

# HEARTLAND YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE



## League By-Laws 2023

*UPDATED May 2023*

### HISTORY

In an effort to standardize the Football Programs from the below listed schools, the Heartland Youth Football League (HYFL) was formed in January 2016. The League offers three Divisions, A – 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade players, B – 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade players and Flag – K, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade players. Teams are split into Varsity and Junior Varsity teams based on participants. The goal of the HYFL is create a level playing field for all programs in the Heartland Conference. The League originally consisted of Teams from Danville, Hughesville, Loyalsock, Mifflinburg, Montoursville, Selinsgrove, Shikellamy, South Williamsport and Southern Columbia. Lewisburg joined the League in 2017 bringin the total to 10 Teams. 2018 saw our League grow to 16 Teams with the addition of Bloomsburg, Central Columbia, Milton, Montgomery, Muncy and Warrior Run. In 2019, Mid-West and Jersey Shore were added to bring the League to 18. In 2020 we added Shamokin and Williamsport. In 2021 Mt Carmel joined, followed by Central Mountain and Berwick in 2022.

The Heartland Youth Football League is a State Registered 501 c3 Non Profit Organization.

### Divisions: 2023

| North West  | North East   | South West   | South East  |
|---|--|--|---|
| Loyalsock 2016<br>Montoursville 2016<br>Jersey Shore 2019<br>Williamsport 2020<br>Central Mountain 2022 | Hughesville 2016<br>Montgomery 2018<br>Muncy 2018<br>Warrior Run 2018<br>South Williamsport 2016<br>Lewisburg 2017 | Danville 2016<br>Mifflinburg 2016<br>Selinsgrove 2016<br>Shikellamy 2016<br>Mid West 2019<br>Milton 2018 | Southern Columbia 2016<br>Bloomsburg 2018<br>Central Columbia 2018<br>Shamokin 2020<br>Mt Carmel 2021<br>Berwick 2022 |

## ARTICLE I: ETHICS

Section 1.1: All programs, Coaches, participants, parents and guests are required to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes, Sportsmanship and Fair Play and provides an environment that sets the proper example to the youth of our Organization and Communities. All Participant (Football and Cheer), Parents/Guardians, Coaches and Leadership, will be required to acknowledge and sign a Code of Conduct Agreement prior to participation in the Heartland Youth Football League. The Agreement will be attached as Addendum #1. Unacceptable actions not addressed by the individual Organization will be presented to the League Committee for disciplinary action.

## ARTICLE II: GOVERNING BODY

Section 2.1: The HYFL will be Governed by an Executive Board and Board of Directors. The Executive Board will consist of the Commissioner and the Presidents of all the Teams in the League. The Executive Board members will each carry 1 vote for all matters pertaining to the League. The Commissioner will only vote in the event of a tie vote. The Board of Directors will consist of all League Teams elected or appointed Officials. They will be responsible to make decisions on behalf of the players, parents, guardians and Coaches of their respective Team. They will provide Guidance to the Team President for matters pertaining to their Teams and those of the HYFL.

## ARTICLE III: COACHES

Section 3.1: All Coaches MUST be USA Football Certified to participate in the HYFL.

Section 3.2: There will not be any coaches allowed on the field during A Division (Varsity and JV) or B Division Varsity games. B Division JV will be allowed 1 coach on the field for Offense and Defense. They will only be permitted to call the play and then step as far away as possible. **Coaches (on field only) will NOT be able to direct their players once the ball is snapped. There will be a 5yd penalty imposed if this occurs.**

## ARTICLE IV: INSURANCE and MEDICAL SUPPORT

Section 4.1: All Teams will be covered by Insurance for the 12 Month Calendar Year from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>. Each Team will be responsible for payment of an equal share for the Policy. All Teams will be required to submit Field Name and Addresses in order to receive an Additional Insured Certificate of the Policy. This includes practice and game locations.

Section 4.2: Home Teams must have an EMT or other Medical Professional on site for all games. Currently our Medical Support will be provided by the Geisinger Sports Medicine Athletic Trainers. Medical decisions by the Athletic Trainers will be final. Players will not be able to return to play unless cleared by the Trainer. The cost of this service will also be shared equally by all Teams.

## ARTICLE V: OFFICIALS

Section 5.1: Each Team will be responsible to have a minimum of 2 PIAA Officials for all Home games. 3 Officials is preferred.

## ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Section 6.1: Meetings will be held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each Month at 7:00 pm. There will not be a meeting in April, June and December. All organizations are expected to have a Representative attend. We will meet at a predetermined location. Currently, Bull Run Tap House, Lewisburg. Agenda Items and Issues that arise will be discussed at length during the meeting. If a vote is needed it will be during the meeting or at the following meeting. Those not in attendance for the discussion will not vote on the matter. We will not entertain any further discussion on a matter until the next season, once approved or denied. A Quorum for the purpose of voting and approving an Item will be 12 Teams Represented at the meeting.

## ARTICLE VII: TEAM/PLAYER REQUIREMENTS

Section 7.1: Each Team may only Register/Roster Players that attend a School in their respective District. Players who attend Private Schools will have the option of playing with the District that they live in or the District that the Private School is located in. If a Private School has a CoOp with a District, the player will play for the CoOp School if their decision is based on the Private School location.

Section 7.2: There will be a \$10 Registration Fee for all Participants beginning January 2023. This fee will cover the cost of Insurance, Athletic Trainers, Spirit Event Awards, Officials for Championship and All Star Apparel. The balance will be used as needed to ensure the Safety and Development of our Youth. The Commissioner will provide a detailed Income/Expense to any Program Leader on request.

Section 7.3: Medical Physical requirements are the responsibility of each Organization. There will be a mandatory League Weigh In prior to the start of the season. This will be the Official Weight for the Regular Season. A standard roster will be sent to each program to be completed and submitted by August 15<sup>th</sup>. Each Team is responsible to inform the League Commissioner when adding new players. Updates will be added to the Master Roster and emailed to all teams. Final Roster submissions must be made prior to midnight the Friday before the first game of the season. The exception will be players moving into your School District during the season. They will be allowed to join.

Section 7.4: 100% Mandatory Weigh In – All players regardless of position are required to attend the League wide weigh-in prior to the start of the Season. Players who miss the Weigh-In will only be allowed to play on the Interior Line for the first 2 weeks. Players who fail to be weighed prior to week 3 will be ineligible. Parents will also be required to sign the League Code of Conduct (Addendum #1). *Note: All Players attending the HBR Heart and Hustle, Building Champions Camp will be weighed in.*

Section 7.5: There will be a mandatory weight check on the Monday following the last regular season game. Playoff Teams will be required to have all A Division players between 120 and 130 lbs and B Division players between 90 and 100 lbs will be required to attend. There will not be any weight allowance or make up day.

Section 7.6: Teams that have 25 Players registered in a Division, must have a JV Team. This will help ensure all Players get actual playing time. Varsity players may be available to fill in in case of an injury. Under no circumstance should Varsity starting skill players be used to give a JV Team an unfair advantage.

## ARTICLE VIII: SEASON/DATES

Section 8.1: 1<sup>st</sup> Practice Date – Organized Practice cannot start before the first day of the week that August 1<sup>st</sup> is in. Summer conditioning and skill drills will be allowed. There will not be any restrictions on the amount of practices or practice time after Aug 1<sup>st</sup>. Each school will control its own program.

Section 8.2: The Schedule will be completed and sent to each Team for approval prior to March 1<sup>st</sup>. For 2023 each Team will play all teams in your Division once with 3 crossover games. The 5 Team Division will have 4 crossover games. All teams will have 4 Home and 4 Away games. Game dates can be adjusted ONLY if BOTH Teams agree to the change, otherwise games will be played on Sunday as scheduled. Any changes must be submitted to the Commissioner to ensure Athletic Trainers will be aware of the change.

Section 8.3: Varsity Playoffs - Top 3 Teams from each Division will compete for the Championship. Divisional Records only (Tie Break Rules if needed) will be used for Top 3 Teams. For 2002 Playoff games will be played at the Highest A Division Seed hosting. B Division will also play at that location. B Division Seeds will be used in 2023 and continue to rotate from there on.

