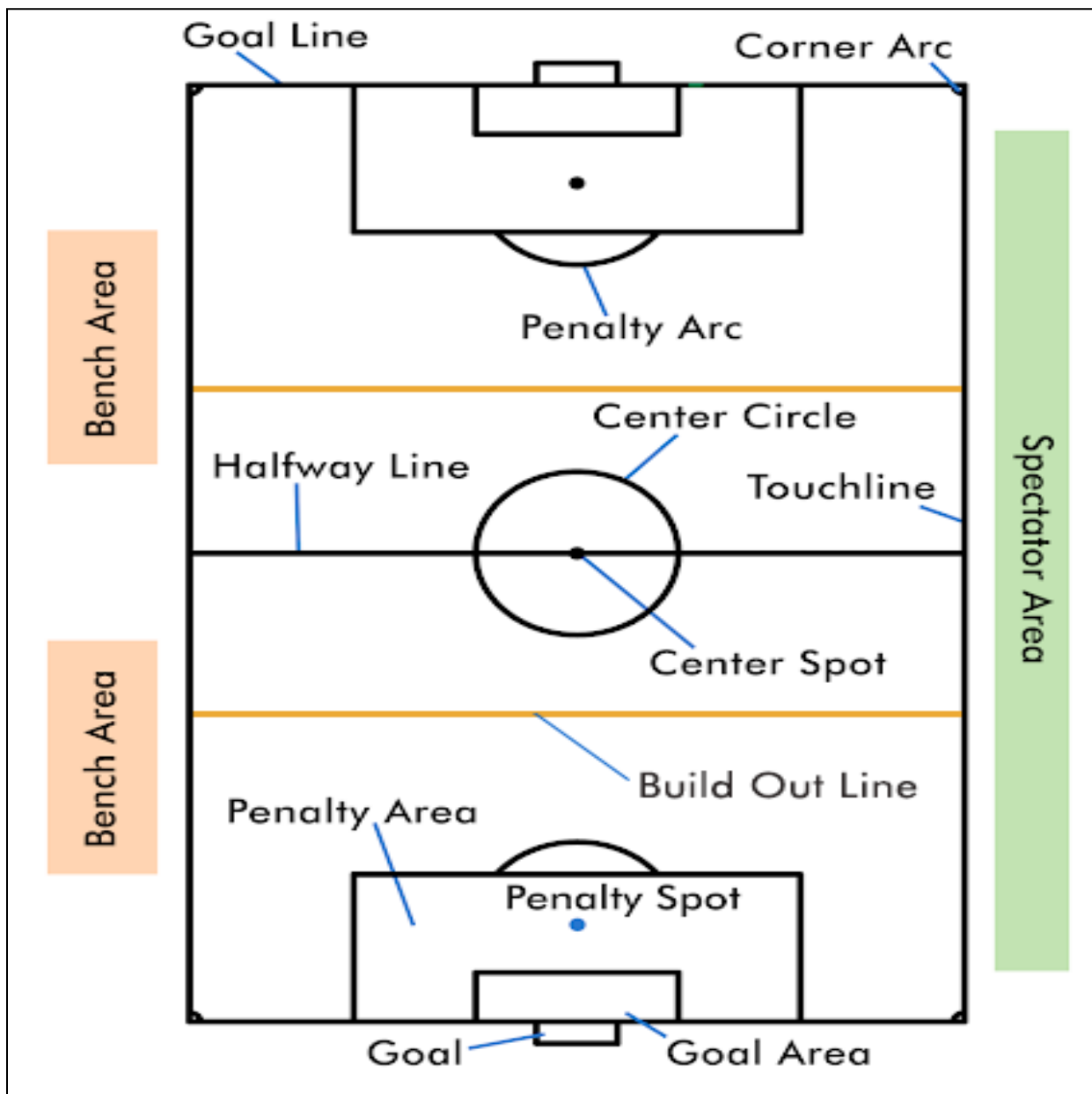
## League Rules

*Except as provided by ExCEL, the FIFA "Laws of the Game" apply to all competitions facilitated by ExCEL. Some of the noteworthy modifications / exceptions are detailed below.*

