



Coaching Manual

Last Updated: 3/23/2025

Goals

The goals of the Eden Prairie Track and Field Association (EPTFA) are to:

- Teach kids about track and field.
- Provide instruction on form and drills for each event.
- Introduce competition
- Help athletes improve upon their own individual performances.
- Prepare the athletes for participation at the middle school and high school levels

Introduction

The EPTFA program is for kids in grades 1-5. Each grade will learn a progression of skills during practice that will prepare them for the events contested at meets.

Teams

- Teams are co-ed and are based on grade for the current school year. We try to have teams evenly split in terms of girls/boys as much as able (obviously variable based on who signs up).
- Team size varies – the main influencing factor is how many parents sign up to help coach. In general, we try to have smaller teams for younger kids to help with team management. We tend to have larger team sizes for the older grades since they are more independent. In forming teams, our goal is to have a Head Coach and Assistant Coach (or two) for each team.
- Teammate requests should be made by parents during registration. While we try to honor these requests, it is not always possible.
- Coach Coordinator – the EPTFA board member designated as the Coach Coordinator will be a resource for coaches during the season. The Coach Coordinator for 2025 is Susie Zhang – susanbzhang@gmail.com, 832-247-1422

Coaches:

Coach Training

- In-person coach training
 - Coach training session: Monday, April 7 from 6-7 pm at the EPHS track. In the event of bad weather, the Activities Center has been reserved so that we can still have the training.
 - At the in-person coach training there will be coaches and athletes from EPHS to demonstrate event specific skills. There will also be time for Q&A.
- What if I can't go to the in-person training?
 - Do not panic!
 - There are training videos made by Eden Prairie High School for EPTFA available on YouTube. These were made in 2021 when there was no in-person coach training. The links below are searchable as EPTFA Coaching Videos on
 - [EPTFA Coaching Videos - YouTube](#)
 - Not all videos apply to all grades. Grades 1-3 do long jump, shot put, sprints, and distance. Grades 4-5 also do hurdles and high jump.
 - Please also reach out with any questions you may have to susanbzhang@gmail.com

Requirements for Coaches

- Background screen
 - Even if you have previously had a background screen for another organization, our insurance requires all coaches to pass a background screen
 - You will NOT be charged for this
 - The Coach Coordinator will send a link to complete this prior to the season.
- Concussion awareness training
 - Our insurance requires coaches to have concussion awareness training.
 - If you have a valid certificate from another sport, that is fine, but the certificate must not expire before the end of the season
 - If you do NOT have prior concussion training, we will use the CDC concussion awareness training. This is a free module that takes about 30 minutes to complete and is good for 3 years

- <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html>

Safety

- A first aid kit is available for any injuries. Please locate an EPTFA Board Member to assist you.
- The EPTFA board members also have emergency contact information for all athletes.
- Notify an EPTFA board member if an athlete's parent is late to pick them up. Athletes must be accompanied by at least 2 adults until parent pickup to meet Safe Sport guidelines.
- Please help remind your athletes to use equipment how it is meant to be used. Example: hurdles aren't for climbing on, soccer nets aren't for climbing on, etc.
- As always – younger kids especially will need some guidance for safety awareness. Probably the most dangerous part of practice is the shot put area

Season Schedule

- Typically 6 weeks starting in early April.
- Start/end dates of season vary year to year based on things like Spring Break, Memorial Day.
- Practice – starts approximately first week of April. Photos are generally the 2nd week of practice, weather permitting.
- Meets – Saturdays starting the 2nd week and running through the end of the season
- Exact schedule for the full season will be posted on Sports Engine website