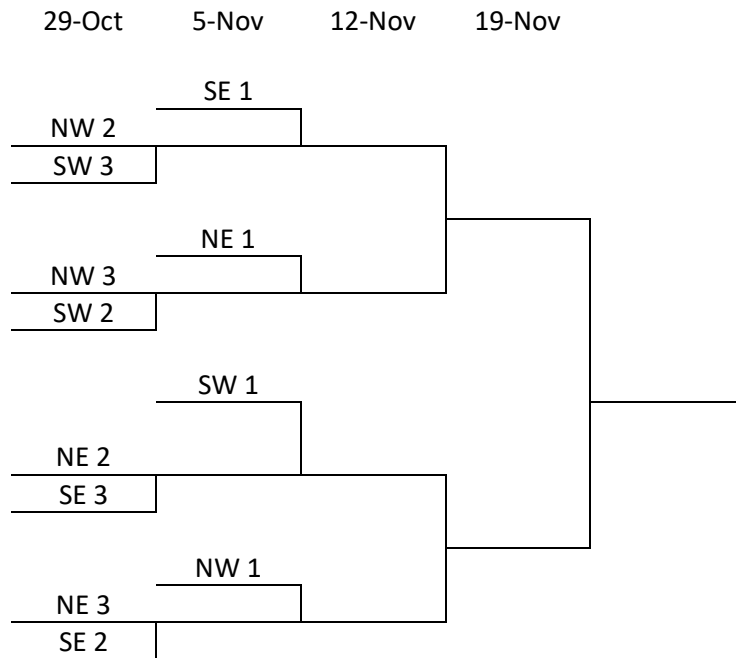
Preliminary – All #1 Seeds receive a Bye. NE #2 vs SW #3 / NE #3 vs SW #2 / NW #2 vs SE #3 / NW #3 vs SE #2.

Quarterfinals - SE #1 vs Winner – (NE #2 vs SW #3)  
NW #1 vs Winner – (NE #3 vs SW #2)  
SW #1 vs Winner – (NW #2 vs SE #3)  
NE #1 vs Winner – (NW #3 vs SE #2)

Semifinals – Winners (SE #1 vs (NE #2 vs SW #3)) vs (NW #1 vs (NE #3 vs SW #2))

Winners (SW #1 vs (NW #2 vs SE #3)) vs (NE #1 vs (NW #3 vs SE #2))

Championship - Winners from the Semifinal Games – 2023 Host is Southern Columbia.  
(SEE BRACKET BELOW)



**Section 8.4: Championship location Schedule** - Site will be determined alphabetically beginning with Danville in 2016. Any future teams will be placed on the end of the list in the sequence that they commit to the League. ~~Danville 2016, Hughesville 2017, Loyalsoek 2018, Mifflinburg 2019, Selinsgrove 2020, Montoursville 2021, Shikellamy 2022~~, Southern Columbia – 2023, South Williamsport – 2024, Lewisburg – 2025, Milton – 2026, Montgomery – 2027, Muncy – 2028, Central Columbia – 2029, Warrior Run 2030, Bloomsburg 2031, Mid-West 2032, Jersey Shore 2033, Shamokin 2034, Williamsport 2035, Mt Carmel 2036, Central Mountain 2037, Berwick 2038.

Schedule for Championship Day - 11am – Flag Football Championship / 12:30pm – B Division Championship / 2pm -- Pediatric Cancer Donations / 2:30pm – A Division Championship.

**Section 8.5: Tie Break Rules -**

1. Head to Head
2. Points Against
3. Differential of Total Points Scored and Total Points given up. (Highest number wins)
4. Points Scored
5. Coin Flip

**Section 8.6:** At the September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Heartland Committee approved Host sites for Playoffs. For 2022 the Host sites will be the Highest Seed from the A Division. B Division Teams will play at the same location. The B Division will Host the Playoff games in 2023 and will rotate each year.

**ARTICLE IX: AWARDS**

**Section 9.1:** Current members of the Heartland Youth Football League will share the expense of three (3) Traveling Trophies. These trophies will be maintained by the Championship Team until they are dethroned. Each year the Champion will have a plate added to the trophy.

An additional Team Trophy will be given for the Championship Team to keep.

**ARTICLE X: FOUNDATION RULES**  
(Can only be changed by 100% approval)

**Section 10.1:** Effective October 19, 2023, all Current and Future Teams will be required to wear their School District Colors and use the School District Mascot. They will have 2 yrs to make the transition.

**Section 10.2:** All Teams in the League must be organized and managed by a Parent Based group. There will be no Private Organizations managing the programs.

**Section 10.3:** Divisions will be divided by Grade. A Division 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, (*4th Graders will not be permitted to play in the A Division*). B Division 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, (*2<sup>nd</sup> Grade may play in the B Division*). Flag Division K – 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Section 10.4:** Weight Limits – Ball Carriers and Receivers, including Special Teams  
A Division – 130 lbs  
B Division – 100 lbs

**Section 10.5:** If a school would grow to support 2 teams, they must have a minimum of 30 players per Division team to support a Varsity / JV format.

