

Every Friday game day — fall and spring

Fall: Oct 9 • Oct 23 • Nov 6 • Nov 20

Spring: Apr 23 • May 7 • May 21 • May 28 • Jun 4 (playoffs)

Dismissal buses start pick-up for teams at 3:00 PM on EMPOWER game days at designated schools.
See table of contents.



EMPOWER New Haven

Season Two • 2026–2027

THE GUIDE FOR

SCHOOL STAFF GUIDE

Help Desk: text 203-208-9249 • newhavencounts.io/empower



The Short Version — [read this first](#)

EMPOWER New Haven is a school-based soccer league run by New Haven Counts. Students from your school play on Friday game days. This fall is a **preseason**: no score is kept.

What we are asking of school staff

- **Release players a little before 3:00 PM on Fridays** to the bus platform. Buses pick up between 3:00 and 3:15 PM.
- **Help load the buses** if you can. It is a **dismissal bus**, **not a field-trip bus**, and no adult has to ride.
- **Give the team a shout-out** on the loudspeaker every other Friday. They represent your school and are trying something new.
- **Come to games** if you can, especially in the spring. You are welcome and encouraged.

At the field, stay hands-off

Please do not talk to the coaches, the players or the referees during games. Cheer and enjoy. In a real safety emergency, call 911 and alert the on-site field coordinator.

Staying in the loop

Schedule and bus information is updated at newhavencounts.io/empower every **Sunday evening**. The site also shows past league results and results from our Winter Classic soccer tournament. Final bus pick-up times are being sent by text this week.

Emergencies

Thunder, lightning or a code red: parents are called and students gather at your bus platform, away from metal and the building. If buses are short, we will tell schools and families right away. See Emergency procedures.

Key dates and contacts

Fall games: Oct 9, Oct 23, Nov 6, Nov 20 (4:00 and 5:00 PM). **Spring:** Apr 23, May 7, May 21, May 28, playoffs June 4. **Program Director:** Lisa Pietrosimone. **Program Manager:** Wanda Faison. **Help Desk:** text 203-208-9249.

Table of Contents

1	About the league.....	4
2	Season at a glance.....	4
3	Fridays: dismissal and buses	4
4	Which schools have buses	5
5	Your role	6
6	If you attend a game	6
7	Staying informed	7
8	Fields and divisions	7
9	What to tell parents about enrolling.....	8
10	Emergency procedures	8
11	Who to contact	9
A	Spring 2027 tentative schedule.....	10

For school staff who need to be in the loop. Questions? Text the Help Desk at 203-208-9249.

1 About the league

EMPOWER New Haven is a school-based soccer league for grades 3–8, run by New Haven Counts (NHC) in partnership with the City of New Haven and New Haven Public Schools. Our values are **Pride, Joy and Sportsmanship**. Your school's students are on these teams, and the way the school notices and supports them matters.

Fall 2026 • Preseason

Player development and fun. **No score is kept**, coaches are not encouraged to try to win, and players share playing time as equally as possible.

Spring 2027 • League Cup

The league becomes competitive, with school-versus-school and citywide pride. There are four regular-season game days and a playoff day on June 4.

2 Season at a glance

Season	Game Fridays	Notes
Fall 2026 Preseason	Oct 9 • Oct 23 • Nov 6 • Nov 20	Sept 25 game day was cancelled. No score kept.
Spring 2027 League Cup	Apr 23 • May 7 • May 21 • May 28	Regular season. Spring practices begin April 7.
Spring 2027 Playoffs	June 4	Single elimination across both divisions: seeds 1–4 at Clinton Ave., seeds 5–8 at Kimberly Ave. Every team plays at least two games.

All games are on Fridays at 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM. The league does not reschedule once the season begins — missed games are forfeits.

Fall: who is playing whom, and the bus schedule, are posted on our website, newhavencounts.io/empower, every **Sunday evening before each game week**. **Spring:** the full schedule is released at the start of the season (a tentative draft is in Appendix A). Final school bus pick-up times are being sent by text this week.

3 Fridays: dismissal and buses

- Buses run from each school to the fields. Buses have been instructed to pick up between **3:00 and 3:15 PM**.
- This is a **dismissal bus, not a field-trip bus**. No adult has to ride.
- Coaches may ride if they have a way to get back to their car at school. Most coaches drive to the fields instead.