Practices

- Structure: teams rotate through stations of the different events
 - A schedule for each practice will be printed with where your team will be for each of the rotations.
 - Typically you are at a station for about 15 minutes
 - We have limited set up time for practices as we are right after the middle school practice
 - To help things run smoothly: help set up the station you start on, and help take down the station you end on.
 - Usually board members have already done a lot of set up prior to practice, but you may need to assist some items.
 - Generally you will want to set aside some time during practice for awards from the prior week's meet. (More on awards later). Doing awards at the end of practice is often easier
 - Allows you to end on a high note
 - Helps ensure all athletes are there to get ribbons (many people run a little late at the start of practice)
 - Reduces the need to manage ribbons during practice. If you hand out at the start, athletes without bags will have to hand off to parents, ribbons may get lost, etc
 - Please help break down stations at the end of practice.
 - Shot put: help bring the shots and rings back to the track shed
 - Long jump: if using cones, chalk, etc please bring back to track shed
 - Start blocks: place start blocks back on the cart
 - Hurdles: stack the EPTFA hurdles neatly on the infield
 - Long jump: place the pole on the mats and help secure the cover over the mats. Wood blocks are placed on top of the cover to reduce the risk of the mats/covers blowing in high wind conditions
 - Relays: make sure the batons are either returned to the shed or to a board member
 - Safety during practice:
 - Don't let kids climb on hurdles, soccer nets, other equipment.
 - Ensure that there is a clear field in front of the thrower for shot put. Communicate well in this area
 - Long jump: make sure rakes and other obstacles are out of the pit
 - High jump: athletes should exit the mats to the sides, not the back. There are wood blocks in the back of the mat that are used to keep the covers from blowing away in high wind conditions that can be a tripping hazard

- Events by grade
 - 1st-3rd grades: shot put, long jump, sprint events, distance events (up to 400m), relays
 - 4th- 5th grades: shot put, long jump, sprint, distance (up to 800m), high jump, hurdles, relays
 - Most of us have only ever competed in 1-2 of the events we are coaching. The coach training and training videos are very helpful in getting coaches up to speed.
- Logistics:
 - Especially with younger teams, I recommend bringing a bin or bag to assist in keeping track of your athletes' water bottles, gloves, hats, etc. It will make it much easier to move from station to station. You can also direct them to leave their possessions in a centralized location during practice
 - Parents will drop off their kids to you, then they are required to leave the track/infield area. It is just too chaotic to have all the parents be in the mix at practice. As a coach, you may recruit help from parents during practice as needed if you feel it will help in your team management.

Meets

- Start/end times
 - Grades 1-3: 10:00 – 11:30
 - Grades 4-5: 8:00 – 9:30
- On Saturdays, typically from 2nd week of practice on.
- Events: not every event will be contested every meet. Generally there will be a shorter running race, a longer running race, and 2-3 field events.
- For the first 3 meets, athletes mostly compete against their teammates
- At the OPEN MEET athletes will compete across their graded level and results will be reported in aggregate.
 - Open meet is usually 2nd to last meet – that way if it gets postponed it can be rescheduled.
 - Final meet is typically something different like all relays
- For meets to run smoothly, we MUST have parent volunteers. I recommend 2 parent volunteers per team. They will travel with your team from event to event on the infield.
 - We ask that you help actively recruit parents from your team to help at meets.
 - We have been very successful with coaches asking parents to help. The helper parents will assist with tasks like measuring shot put, raking the long jump pit, spotting place finishes in running races, etc.

PRACTICES:

Tuesday, April 8 will be the first practice for all grades. It will be held at the Eden Prairie High School. The times for the first practice are as follows:

- Grades 1-3 – 6:00-7:00
- Grades 4-5 – 7:00-8:15

ALL OTHER practices and meets will be held at Central Middle School

1st to 3rd Grades:

Practice is on Mondays from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Each practice will be split into 4 stations with 15 minutes per station.

Meets are Saturdays from 10:00-11:00/11:30ish. Generally the 1st to 3rd grade meet goes relatively quickly.

4th to 5th Grades:

Practice is on Tuesdays from 6:00 PM to 7:20 PM. Each practice will be split into 4 stations with 20 minutes per station. Meets are Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 9:30 AM

Gear/Equipment

Coaches are provided with a gear bag and ribbons. You should bring a water bottle for yourself to each practice and meet, and wear clothes that will allow you to participate. Additional items that may be useful:

- Clipboard
- Pens/Pencils
- Flat cones
- Chalk (for marking starting positions in long jumps)
- For practices and meets, it may be helpful to bring a large box, bin, or wagon to help keep track of their team's "stuff" – like water bottles, gloves, etc

Facility

Our practices and meets are scheduled at Central Middle School. **The one exception is that the first practice will take place at Eden Prairie High School as above.** The high schoolers will be putting on a clinic.