**Section 10.6: Game Sequence**

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| B Division Varsity | - 1 PM             |
| A Division Varsity | - 2:30 PM (Approx) |
| B Division JV      | - 4:00 PM (Approx) |
| A Division JV      | - 5 PM (Approx)    |

Teams may alter their weekly times if the Officials and opposing team agree. The above sequence will stand if they cannot agree. We understand there will be sequence changes especially when a Team is playing that does not have JV.

- (a) With this previous change in Game sequence and in order to maintain our JV Game integrity, we have approved the following Fine for Teams who Forfeit JV Games. If a Team has scheduled JV Games and decide to Forfeit because some players left, there will be a \$200 per game fine imposed on the forfeiting Team. We all understand that through injury and illness, a Team may legitimately may not be able to play the JV Game. However, this must be communicated to the opponent and Commissioner in a reasonable time prior to Sunday in order to provide their opponent an opportunity to reschedule or add another JV game for their players.

**Section 10.7:** The Chain Gang will be placed on the HOME side of the field to avoid any conflicts.

**Section 10.8: Official Game Football Size:** All Footballs will be made of Leather. Teams will use their own football. A Division will use Junior (TDJ) and B Division will use PeeWee (K2). Any brand can be used, however it must be the same size and design as the PeeWee (K2) or Junior (TDJ) Wilson Leather Football. If an organization would like to present a ball of comparable sizes, we could compare it to the K2 and TDJ and vote to approve it.

**ARTICLE XI: RULES AND REGULATIONS**  
(May be changed with a majority vote)

**Section 11.1: Playing Rules** – PIAA – with the exception of the following.

1. Kickoff will be from the 40yd line for both Divisions.
2. B Division JV will Not Kick Off. Play Starts at the Receiving Team 40 yd Line.
3. A Division will be able to rush the kicker on all plays
4. B Division - Blitzing A Gap. The A Gap will remain open for the sole purpose of the Center/QB exchange. There may be a Nose Tackle over the ball or in either A Gap. Defensive

- Tackles may line up outside the Offensive Guards head. Linebackers must be 3 yards from the Center until the snap occurs. EXCEPTION: Inside the 5 yard line where a normal Goal Line Defense may be used or on 4<sup>th</sup> down with less than 2 yds to gain. The Penalty enforced for violations of this Rule will be as follows. 1<sup>st</sup> Offense, Illegal Defensive Formation (5yd) the 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense will be an Unsportsmanlike Conduct of the Head Coach (15yd).
5. B Division (Extra Pt/Field Goal) will not rush the kicker. There must be a direct snap to the Holder. If the Holder has to move to recover the snap the play is dead.
  6. B Division punting: Varsity will have a free punt (No Rush) but will be live once the ball is punted. Jr Varsity will institute a 30yd walk off (Exception: The Ball cannot be placed inside the 15yd line regardless of the mark in which the Walk Off starts... ie; a Punt from the Opponents 35 yd line will only be moved to the 15 yd line, not the 5 yd line) All B Division will have to declare if they are going to punt.
  7. B Division All Defensive Linemen inside the Tackle Box must be in a down position, either 3-point or 4-point stance.
  8. Exceptions – Extra Point – 2 points for Kick / 1 point for run or pass
  9. Cut Blocks will be illegal. All players must block above the knees. A Personal Foul Penalty of 15 yds will be assessed for the infraction.
  10. Electronic communication equipment on the field is not allowed in the HYFL.
  11. Halftime will be 7 minutes maximum.
  12. Players will be permitted to use any mouthguard available.
  13. Guardian Caps are approved to be worn during all games.
  14. Ball placement for extra points will be the 3 yard line.

### **Section 11.2: Weight Limits –**

Offensive Ball Carriers and Receivers – A Division – 130lbs / B Division 100lbs

*Note 1:* If overweight Tight Ends are used, they will be ineligible Receivers and must report to the Official.

*Note 2:* If a Kicker is overweight, he may kick the ball but is ineligible to advance the ball if he recovers it.

*Note 3:* All Offensive players that are not on the line of scrimmage, between the tackles, (Tight End Exception above) must be under the weight limits above. Overweight players may not be used behind the line of scrimmage as backfield blockers. There will not be a weight limit for any Defensive Players.

All Defensive Players may advance the ball in the event of a fumble or interception.