Shout them out

Recognize the team on the loudspeaker every other Friday.

4 Which schools have buses

These schools have a dismissal bus on game days. Buses are instructed to pick up between **3:00 and 3:15 PM**. Final pick-up times are being sent by text. Specific bus pairings and routes are not final yet and will be shared later.

Schools with a bus

North Division • Clinton Ave. Fields

- Celentano
- Conte
- East Rock
- Edgewood
- Fair Haven
- FAME
- Hooker
- Jepson
- Martinez
- Nathan Hale
- Ross Woodward

South Division • Kimberly Ave. Field

- Barnard
- Daniels
- Davis
- Highville
- Hill Central
- L.W. Beecher
- Mauro-Sheridan
- St. Martin
- Truman

Schools without a bus on game days

- **Troup** does not have a bus. Troup athletes can join the Barnard team on game days; families arrange transportation.
- **Clemente** does not have a bus.
- Satellite locations do not get a bus. Families arrange transportation or carpooling.

5 Your role

Principals and administrators

- Release EMPOWER players to the bus platform a little before 3:00 PM on Fridays.
- Give the team a **shout-out on the loudspeaker every other Friday**: they represent your school and are taking a risk to try something new and be a well-rounded student athlete.
- Encourage staff and families to attend games, especially in the spring.

Teachers and classroom staff

- Let students leave class on time on Fridays so they reach the bus platform before pick-up.
- Celebrate players in class. A kind word from a trusted adult at school matters.
- Know that players are practicing at school on Mondays and Fridays.

Front office and attendance

- Students need to be at school on Fridays to ride the bus. If a family brings a child to the field after a school absence, that is allowed when the child is not sick.
- Send parent and family questions about the program to the Help Desk at 203-208-9249.
- Know that schedule and bus information is posted at newhavencounts.io/empower every Sunday evening.

Dismissal, bus-platform and security staff

- Help students find and load onto their bus, with pick-up between **3:00 and 3:15 PM**.
- Remind students that **no adult has to ride**. This is a dismissal bus, not a field-trip bus.
- Coaches may ride the bus if they have a way back to their car at school; most drive to the fields.

After School program staff and site supervisors

- Work with your school's soccer coach on practice space and timing.
- Remember that students need to attend the After School program at least two days a week to practice with the team.
- Not every enrolled student plays in games; some are practice players.

6 If you attend a game

You are welcome and encouraged to attend

School staff are not expected to attend games, but you are encouraged to, especially in the spring, when school-versus-school and citywide pride come into play.

At the field, please stay hands-off

- Do not talk to the coaches.
- Do not talk to the players.
- Do not talk to the referees.
- Cheer, celebrate and enjoy the game.

When it is acceptable to step in (suggested)

Coaches and referees should spot safety issues, so this should be rare. These are reasonable exceptions:

- A child is seriously hurt and no coach or coordinator is responding. **Call 911**, then alert the field coordinator.
- A child appears lost, or is leaving with an adult who is not a parent or known guardian.
- Lightning or severe weather and nobody has called the game.
- A hazard on the field or sideline, such as a broken goal, glass or an unsafe crowd.
- An adult is behaving in a threatening way.
- In every case, go to the **on-site field coordinator** first when you can.

7 Staying informed

- Schedule and bus information is updated on our website, newhavencounts.io/empower, **every Sunday evening**. Staff are welcome to check it, but it is not required reading.
- The website also shows past results from the league and from our Winter Classic soccer tournament.
- Final bus pick-up times at schools are being sent by text this week: buses pick up between 3:00 and 3:15 PM.
- In the fall preseason no score is kept, so there are no standings until spring.

8 Fields and divisions

North Division • Clinton Ave. Fields

- Celentano/East Rock
- Conte
- Edgewood
- Hooker
- Jepson
- Martinez/FAME
- Nathan Hale
- Ross Woodward

South Division • Kimberly Ave. Field

- Barnard
- Daniels/Truman
- Davis
- Highville
- Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross
- L.W. Beecher
- Mauro-Sheridan
- St. Martin

Location	On-site field coordinators
Kimberly Ave. Field (South)	Wanda Faison and Lisa Pietrosimone
Clinton Ave. Fields (North)	James Buxton and Erniel Cruz — reach them by texting the Help Desk at 203-208-9249

Field locations (tap to open GPS): Clinton Ave. Fields — [Clinton Avenue School, 293 Clinton Ave., New Haven, CT 06513](#). Kimberly Ave. Field — [Betsy Ross Arts Magnet School, 150 Kimberly Ave., New Haven, CT 06519](#).

