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## **EXCITING NEWS – READ ALL ABOUT IT!!!**

### **New Hampshire Youth Football and Spirit Conference changes to a GRADE-BASED structure!!!**

Starting with the 2009 season our playing format will change to the American Youth Football (AYF) ALL-AMERICAN DIVISION.

The New Hampshire Youth Football & Spirit Conference (NHYFSC) member association presidents approved and voted on restructuring the football program to a Grade-Based format after reviewing youth football national trends and research.

Bill Brown, National Football Commissioner for AYF, the largest youth football and cheer organization in the country, met with member associations and presented the All-American Division format, which has been offered by AYF for years.

In the past, the NHYFSC offered football in an age/weight restricted format. While this was well suited at the time, the Grade-Based format represents a more natural progression and development for today's youth football players. The Grade-Based program will better align us with national trends and create a true feeder program for all of our High Schools.

What is the All American Division?

- The All American Division is a Grade-Based program that fosters participants in the same grade of similar age to play together. This will provide consistency and continuity for the players and teams from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and onto high school. It is our belief that this change will strengthen our overall football program.

What the NHYFSC has to offer?

- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – The new Varsity/Jr. Varsity program offered at the Middle School level will help transition players to a higher level of competition prior to moving onto high school. Teams will compete in an 8-game schedule that leads to state playoffs and the opportunity to advance to regional and national championships as in the past. They will continue to play national federation rules.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – Individual teams can be formed at each of the three grade levels (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>) and will compete in an 8-game schedule that leads to state playoffs and the opportunity to advance to regional and national championships as in the past. They will continue to play national federation rules.
- Instructional – A combination of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades. This level will continue as our instructional level so the participants can learn and develop the skills they need to play the game of contact football.
- Flag Football, introduced in 2008, will continue to be offered to our participants aged 5-7. The level came about based on trends and parents request. The focus of the level is to provide a safe controlled environment to introduce these younger participants to teamwork and the game of football.

All other aspects of the conference will continue to operate in the same great manner. The NHYFSC mission is to provide an opportunity for the children to participate in a safe, structured environment that supports sportsmanship, healthy competition and academic achievement. Cheerleading will continue to follow the AYF/AYC Nationally published division format.

This is a very exciting time for the New Hampshire Youth Football & Spirit Conference, its member associations and the children of New Hampshire. This progressive change will provide all children the opportunity for improvement, expansion and advancement, within a more appropriately structured format.