*Note 4:* Kick Off (Receiving Team) All players over the weight Limit must be on the front line (40yd Line). Overweight Players may advance a ball that is kicked in front of them (ie onside kick).

### **Section 11.3: Penalty for Illegal Use of Players**

If an opposing Coach should observe an overweight player handling the ball, the following rules apply.

- a. If it is observed during a play at any time during the game, the observing Coach will call a Time Out. If the player is deemed overweight, there will be a 15yd Unsportsmanlike Penalty called and Loss of Down. The Head Coach will be ejected from the game and suspended for the next game. The challenging Coach will get the Time Out back.
- b. If it is noticed on video after the game is over, the offending team will forfeit the game and the Head Coach will be suspended for the next game.

*NOTE: At no time will a Player be punished.*

## ARTICLE XII: GAME RULES

Section 12.1: Game Length: All Varsity Games will be played with 8 minute quarters, a 35 sec play clock with 3 timeouts per half. The Play Clock will start when ball is placed and Ready for Play. All B Division JV Games will use a 8 minute quarter running clock. A 35 sec play clock will be used with each team having 1 timeout per half. The clock will stop only on Change of Possession, Penalty or Injury. A Division JV games will be 10 minute quarter running clock. A 35 sec play clock will be used with each team having 2 timeouts per half. The clock will stop only on Change of Possession, Penalty or Injury.

Section 12.2: Overtime Rules: In the event of a tie at the end of regulation, each team will alternate equal possessions. There will be a Maximum of 5 Overtime attempts. 1. Each Team has a series from the 10 yd line. 2. Each Team will have a series from 5 yd line. 3. Each Team will have a series from the 5 yd line but must kick for 2 pt extra point. #3 will be attempted 3 times. If still tied the game ends. **JV (A & B) will not play overtime.**

Section 12.3: Mercy Rule At any time during the game, the difference in the Score becomes 24 points or greater a running clock will be used for the remainder of the game. The clock will stop only on change of possession, penalties and injuries. There will be NO Kickoffs after that point. The ball will be placed on the 35 yard line ready for play.

## ARTICLE XIII: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Section 13.1: Violation of the Code of Conduct: Any individual found in violation of the Code of Conduct (Attachment #1) and the Social Media Policy (Attachment #2) will be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the individual Programs Board of Directors and in accordance of their By-Laws. The Heartland has no disciplinary authority in this case.

Section 13.2: PIAA Rules: All decisions made by the PIAA Officials will be final. There is no Appeal process. Disciplinary action as listed in the PIAA Rules will be followed.

Section 13.3: Excessive Organizational Issues: Programs that have excessive disciplinary issues that disrupt the normal process of the Games and become detrimental to the League Standard of proper conduct and sportsmanship, will be brought before the Heartland Committee for disciplinary action. That Organization will have an opportunity to state their position before a Committee vote of proper disciplinary action. That disciplinary action may result in expulsion from the Heartland Youth Football League.

### NOTE:

**ALL TEAMS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A COPY OF THE BY LAWS AVAILABLE AT THEIR FIELD!**

ATTACHMENT 1  
CODE OF CONDUCT

The adoption of the following codes is a method devised to help develop sportsmanship, character, and fair play. Seasonal code of conducts are to be signed by Parents / Players / Coaches during registration. The online code of conduct is approved by the HYFL and minimally must contain the following guidelines. Codes of conducts are subject to change as needed to address community needs.

A. Parents, Spectators, Attendees, Coaches, Board Members, Coordinators and Participants

Shall conduct themselves in a prudent manner at all games and practices. The use, consumption, or presence of any tobacco, drugs, intoxicants, or alcoholic beverage is prohibited. Riotous, boisterous, threatening, or indecent conduct, or the use of abusive, threatening, or indecent language shall not be tolerated. Unauthorized presence on the playing or practice fields shall not be allowed at any time. The League will aggressively pursue charges against any spectator or coach who engages in any misconduct or criminal behavior at our facilities.

The following shall not be tolerated:

1. Use of foul language.
2. Abusing participants (opposition of fans by word or gesture).
3. Harassing the officials.
4. Disobeying or attempting to circumvent rules and regulations or the intent thereof.
5. At any time lay a hand upon, strike, or threaten to strike an official, spectator, coach or another participant.
6. Refuse to abide by an official's decision or be guilty of objectionable demonstrations of dissent at an official's decision by any forceful action.
7. Any parent found drinking alcoholic beverages or using illegal drugs in the field complex areas, including parking lots, before or after HYFL games will be subject to removal for all future HYFL games.



