

Dear WSL Softball Parents:

Thank you for your continued support and participation in the Western Springs Little League Softball.

The WSL Softball Board continues to improve the league, focusing on teaching children how to play the game, develop their softball skills, instill a sense of teamwork, and create an environment that allows them to enjoy the game. The following changes were made for the 2023 season and will continue in 2024. We believe these changes will increase development and enhance player experience.

1. *Eligibility:* Players who are enrolled in D101, D106 and St. John of the Cross are eligible to play WSL Softball during the 2024 season.
2. *Divisions:* WSL is restructuring the divisions within the league to offer more development opportunities, especially for younger players. The coach/machine pitched division (first graders) will focus on an introduction to softball. The peanuts division (second and third graders) will be a developmental division. This realignment better matches skillset and allows the players to better build game fundamentals.

To align with the Little League Softball age chart, the divisions will be structured by age. Historically, the leagues were set by grade, which inadvertently allowed players to “age out” or “play up” to next division before it was required. Structuring by age allows players to maximize development and time playing Little League Softball.

Division	Pitching	Birth Years	Grade Level(s)
Coach Pitch	Coach/Machine Pitched	2017, 2018	1 <sup>st</sup>
Peanuts	Player Pitched – Coach Assisted	2015, 2016	2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup>
Minors	Player Pitched	2013, 2014	3 <sup>rd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup>
Majors	Player Pitched	2011, 2012	5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup>
Juniors*	Player Pitched	2009, 2010	7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup>

\* Home games on weekends, away games during week

3. *Team formation:*
  - a. The coach pitched teams will be a mix of 1-2 schools.
  - b. The Peanuts – players will be divided with an even mix of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders on each team.
  - c. Minors – similar to 2023 we will be utilizing a draft in 2024 – A draft will allow for the most balanced teams within the division and allow for the players to meet new teammates from other parts of Western Springs.
  - d. Majors - players will be evenly divided and will utilize a draft in 2024 similar to 2023.
4. *WSL Season End Events:* Playoffs will occur for the minor and major divisions. In addition, WSL will host a year end, in-house all-star game/event for most levels.
5. *District 9 Tournament:* WSL softball will participate in the District 9 All-Star Tournament again. This is for top performing players interested in competing at a higher level.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Luke Stojak or Roxanne Walsh at [softball@westernspringslittleleague.com](mailto:softball@westernspringslittleleague.com)

Sincerely,

Western Springs Little League Softball Board