To Do Lists

Prior to the start of the season

- Complete all your coaching requirements (Background Screen, CDC Concussion Awareness training, review Training Videos or attend in-person training).
- Send a copy of your concussion certificate to susanbzhang@gmail.com
- Review this Coaching Manual.
- Introduce yourself to any other coaches or assistant coaches for your team.
- Send an introductory email prior to the start of the season to your team. Communication is managed through Sports Engine. This app has messaging features for your team integrated into it.
- Many parents have used Sports Engine before. If you are unfamiliar with Sports Engine I highly recommend downloading the app and checking out the training resources (<https://www.sportsengine.com/training-camp/team/mobile-coaches>).

Parent/Team Meeting

- Hold a brief (~10 minute) parent and athlete meeting before starting the first day of practice (as able). This is usually just an informal meeting on the field as parents are dropping off their kids on the first day.
- Set the tone of enthusiasm, excitement, and sportsmanship for the season.
- Review the introductory email, EPTFA policies, & goals.
- Network with parents - it is a more enjoyable season when they know each other.
- Express the need for volunteers at each of the meets.
 - Each family needs to volunteer to help at one meet per season
 - Coaches will need 2 parent volunteers per meet to assist. The more people we have helping with meets, the faster and smoother they go. This is especially important in inclement weather. Also – especially for the younger kids – less waiting = more fun = better experience for all.
 - Parent volunteers will be in the action with you. Examples of tasks they will help with: measuring jumps in long jump, raking long jump pits, helping keep track of places for sprint races, helping write down shot put distances, etc.
 - Parent volunteers will NOT miss out on seeing their kids compete.
- Encourage parents to drop off and pick up their athletes on time. You and one other adult will need to remain with your team until the last participant has been picked up.
- Inform parents of their responsibility to stay OFF of the track and infield during practices and meets unless they actively participating as a volunteer. They will need to manage the safety of their non-participating children at practice and meets. Spectators are not allowed to cross the track or be in the infield unless (as above) they are actively volunteering and assisting with the team.
- Inform parents about Picture Day date.
- Solicit a Team Manager (or Assistant Coach if you don't already have one) if you think you will need additional assistance.
 - What is a Team Manager? Really whatever you need it to be. For the little kids, it can be helpful to have an additional assistant to help keep them in lanes for things like 100 m sprints. It can also be helpful to have someone assist in filling out ribbons for personal bests, have an extra spotter for finish places/times for shorter events, etc.
 - Extra adults can be very helpful for events that happen quickly, like the 100 m dash. It can be hard to spot places/finish position when many of the kids are finishing VERY close together. It is often helpful to video

tape the finish line in case of timer error, unclear finish place, etc.

Weekly Tasks

- Send messages to remind your team of practices/meets.
- If the weather is bad, remind parents/families that the track often feels colder due to higher winds. Remind them to send their kids with extra clothing, hats, gloves as needed
- Coaches can either provide event results on place and/or participation ribbons immediately following the meet or hand out ribbons and results at the next practice.
 - Often it is easier to hand out ribbons at the next practice so that the coach or coach assistant can fill out ribbons without feeling rushed.
- All meet results should be recorded weekly so you can include each athlete's best times on their certificate at the end of the season. The EPTFA does not maintain any official event results. Coaches will be provided with an Excel spreadsheet template that will allow you to track individual performances for each meet.
- Again – please keep track of your athletes' performances throughout the season so that you can make them a certificate at the end of the season with their best results from each event! We do not share entire team results except for the open meet. Please consider using the assistant coach or team manager if you do not have enough time to handle this task.

End of the Season

- Coaches will complete athlete certificates before the final meet that includes the athlete's best running event times and field event distances. The reason the relay meet is the final meet is to make it easier for coaches to fill out these certificates.
- Certificates and medals will be distributed at the final meet.
- Coaches should email the team to congratulate them at the end of the season
- Coaches can send separate emails to each athlete with the final individual list of results for the season if desired.