*The ExCEL reserves the right, at the discretion of League Administrators, to modify any rules or policy as deemed necessary for the safety / benefit of players and to promote fair play.*

*All judgements by League Administrators are final and not contestable.*

### The Field of Play



## The Field of Play (continued)

**Field Dimensions:** The ExCEL will establish the field sizes based on the age of the players/divisions. The definitions will be specified each season, no later than the coaches meeting. The approximate field sizes are scheduled to be:

- U4-U8 (5v5): 60'X90'
- U10-U12 (8v8): 100' X 160'
- U14 & Older (8v8): 140'X225'

**Field Markings and Measurements:** The ExCEL and its officials are the final arbiters of any field markings and no specific dimensions of width of markings will be considered as a factor for play. Markings lost due to previous play on any field will not inhibit play and officials are empowered to assume any lost marking is present to judge play.

Field markings will be made in accordance with the field dimensions where applicable and may not meet any listed sizes but will be consistent throughout the season.

**Goals:** Goal dimensions will be determined by the ExCEL, based on the age/divisions playing. These dimensions will be specified each season, no later than the coaches meeting.

**Coaching and Team Areas:** All players and teams are required to be on one side of the field with a defined neutral space between the two teams.

**Spectator Restraining Lines:** ALL PARENTS/SPECTATORS without an ExCEL/TISD badge are NOT allowed on the sideline possessed between the two teams. Coaches are required to monitor this and assist officials in having parents/spectators removed from the team's side of the fields. Officials are empowered and required to stop or to not-start play to secure sidelines from parents/spectators without a required badge.

No coaches/parents/spectators are allowed to coach or watch from/near the goal lines at any time during play.

## The Official Approved Ball

**The Ball:** The ball used for the game will be provided by ExCEL. The Game Official and / or League Administrator will make the final determination regarding the ball condition and status if any questions arise. Ball sizes will be determined by the age/division of the players as follows:

- U4 - U10: Size 4
- U12 & Up: Size 5

## Teams, Players, Coaches and Substitutions

**Rosters:** ExCEL furnishes the official roster and game sheet. This document is printed out and is based upon the teams' registration & schedules. The game sheet provided by ExCEL is the current official record for eligible rosters and designation of HOME and AWAY teams.

- One adult, 18 years or older, must be on the roster.
- **All Coaching Staff must have a current, approved ExCEL / TISD background screening renewed annually (August 1<sup>st</sup>) based on ExCEL Policy. Upon clearance, Coaches must obtain an ExCEL Coaches Badge, that is to be worn for ALL Practices & Games.**
- The Head Coach is responsible for the conduct of all persons connected with their team (Assistant Coach, players, scorekeepers, parents and spectators)
- In the event that no coach is available, a parent may act as the stand-in Head Coach; the parent must be 18 or older and have a current, approved background screening with TISD.

**Number of Players:** The number of players will be determined by the age/division:

- U4-U8: 5 Players per team (Minimum start: 4 Players)
- U10 & Up: 8 Players per team (Minimum start: 6 Players)

Any team with less than the minimum number of players to start will be required to forfeit.

Players arriving after the start of play that will bring team numbers to the required number of players may enter play during a legal stoppage in play with officials consent.

All games must start with an active goalkeeper in goal and officials are not to start any game without a clearly designated goalkeeper in each defensive goal.

### **Minimum Player Participation Times (50% Rule):**

There is a minimum amount of time that each player is REQUIRED to play at all levels.

All Players must play 50% of each half. `Players who show up late, have to leave early, or have violated team or conduct rules may be exempt from this requirement at coach's discretion.

