COMPETITION RULES

Soccer

Revised | April 2026

1. TEAM ENTRY

1.1 Grades are:

Premier League - can be filled with players up to Year 12.

Division 1 - can be filled with players from up to Year 12.

Middle A - will consist of only players up to Year 9.

Middle B - will consist of only players up to Year 9.

The Shield grades are **Premier League** and **Division 1**.
The Pennant grade is **Middle A**

1.2 Premier League and Division 1
Teams are to consist of 11 players on the field with up to five substitutes.

Middle A and B
Teams are to consist of 9 players on the field with up to five substitutes.

In Shield grades, a team may request that their opposition lend them a player,,or match their numbers if they do not have enough. If this happens, this is considered a forfeit by the team making the request, and a 'scratch match' may proceed.

1.3 Schools are expected to provide 1 field for every 2 teams entered in the competition.

1.4 Schools who do not enter a team in an A-grade (or equivalent) competition are not eligible for finals in the corresponding B-grade (or equivalent) competition.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Any player who plays a half or less in Premier League on a Tuesday afternoon may play in a lower division, if necessary due to insufficient numbers, on Wednesday of the same round.

2.2 Eligibility for a finals match: If half or more of the player(s) matches (including any semi-finals) have been played in any given grade, they can play in a final in that grade (as confirmation, if a player plays 50% of their matches in Senior A grade and 50% in Middle A grade, they would be eligible for finals in either grade).

For avoidance of doubt – players **can** play in a higher grade than where they have played 50% of their matches. For example, if a player had played solely in Div 1, and the Premier League are short a player for a Final, the Div 1 player may play.

A player may only play in **one** IGSSA Grand Final in each sport.

Schools are expected to keep player attendance records at games so that this information can be provided upon request (for example, student roll in Clipboard).

3. REFEREEING

3.1 The first named school is to provide one referee for their match.

3.2 In Premier League grade only, schools are required to provide a line judge each.

It is preferable that officials are not enrolled students at participating schools. If it is necessary for a student to be allocated to an official role, then they must be accredited or in a training/pathway program for accreditation, and not wearing school uniform.

3.3 Referees should be encouraged to call offsides, particularly where no assistant referee (linesperson) is present.

4. MATCH RULES (INC IGSSA-SPECIFIC RULES)

4.1 Rules are in accordance with the current IFAB Laws of the Game unless otherwise stipulated below.

4.2 Games will start as close to 4.00pm as possible. If teams are late to arrive due to transport distance, then games will be reduced in time unless the finishing time can be extended by mutual agreement. Coaches should negotiate time before the start of matches. If a team is not ready to play by 4.20pm, it will be considered a forfeit by the late team, however a friendly game may still proceed under agreed revised conditions.

4.3 Teams play 25-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time break.

4.4 Games must be completed by 5.15pm. If teams are late to arrive due to transport distances, then both halves will be reduced equally in time unless the finishing time can be extended by mutual agreement. Coaches should negotiate time before the start of matches.

4.5 Choice of ends and the kick-off shall be determined by the toss of a coin.

4.6 Premier League and Division 1
A team must have 8 players to avoid a forfeit. If a forfeit is necessary, schools may decide to have a 'scratch match'.

Middle A and B
A team must have 7 players to avoid a forfeit. If a forfeit is necessary, schools may decide to have a 'scratch match'.

5. RESULTS

5.1 A drawn match is allowed (unless a finals game).

5.2 Incomplete matches.

5.2.1 If a Shield/Pennant match is unable to commence for reasons beyond the control of either team, then every reasonable effort should be made to reschedule. If a mutually agreeable reschedule date between the participating schools cannot be reached, then the match result will be a draw, with 0-goal differential.

5.2.2 If a match has commenced, and a minimum of **75%** of the match (37.5 minutes) has been played, and the match is subsequently abandoned at any time after, then the result at time of interruption will be deemed the final score of the match.

5.2.3 If the match is abandoned with less than **75%** match time played, then the result will be a draw with 0-goal differential.

5.3 All results from the preceding week's matches must be submitted to Clipboard by 48 hours post-fixture in order for accurate Premiership Tables to be published in a timely manner.

5.4 Scorers/Timers or an official rep from each school to be responsible for keeping score and time for the match. Both to sit together for the entire match and confer scores with officials at each break.

5.5 For IGSSA Premiership tables, three points will be awarded for a win, one for a draw and zero for a loss. The maximum win tally that will be registered is 8 goals. If teams win (or lose by more than that, it will be just the 8-goal margin registered). In the event of a bye, the team drawn to have a bye will be awarded zero points. In the event of a forfeit, the non-offending team will be awarded

three points and the maximum winning margin. The offending team will be awarded zero points and the maximum losing margin.

