



Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with us in the spring 2017 North Polk United Survey! We appreciate your comments and have already been working to incorporate positive changes to move the North Polk United Soccer Club and Board of Directors in the right direction to best serve the North Polk United soccer community.

The following is a summary of some of the progress that has been made. Although a formal survey won't be completed again until the spring of 2018, we encourage you to continue to openly provide feedback to the Board at any time by emailing admin@northpolkunited.org.

Support for Coaches

We are working on a number of different initiatives to support our volunteer coaches. Running a program of 500+ kids is not possible without many volunteers and we appreciate those that are willing to step up and donate their time to educate and mentor our youth in the game of soccer. We encourage all coaches to take part in the efforts and hope that together we can improve the experience for all.

- **Skills Night** – We continue to hold skills nights throughout the first month of the season. Our fall 2017 skills night schedule during the month of September is as follows:
 1. 5U/6U – Thursdays 5:00 – 5:30
 2. 7U – 10U – Tuesdays 5:00 – 6:00
 3. 11U+ - Tuesdays 6:00 – 7:00We encourage all coaches and their teams to participate and promote the skills nights as an opportunity for the children to work on their skills amongst all their peers. We also view this and a great opportunity for both new and seasoned coaches to learn and assist one another.
- **Coaches Clinic** – We partnered with Iowa Soccer to offer a Coaches Clinic which was held on August 24th from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. This was a great opportunity for new and seasoned coaches to learn how to interact with youth and learn some soccer training best practices! The Coaches Clinic was open to all coaches wanting to learn more about the game of soccer.
- **Resources** – Iowa Soccer provides weekly lesson plans for 9U+ and we are working on internal lesson plans for 5U-8U to assist coaches by providing sample drills and specific areas of focus. Coaches are not required to follow the lesson plans, but we hope that this effort will provide coaches some tools and ideas to use in their practices. We welcome any coach to share other drills they may use with the Board so that we can continue to expand the library of resources available to our North Polk United soccer community.

- **Code of Conduct Certification** – We require all NPU coaches and assistants to complete the Code of Conduct Certification prior to the start of every season as a reminder of the Club’s rules and expectations. Any violation of the Code of Conduct should be communicated to the Board and will be investigated.

Field Update

Exciting news!! The Board has been hard at work to secure adequate field space for our growing North Polk United soccer community. We are happy to announce a number of new field space options and want to express our appreciation to these organizations for partnering with North Polk United and allowing us to use their available space. New locations include:

- Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church – Two 9U-10U practice fields
- United Methodist Church - Two 5U-8U practice and game fields
- Lakeside Fellowship – Opening Spring 2018!

Field maps for the Fall 2017 Season are now available on the NPU website and fields goals are clearly numbered to assist parents and family members in locating game and practice playing fields.

Communication

We understand the importance of communication and desire to have transparency throughout the North Polk United soccer community in any Club matters. If there is something you want to know, please ask and we will do our best to keep you informed.

- **Remind Notices** – NPU utilizes a free service from Remind to send out critical updates and keep you informed of field status, registration reminders, camp information and any other important reminders. Alerts are delivered via text message. To sign up for NPU soccer notifications, please visit <https://www.remind.com/join/coachnp>
- **Board Composition** – We will continue to notify the North Polk United soccer community of any open Board positions. We are always in need of more help and are happy to hear from anyone interested in joining or assisting the Board in any capacity.
- **Published Board Minutes** – The Board holds monthly meetings and effective July 2017, the NPU Board minutes will be posted on the NPU website for public access.
- **Amended NPU Bylaws** – Recently amended NPU By-laws are now available on the NPU website.
- **Open Board Meeting** – At least annually, and as needed upon request, the Board will open the meeting to the public for anyone wishing to attend. If you have an interest in attending a Board meeting, please let us know.

Roster Formation

The past year has brought about many changes from recent US Soccer age mandates to the addition of NPU Level 2 teams. Change can be difficult and we understand that these changes caused rosters and teams to shift, but as time passes we as a Club will overcome these difficulties and a new norm will

emerge. Rest assured that the Board reviews these changes with care and deliberation to ensure that the decisions made are in accordance with NPU Bylaws and in the best interest of the North Polk United soccer community as a whole.

- **US Soccer Age Mandate** – Beginning August 2016, the US Club Soccer mandate required youth soccer sanctioning organizations to form competitions based on birth-year age groups. Adoption of this mandate required rosters to be adjusted and some children to move age divisions.
- **Level 2** – In the fall of 2016, NPU piloted two Level 2 girls teams. Level 2 is intended to provide players a higher level of competition than Level 3. The pilot Level 2 teams were determined based upon registration numbers for those age divisions that were able to support both Level 3 and Level 2 teams, as well as, players, parents, and coaches willing to put in the extra effort and money required for Level 2. NPU views the Level 2 pilots a success and will continue to look for opportunities to provide other Level 2 team options if registration numbers and interest allow. A survey was sent out in the spring of 2017 regarding interest in a Level 2 11U boys team. The survey did not draw enough interested players at this time.
- **Playing Up Policy** – The NPU playing up policy is documented on the NPU website. NPU will first honor age appropriate players and then will honor play up requests based on roster availability across the age divisions.
- **Team Formation** – The Iowa Soccer season runs from fall to spring with the academic year. NPU aligns with that by keeping the teams together from fall to spring and then resetting teams in the fall. While the board believes that there are positive aspects of teams sticking together across seasons, we also believe that there are positives for resetting teams and for kids to get the experience playing with different kids and learning from different coaches.

We hope this document provides transparency into some of the great things happening within the North Polk United soccer community. We are open to feedback, so if you have any questions, please reach out to the Board at any time by emailing admin@northpolkunited.org or by contacting any Board member. See you on the soccer fields!