**NOTE: The referee(s) will not be tracking playing time of the players on each of the teams – that is the responsibility of the coaches. Any issues or complaints of playing times should be directed toward ExCEL administration in order to be addressed.**

**Substitutions:** The rules concerning substitutions are dependent upon the age/division:

- U4-U8: Free substitution without need of the officials consent.
- U10 & Up: During any legal stoppage of play with officials consent.

### **Player Eligibility:**

All players must be registered to the current ExCEL league and on the active roster in order to practice and play in the games/matches; no exceptions.

An ineligible / illegal player is defined as an Unregistered / Un-Rostered Player, or;

- A Player competing in a younger division (5<sup>th</sup> grader playing in a 4<sup>th</sup> grade division), or;
- A Player that is on 2 rosters in the same age/grade division.

### **Other League Policies:**

- Guest players are not authorized at any time or under any circumstances and will be considered ineligible players.
- Players may “play up” to an older division and may participate in multiple age groups / divisions if age-eligible for both.
- Players may only play on one (1) team per division or age/grade level combination.
- Established teams will be assigned to the division of their players’ highest-grade level.
- The ExCEL may verify any player’s age/grade as deemed necessary on any roster at any time.
- Teams with female players only are “Girls” teams. All other teams are considered “Boys” or “Co-Ed”.
- Girls teams may play in Boys divisions; Boys teams may NOT play in Girls divisions.
- The ExCEL may require verification of any player’s age/grade at any time and the player in question may be considered ineligible until validated by league-approved documentation.

**Playing in a scheduled game/match, any player whose age, grade, or gender falls outside of the ExCEL-defined specifics of the division or league, regardless of determination; or playing in any scheduled game/match, an unregistered or un-rostered player, regardless of determination may result in suspension of team from future games and future participation in ExCEL leagues and programs.**

## **Player’s Equipment & Uniforms**

**Uniforms:** The ExCEL reserves the right to deem any jersey and/or uniform unsatisfactory or inappropriate for play. Prior to all games, coaches will enter the jersey number of each player on the game scoresheet. No players may be added to the game scoresheet without consent of the ExCEL. Any player without a number to enter onto the scoresheet must be brought to the official’s attention before the player enters play. Officials are not to start play until both participating teams have fully and correctly addressed the game scoresheet.

**Uniform Conflict (Similar Uniforms):** Home Team is required to change tops or wear bibs provided by ExCEL.

**Shin Guards:** Players shall wear appropriately sized shin guards in manner intended without exception to all practices and games. ExCEL Staff and officials are to prohibit any player without shin guards from any level of participation without exception until requirements are met.

**Shoes:** Appropriate shoes must be worn by all participants during the game and the official is the final arbitrator of the safety of any player's shoes prior to the start of game.

**Miscellaneous Articles:** The ExCEL reserves the right to deem any miscellaneous articles worn by players as unsatisfactory or inappropriate for play.

- No hard casts are permitted on field during play and officials are not allowed to make exceptions under any circumstances.
- A player may not wear jewelry of any type whatsoever. This includes motion tracking devices and /or heart rate monitoring devices.
- No player may wear earrings of any type, unless deemed safe for play by Game Official or League Administration prior to the game.
- Religious items that must be worn require the consent of the Game Official or League Administration prior to the start of play.

## The Powers and Duties of Officials

**Jurisdiction of Officials:** ExCEL official's jurisdiction begins with arrival to the designated ExCEL fields and ends upon their leaving the designated ExCEL fields. Officials jurisdiction includes bathrooms, parking lots, and common spaces in and around playing fields. Officials are also to be considered members of the ExCEL Staff for the duration of time in attendance at designated playing fields.

**Discretionary Powers:** The official may use their authority to modify standing rules to facilitate any reasonable requests of both opposing teams' coaches prior to the game. Officials will deny any requests that will unfairly impact play, limit an individual player's playing time, or will impact the start of any later games. The official is the final arbiter of what modifications will be allowed prior to the start of play.