ATTACHMENT 2  
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social Media Policy for Parents

The use of social media is now a normal part of life for many people and it is used for entertainment, communication, and self-expression. In addition to protecting children in the HYFL, members of any club or organization have a responsibility to the organization, it's volunteers, the officials and other members of the league to maintain a positive image for the league and this extends to the use of social media publication. Note: Parents are encouraged to monitor their children's use of social media to protect them and guide them in its appropriate use.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that the relationships between parents, the coaches and the league remains professional.
- To protect coaches, officials, volunteers, and parents from allegations of inappropriate conduct.
- To ensure that there are clear guidelines for parents, volunteers, coaches, and officials about the use of social media related to the league and its participants.
- To preserve the reputation and positive image of the league, its volunteers, the Board, the coaches and its members.


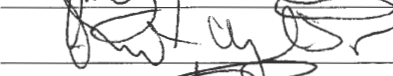
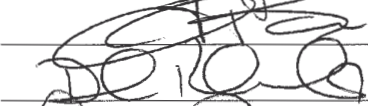

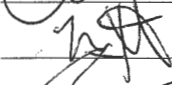
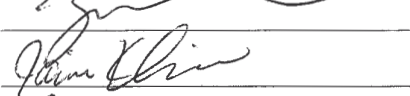
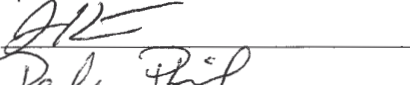
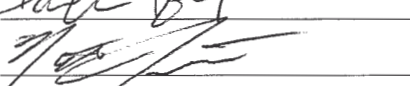
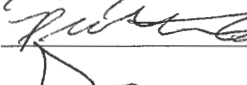
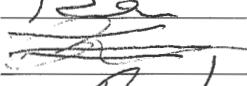

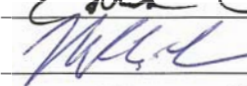
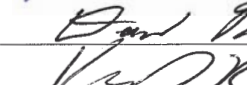
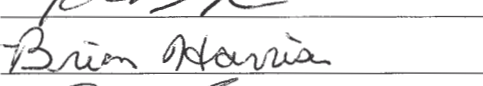
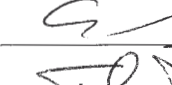






Guidelines for appropriate use of social media:

The following guidelines refer to any posts, photographs, video, status updates and any other item that can be published on social media, which directly or implicitly mentions or directs attention to the HYFL. Parents, Coaches and Volunteers should avoid posting any remarks, photographs or videos that could be disparaging or embarrassing to the league or its volunteers, about another member of the HYFL, about our volunteer coaches, any parent volunteer or official on any social media platform or by email.

## Heartland Youth Football League By Laws 2023

By signature below, the above By-Laws were approved by all Youth Football Programs for the 2023 season.

- Berwick Bulldogs – Dane Brown
- Bloomsburg Panthers – Jeff Ralston
- Central Columbia Blue Jays – Isreal Ortiz
- Central Mountain Wildcats – Lee Ramos
- Danville Ironmen – Derl Reichard
- Hughesville Spartans – Tim Milheim  
*Amy Kamiza for*
- Jersey Shore Bulldogs – Eric Kahler
- Lewisburg Green Dragons – Chris Benfer  
*Nisan Trotter for*
- Loyalsock Lancers – Justin Van Fleet
- Midd West Mustangs – Jamie Kline
- Mifflinburg Wildcats – Jake Kerstetter
- Milton Black Panthers – Dale Pfiel
- Montgomery Red Raiders – Nathan Jarrett
- Montoursville Warriors – Jeremy Eavenson  
*Proton Emerit for*
- Mt Carmel Red Tornadoes – Tara Sever  
*Steve Roshon for*
- Muncy Indians – Justin Snyder
- Selinsgrove Seals – Brian Scorsone
- Shamokin Indians – Marilyn Polyniak  
*Robert Lowry for*
- Shikellamy Braves – Nate Lawrence
- Southern Columbia Tigers – ~~\*\*\*\*\*~~  
*Dave Noblit*
- South Williamsport Mounties – Eric Gerber  
*Kris Runner for*
- Warrior Run Defenders – Brian Harrison
- Williamsport Millionaires – Alec Eggerton  
*Anthony Barberic for*
- Commissioner – John Derr


Date: 3/15/23