

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**US Youth Soccer, US Club Soccer, AYSO Statement on Forthcoming U.S. Soccer Decision Regarding Age Group Formation by School Year vs. Calendar Year**

**FRISCO, Texas (October 23, 2024)** – Today, US Youth Soccer, US Club Soccer, and AYSO released the following statement.

In 2017, U.S. Soccer decided to change the age eligibility for team rosters from August 1-July 31 to January 1-December 31. Since that time, we have been reviewing the impact on our sport, specifically for players of all ages and competitive levels, and comparing the practical results to the communicated goals and outcomes.

Over the past few months, U.S. Soccer, at the urgence of its Technical Development Committee, has engaged in a review of that decision. We support these efforts and appreciate their approach to engage organizational members, leagues and clubs in collecting feedback. Additionally, US Youth Soccer, US Club Soccer, and AYSO have solicited and shared additional feedback with one another in an effort to make the most informed and appropriate decision for our sport.

First and foremost, US Youth Soccer, US Club Soccer, and AYSO have been in constant communication on the topic. US Youth Soccer and US Club Soccer's leadership teams have met in person multiple times, most recently in September at the US Youth Soccer Grassroots Symposium in Salt Lake City. Additionally, we welcome the involvement of other U.S. Soccer organizational members.

***We believe that any decisions should be made as a collective and our intention is to do so.***

As chair and vice chair of the U.S. Soccer Technical Development Committee and Youth Representatives on the Board of Directors, Mike Cullina (US Club Soccer CEO) and Louis Mateus (US Youth Soccer Board of Directors member) are directly involved in the conversation and recommendation to U.S. Soccer's Board of Directors. Likewise, as chair

of the Youth Council and the Youth Representative on the Board of Directors, Tina Rincon (US Youth Soccer Board of Directors chair) is actively engaged.

The next U.S. Soccer Board of Directors meeting is November 22, 2024. We expect this topic to be on the agenda for that meeting and, consequently, a formal and public decision made by the end of the calendar year.

As always, thank you for your passion for the sport and commitment to our athletes.

Skip Gilbert

Mike Cullina

Doug Ryan

US Youth Soccer CEO

US Club Soccer CEO

AYSO National President

– USYS –

### **About US Youth Soccer**

US Youth Soccer, the largest youth sport organization in the country, is on a mission to provide world-class support, resources, and leadership, helping every member fulfill their goals on and off the field of play. US Youth Soccer registers nearly 2.5 million players annually. Through its programming, resources and leadership, US Youth Soccer is advancing the game for its 54 Member State Associations, 10,000 clubs and leagues and one million administrators, coaches, and volunteers. US Youth Soccer connects families and communities to the power of sports and its shared love of soccer. US Youth Soccer provides a path for every player, coach and referee offering programs that provide a fun, safe and healthy environment at every level of the game.

### **About US Club Soccer**

A National Association member of the U.S. Soccer Federation, **US Club Soccer** fosters the growth and development of soccer clubs in order to create the best possible development environment for players of all ages.

Anchored by **Players First** and its pillars of Club Development, Coaching Development, Player Development, Referee Development, Parent Engagement & Education and Player Health & Safety, US Club Soccer offers registration, league- and cup-based competition platforms, player identification and a variety of other programming, resources and services.

US Club Soccer is sponsored by Nike, DICK’S Sporting Goods and Gatorade.

### **About AYSO**

American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) is a national nonprofit organization committed to delivering quality youth soccer programs in a fun, family-friendly environment. AYSO is rooted in Six Philosophies: Everyone Plays®, Balanced Teams, Open Registration, Positive

Coaching, Good Sportsmanship, and Player Development. Now celebrating its 60th year since inception in 1964, AYSO programs span over 640 communities across the United States.

As a member organization of the U.S. Soccer Federation, all AYSO programs, including AYSO PLAY!, conform to U.S. Soccer standards for safety, training, education, and player development curricula. Learn more about AYSO at [www.ayso.org](http://www.ayso.org).