### Advantage

The official's power extends to offenses committed when play is stopped or when ball is out of play. The official will refrain from penalizing in cases where the offending team will gain advantage, unless said official deems the infraction such as to merit the attention of a penalty for the purposes of educating the offending player on the severity of the infraction. When the official observes a foul that is not to be penalized and/or stop play, the official shall call out "play on" and signal with both hands, palms up, pointing towards the direction of the ongoing play, but not stop play with the whistle. The official may then, at any reasonable point, stop play and award a free kick if the advantage does not materialize.

**Injuries:** Any player removed from play due to injury/illness may be replaced before play begins and this includes the goalkeeper. Officials are to allocate time for potential substitution to take place. Any bleeding player must be removed from the field immediately and is unable to rejoin play until the present ExCEL Staff approves return to play.

**Assistant Officials:** When present, an assistant official shall have all the powers of the lead official. The assistant official may at any time take the role of the lead official. The assistant official may not override or reverse any call made by the lead official without the consent of the lead official.

**Time & Scorekeeping:** The official will be the sole timekeeper and responsible for score. Any implemented scorekeeping device will defer to the official for the time of play and correct and final score.

**Duration of Game:** The game shall consist of two 24-minute halves, with a five-minute halftime given between the two halves. No extended time or overtime periods will be allotted to any game and any game with a tie score at the end of regulation time shall be recorded as a tie. Coaches may approach the official prior to the start of the game and discuss possible reductions of time of game or playing the game in twelve-minute quarters.

**Caution offenses:** Engaging in unsportsmanlike behavior by coach or player, directed at an official, any player, any opposing coach or bench, or towards any spectator will be considered an ejection offense if the severity, in the officials' opinion, merits the ejection. It is not solely a caution offense.

**Protests:** There are two instances where a protest can be made:

- A team plays an ineligible player.
- There has been an obvious error made in the application of the rules that directly affects the outcome of the match and the error is confirmed by the referee.

\*A team may not protest based on judgement calls made by the referee or for any other reason outside of the two instances mentioned.

\*Official protests can only be made after the contest has been played.

\*\*Exception: If there is a valid concern for player safety, Coaches should address the game official and/or League Administrator with their concern immediately. Both the Official and the League Administrator have the ability to stop play and render a decision in the moment. In such instances, the League Administrator will have the final say and may overrule the Official's call.

\*Protest Requirements: In order to protest, the Coach must formally submit the protest in writing to the ExCEL, in person or via email within 48 hours of the match completion (even if the team won the match). No objection/protest shall be withdrawn because the protestor won the match.

The ExCEL will consider the protest and render final determination regarding the outcome of the contest.

## Build Out Lines & Offsides

### Build Out Lines (U10-U12):

- For Goalkeepers playing the ball out of the back field:
  - When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play.
  - Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw, or roll the ball into play (punts or dropkicks are not allowed.). *The goalkeeper may put ball into play prior to opposing team moving behind build out line.*
  - If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.
  - If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point where the infringement occurred.
  - After the ball is put into play by the goal keeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.
- For Goal Kicks:
  - The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play.
- For Offsides:
  - The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called.
  - Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line.
  - Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line.

**Offsides (U14 & Up):** Standard offside rules apply. Build-up lines will NOT be used.

## Games Rescheduled for Indoor Play @ ExCEL

**Rescheduled Games:** Anytime games are rescheduled to be played inside the ExCEL, all games will be played with the ExCEL Futsal or ExCEL Indoor Soccer rulesets. The determination of which is played will be determined by division. U4-U8: Futsal rules will apply. U10 & Up: Indoor Soccer rules will apply. The rules for ExCEL Futsal and Indoor Soccer can be found at <https://www.terrellexcel.com/rule-books>.

Players should wear appropriate footwear for court (non-marking shoes) and/or turf play for games brought inside the ExCEL. Players with inappropriate footwear could be prohibited from play.

When games are rescheduled to inside the ExCEL, all applicable ExCEL facility rules will be enforced. ExCEL policies may be found at <https://www.terrellexcel.com/copy-of-facility-rules>.

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE ExCEL SOCCER LEAGUE.