Players who join a team on game days

Fair Haven athletes are welcome to join the Martinez/FAME team on game days. Troup athletes are welcome to join the Barnard team on game days.

9 What to tell parents about enrolling

Families may ask school staff how to enroll. Here is what to tell them. It is two steps: **After School program first, then the soccer league.**

Quick way to register: text 203-208-9249

The flyer says it best: **TEXT TO REGISTER 203-208-9249.** The league is open to all New Haven students participating in a New Haven Counts After School program.

Step 1 • Enroll in the After School program

- Sign up through AfterSchoolHQ: <https://afterschoolhq.com/NHA>
- The program costs \$25 per week and is paid to the City of New Haven through AfterSchoolHQ.
- **Fee waiver (After School program only):** if your family does not already have one, request it from the City of New Haven at **475-355-0833**. The waiver covers the After School program only, **not** the soccer league.
- Your child must attend the After School program at least two days a week to practice with the team.

Step 2 • Join the Friday game day roster (soccer league)

- Register on LeagueApps: [https://newhavencounts.leagueapps.com/leagues/soccer-\(outdoor\)](https://newhavencounts.leagueapps.com/leagues/soccer-(outdoor))
- Use code **ALEXION** at checkout to remove the league fee.
- LeagueApps is also where families receive league updates, so use an email and phone you check.

What to tell a parent

- “Enroll in the After School program at AfterSchoolHQ. If you need a fee waiver, call the City of New Haven at 475-355-0833. It covers After School only.”
- “Then register for the soccer league on LeagueApps and use code ALEXION at checkout to remove the league fee.”
- “You can also text 203-208-9249 to register.”
- For anything else, send families to the Help Desk rather than answering for the program.

10 Emergency procedures

Thunder and lightning

All parents are called. Students go to the **bus platform** of the school and are told not to touch anything metal or anything attached to the building while we wait for parents to be reached.

At the fields, field coordinators will try to get inside and ask school staff whether we can shelter in the building.

Code red or a neighborhood safety concern

Handled **the same way as thunder and lightning:** parents are called, students go to the bus platform, and field coordinators try to get everyone inside.

Weather and field conditions

On game days we will call games **as soon as we learn** the field will be unplayable, or that conditions will make it not fun or not safe for students. Families are notified through LeagueApps and AfterSchoolHQ.

If there are not enough bus drivers

If the bus company has too many drivers call out, we will tell **schools** and **families** if other transportation to the fields must be arranged.

- **Home first:** all students go home on their regular school buses, then walk, drive or carpool to the fields.
- **Recycled buses:** one driver makes three stops, so students arrive at the field around **3:45, 4:15 and 4:45** instead of all at 3:45. Some or all of the 4:00 games may be cancelled.

Whatever challenge comes up, we will work to solve it and communicate the options.

What this means for you

- Be ready for students to gather at your bus platform during an emergency.
- If a field coordinator asks to shelter inside, please help if you are able.
- If buses are short, expect a message from us about changed dismissal.

11 Who to contact

Person	Role	Email (before game days)	Phone (game days)
Lisa Pietrosimone	Program Director, New Haven Counts	lisa@newhavencounts.org	203-843-7199
Wanda Faison	Program Manager, New Haven Counts	wanda@newhavencounts.org	203-606-6985

Email Lisa or Wanda **before** game days. Call or text them **on** game days. For anything else, text the **Help Desk at 203-208-9249**.

If you need to...	Contact
Parent or family questions about the program	Help Desk, text 203-208-9249
Operational questions	Lisa or Wanda, by email
Something urgent at the fields	The on-site field coordinator, or Lisa or Wanda by phone
Reaching the Clinton Ave. coordinators	Help Desk, text 203-208-9249

A Spring 2027 tentative schedule

Tentative — subject to change. Each team plays two games on each of the four regular-season Fridays (4:00 and 5:00), eight games in all: every team in its division once, plus one rematch. No team plays the same opponent twice on one day. Field numbers may change on game day.