5.6 If **half or more** games from an IGSSA Division are unable to be completed in a single Shield/Pennant round, then **all games** from that round in that Division will be considered a draw, with a 0-point differential. For the avoidance of doubt, for example, if there are six scheduled Shield/Pennant games in a round, and three are unable to be completed, then all games in that round are considered a draw.

6. FINALS

6.1 Shield grades – single pool - two semi-finals, 1 v 4 and 2 v 3, will be scheduled, with the winners of the two semi-finals (finalists) playing for the Shield in the Grand Final. The winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Shield. If season length/number of nominations does not allow for semi-finals, then a 1 v 2 Grand Final will be scheduled, and the winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Shield.

Shield grades – two pools - two semi-finals, 1 (Pool A) v 2 (Pool B), and 2 (Pool A) v 1 (Pool B), will be scheduled, with the winners of the two semi-finals (finalists) playing for the Shield in the Grand Final. The winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Shield. If season length/number of nominations does not allow for semi-finals, then a 1 (Pool A) v 1 (Pool B) Grand Final will be scheduled, and the winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Shield.

Pennant grades – one Grand Final, 1 v 2, will be scheduled, and the winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Pennant.

The team which finishes higher on the regular season ladder has the right to host any semi-finals, or the Grand Final, at their choice of home venue. In the event that the preferred home venue is not available, IGSSA will schedule an alternative venue in consultation with the school with hosting rights.

In the event that finalists are from different pools, the hosting rights will be granted to the team which earned more ladder points. If teams in one pool played fewer games than the teams in the other pool, overall ladders will be adjusted on average wins.

Finalists will be determined by total points initially (i.e., win/loss tally) and then SD (Score differential) if points are equal but a split needs to be made.

If the Score Differential is also equal, then the team who has won in Head-to-Head games in any Shield matches from the regular season will advance. Where more than one H2H Shield game has been played, total score from the two games shall be combined to determine a winner. For example, if Team Blue and Team Red played two Shield games in the regular season, with Blue winning the first 3-0, and Red winning the second 2-0, Team Blue would advance.

6.2 If a finals match is tied at the end of full time, then a 2x minute break is applied, followed by extra time of 2 x 5min periods (with a 2x minute break in between) will be played, followed by penalties (5 in total) if still tied.

6.3 If either or both semi-final matches cannot be played, the higher-ranked team will advance to the Grand Final.

6.4 If no Grand Final match can be played and team(s) are on tied points in Shield/Pennant grades at the end of the season, the Shield/Pennant winner will be identified using the following criteria:

i. Head-to-Head – Calculate the premiership points for games played between *each team involved in the tie* only. The school with the most Head-to-Head premiership points wins the Shield/Pennant (providing equal number of Head-to-Head games between tied teams exist). If there is still no clear winner from Head-to-Head calculation, then:

ii. Score Differential – Calculate the score differential for all games played. The team with the greatest score differential will be awarded the Shield/Pennant. If there is still no clear winner from the score differential, then:

iii. The Shield/Pennant will be shared between all teams on tied points.

7. EQUIPMENT

7.1 Each school is to provide a match quality ball.

7.2 Shin guards are compulsory for all players.

7.3 Pitch dimensions – it is suggested that Middle A and Middle B play on a modified ground in accordance with governing body guidelines.

Field size: Length 60-70m, Width 40-50m
Goal size: 2m high, 5m wide
Field marking: cones, markers or painted lines are allowed
Penalty area: Depth 10m, Width 20m. Penalty spot 7m from goal line.

7.4 If teams' uniforms are similar in colour, it is the responsibility of the away/second-listed team to provide clash bibs or a clash uniform to wear.

SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDELINES

Sport plays an essential role in the personal and social development of students, fostering teamwork, discipline, and resilience. To ensure that every student has a positive and enriching experience on the field or court, it is important that we prioritise sportsmanship, respect, and enjoyment in every competition.

IGSSA's Sportsmanship Guidelines are designed to maintain a healthy balance in competition, ensuring that students from all skill levels and backgrounds have the opportunity to feel engaged and supported. In this spirit, collegiality and open communication between schools and coaches are vital. By working together, we can create an environment where the well-being of our athletes comes first, where every match is competitive yet compassionate, and where the values of respect, fairness, and encouragement shine through.

These guidelines are a reminder that while winning is part of sport, the ultimate goal is to nurture a love for the game and foster strong character in all our students.

RULES

At the below point margin for all grades:

- 8 goals

The following rule shall apply:

- All players from the leading team must move behind the halfway line following a goal kick.

The maximum score difference is awarded in the recording of results once the margin is reached and the Sportsmanship Guidelines are activated.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following are not implemented rules, however, suggestions for coaches to help ensure sportsmanship is present for all teams.

- If the goalkeeper of the trailing team takes possession, the leading team could retreat behind the halfway line.
- Dominant players could rotate their optimal positions.
- The first pass is free to the trailing team from a goal kick.