Responsibilities

Head Coach

- Responsible for managing the assigned EPTFA team and coaching staff throughout the season.
- Acts as team lead coach, teacher, track enthusiast, communicator, and parent contact.
- Provide regular communication to the team (kids & parents) throughout the season
- Conduct team awards ceremonies, athlete recognition, organize team participation at meets, gather team meet results, record team progress.
 1. For awards – we have a LOT of ribbons. We want kids to be excited and proud of their progress. It is ok to think about the ribbons generously. They mean a lot to some of the kids.
 2. Ribbons should be separated by gender as much as able. Even though the teams are co-ed, we usually give out place ribbons to the top 3 boys and top 3 girls per team. If you end up having to do mixed relays with your team based on numbers, obviously then it won't be possible to do a top boy/girl award.
 3. For the open meet – medals are awarded as a whole to the top boys/girls in events. This is the one time the coaches aren't the ones responsible for determining the places.
 4. For the younger kids, it can be fun to give each kid a ribbon after each meet with their individual results written on the back. The younger kids really love the ribbons.
- Ensure fun and excitement at practices and meets.
- Teach and lead in good sportsmanship.
- Follow direction of the EPTFA Coach Coordinator.
- Team/Parent/Coach liaison to EPTFA Coach Coordinator and Board of Directors.
- Help with set-up and clean-up at each practice and meet. Generally this will mean that you help set up the station you start on and then help tear down the station you end on. The board will provide guidance on how to do this – it just goes much quicker when we all work together.
- Provide feedback to EPTFA for program improvements.
- Delegate responsibilities to assistant coach(es) and team manager to ensure the above takes place.
- Must abide by the rules and policies set forth by the EPTFA Board of Directors to ensure a SAFE, SECURE,

- and POSITIVE experience for each participant
- If you or your assistant coach needs to miss a meet, you will recruit a parent to help stand in.

Assistant Coach

- Assist head coaches act as a team teacher, track enthusiast, and kid wrangler.
- Help provide regular communication to the team (kids & parents) throughout the season as needed
- Help conduct team awards ceremonies, athlete recognition, organize team participation at meets, gather team meet results, record team progress.
- Ensure fun and excitement at practices and meets - teach good sportsmanship.
- Help with set-up and clean-up at each practice and meet.
- Provide feedback to Head Coach for program improvements.
- Collaborate with the Head Coach of assigned team.
- Must abide by the rules and policies set forth by the EPTFA Board of Directors to ensure a SAFE, SECURE, and POSITIVE experience for each participant.

Team Manager (Optional)

- Work with both the head and assistant coaches to ensure consistent communication and administration of the team activities.
- May assist coaches with recording meet results and filling out ribbons to be awarded to athletes.
- May NOT lead the team during practice or at a meet exclusively since they have not had a background screen or taken concussion awareness training. A coach who has done a background screen/concussion training should be present.

Meets – FAQ

1. Are athletes competing against their teammates or the entire grade level?

At meets #1 through #3 athletes are primarily competing within their own teams. Here are some more details specific to each event at the first three meets:

Long Jump, High Jump, Shot Put - Athletes are competing within their own team, and not the entire grade.

400 M and 800 M - We typically do either a grade level start or a separate boys and girls start per grade level. Even though this event has teams combined we encourage coaches to award ribbons based on their athletes' place within their own team.

100 M, 200 M, and Hurdles - We try to do heats only within a team, but depending on the number of kids and how we are doing on time we may have a few heats with athletes from multiple teams. You can still award place ribbons based on your athletes' places in their own team.

Relays - We typically have multiple teams competing against each other. Since it's rare to have a perfect multiple of 4 per team we may request that athletes from separate teams are combined to form one relay team. If we are short an athlete or two we may allow one athlete to run two legs of the relay.

2. What is the open meet?

Meet #4 is our open meet. This is the first chance for athletes to compete against their entire grade level for each event. Depending on timing, we may limit it such that each athlete picks their favorite 3 events in advance and only competes in those 3 events. If time allows, we will allow all athletes to

compete in all events. The top three girls and top 3 boys per grade level will receive medals. The 4th through 6th finishers will receive ribbons.

3. Do I need to record my athletes' performances?

Yes! The head coach needs to keep track of athlete's performances for individual events and also keep track over the course of the season to know what your athletes' personal bests are. It is the responsibility of the coaches to write down the distances, and to get the printout from the timers for the track events. I suggest taking a photo on your phone of any paper results at meets so you can refer back as needed. These should be saved for the full season. At the end of the year coaches will present each athlete with a certificate and will list their personal bests for each event.

For sprint races, I recommend using a video to record the finish as sometimes kids don't stay in their lanes, and sometimes it is tough to tell who finished in what order. The video can be used as a reference.