North Division • Clinton Ave. Fields

Game	Field 1	Field 2	Field 3	Field 4
Apr 23 4:00 PM	Celentano/East Rock vs Ross Woodward	Conte vs Nathan Hale	Edgewood vs Martinez/FAME	Hooker vs Jepson
Apr 23 5:00 PM	Celentano/East Rock vs Nathan Hale	Ross Woodward vs Martinez/FAME	Conte vs Jepson	Edgewood vs Hooker
May 7 4:00 PM	Celentano/East Rock vs Martinez/FAME	Nathan Hale vs Jepson	Ross Woodward vs Hooker	Conte vs Edgewood
May 7 5:00 PM	Celentano/East Rock vs Jepson	Martinez/FAME vs Hooker	Nathan Hale vs Edgewood	Ross Woodward vs Conte
May 21 4:00 PM	Celentano/East Rock vs Hooker	Jepson vs Edgewood	Martinez/FAME vs Conte	Nathan Hale vs Ross Woodward
May 21 5:00 PM	Celentano/East Rock vs Edgewood	Hooker vs Conte	Jepson vs Ross Woodward	Martinez/FAME vs Nathan Hale
May 28 4:00 PM	Celentano/East Rock vs Conte	Edgewood vs Ross Woodward	Hooker vs Nathan Hale	Jepson vs Martinez/FAME
May 28 5:00 PM	Celentano/East Rock vs Ross Woodward	Conte vs Nathan Hale	Edgewood vs Martinez/FAME	Hooker vs Jepson

South Division • Kimberly Ave. Field

Game	Field 1	Field 2	Field 3	Field 4
Apr 23 4:00 PM	Barnard vs St. Martin	Daniels/Truman vs Mauro-Sheridan	Davis vs L.W. Beecher	Highville vs Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross
Apr 23 5:00 PM	Barnard vs Mauro-Sheridan	St. Martin vs L.W. Beecher	Daniels/Truman vs Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross	Davis vs Highville
May 7 4:00 PM	Barnard vs L.W. Beecher	Mauro-Sheridan vs Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross	St. Martin vs Highville	Daniels/Truman vs Davis
May 7 5:00 PM	Barnard vs Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross	L.W. Beecher vs Highville	Mauro-Sheridan vs Davis	St. Martin vs Daniels/Truman
May 21 4:00 PM	Barnard vs Highville	Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross vs Davis	L.W. Beecher vs Daniels/Truman	Mauro-Sheridan vs St. Martin
May 21 5:00 PM	Barnard vs Davis	Highville vs Daniels/Truman	Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross vs St. Martin	L.W. Beecher vs Mauro-Sheridan
May 28 4:00 PM	Barnard vs Daniels/Truman	Davis vs St. Martin	Highville vs Mauro-Sheridan	Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross vs L.W. Beecher
May 28 5:00 PM	Barnard vs St. Martin	Daniels/Truman vs Mauro-Sheridan	Davis vs L.W. Beecher	Highville vs Hill Central/Clemente/B. Ross

June 4 playoff day (tentative)

Teams are seeded 1–8 in their own division by regular-season record. The **top four teams from each division** (North and South) all play at **Clinton Ave. Fields**. The **bottom four teams from each division** all play at **Kimberly Ave. Field**. North plays South: the top seed in one division faces the fourth seed in the other, and so on.

Time	Clinton Ave. Fields • seeds 1–4	Kimberly Ave. Field • seeds 5–8
4:00 PM Round 1	Game 1: North #1 vs South #4 Game 2: North #2 vs South #3 Game 3: North #3 vs South #2 Game 4: North #4 vs South #1	Game 1: North #5 vs South #8 Game 2: North #6 vs South #7 Game 3: North #7 vs South #6 Game 4: North #8 vs South #5
5:00 PM Round 2	Semifinals: winner of Game 1 vs winner of Game 2, and winner of Game 3 vs winner of Game 4. Second games: loser of Game 1 vs loser of Game 2, and loser of Game 3 vs loser of Game 4.	Same format as Clinton Ave.: two semifinals and two second games for Round 1 losers.
6:00 PM Final	The final at the site, played as a third game that everyone can watch.	The final at the site, played as a third game that everyone can watch.

Single elimination. Teams that lose their first game are out of the title race but still play a second game, so every team plays at least two. The day runs until about 7:00 PM. Because teams travel to their playoff site, playoff-day bus routes may differ from the regular season.