4. What etiquette should I be aware of as a coach?

See the "Meet and Practice Etiquette" Section.

One of the major things we want to stress is getting your athletes in the practice of treating the track as a road and looking both ways before crossing. In addition, they should be crossing as a group with direction from their coach whenever possible.

5. Why don't we have relays at every meet?

We don't have enough time and relays tend to be our most time-consuming events. We know a lot of kids love the team aspect of relays, so we do incorporate relays at a few meets per year. You can always include a relay challenge during practice.

6. What about spectators?

No spectators are allowed inside the fenced in area except for the initial parent meeting on the first night of practice only. Athletes need to stay with their coach and the rest of their team. They should not be heading into the bleachers between events. Parents who you have asked to actively help with practice may stay on the infield.

Long Jump - FAQ

1. What etiquette do I need to know for long jump?

When doing long jump we want to encourage the kids to return to the starting line on the outside of the runway, rather than using the middle space between the lanes. Coaches or volunteers should be continually raking the pits and making sure athletes are not starting their approach until volunteers and other athletes are out of the way.

2. What line do athletes use for take-off?

The long jump stations at CMS do not use a take-off board. Generally, we will be using the white line closest to the pit for our take-off line. For some of the younger kids, if they cannot reach the pit from the white line, you can determine an alternate take off as needed (sometimes a chalk line can be

drawn closer to the edge of the pit). For the open meet, a standard take off line will be used.

3. What if the athlete scratches/faults (jumps with their foot beyond the line)?

At the open meet, for athletes that scratch twice in a row, a third attempt will be given. At the rest of the meets we leave it up to coach's discretion. Often, we let the athlete know they scratched, but will still measure the mark and reduce it by the approximate length of the scratch. If it makes it easier, any results that are approximated due to a scratch could always be recorded with an asterisk.

Shot Put - FAQ

1. What etiquette do I need to know for shot put?

Coaches and volunteers should be the only ones in the field measuring and returning the shot puts. Only one athlete may be in the ring at a time, and other athletes need to stay behind that area. We do not allow the spin technique for shot put since we do not have netting around each shot put station.

2. What about fouls or scratches?

If the athlete steps outside the ring (falls forward over the line) the attempt does not count. Please enforce that the shot must be "put" or pushed. It may not be thrown. The volunteers measuring the distance will not be looking for these fouls. The key thing to look for is making sure the athlete starts with the shot against their neck or chin. If it comes away from their body the athlete will most likely also drop their elbow and it will result in a throwing motion.

The throwing motion of a baseball is NOT allowed for a couple reasons 1) it's just not how this event is done, and it won't translate to later successful shot putting as kids get older, 2) it's not safe and will place kids at risk of injury

Relays - FAQ

1. How many teams will race at a time?

We will be using most of the 8 lanes available to maximize meet efficiency.

2. How are the relay teams created?

Coaches are responsible for creating the relay teams. Ideally, each relay team should be only kids from the same team. If you don't end up with a perfect multiple of 4 there are two options. One athlete can run multiple legs (but no more than 2 legs) or we can combine teams together. We do not include relays at the open meet. Because the relays are supposed to be fun, we try not to have coaches "stack" relays so that one team is much faster than another. Kids have much more fun if you try to distribute your athletes to make it a decent race rather than focusing on one of your teams getting the best possible time.

Meet Results

As mentioned above, the EPTFA does not maintain any official event results except for the open meet. Coaches are

ultimately responsible for collecting results at the rest of the weekly meets. Please consider using assistant coaches or team managers to help in collecting the results during the meets. Coaches will be provided with a template that can be used for manually recording all results.

Field Events (Shot Put, Long Jump, High Jump)

During the field events the results should be recorded after each attempt.

55M Hurdles

Depending on the availability of volunteers the hurdle events may or may not have an official timer. When a timer is not available coaches may decide to try and time the events themselves, or at a minimum record finishing place.

100M, 200M, 4x100M relay, and 4x200M relay

These events are timed with a button timer system. At the start of each heat record which lane your athletes are in. At the end of each heat the timing volunteer will print out one copy of the results and hand it to a coach. It is the responsibility of the coaches to pass this to each of the other coaches that had athletes in that event. It is recommended that coaches take a photo of the printout rather than trying to record all the results. As above, having a volunteer record the finish can help clarify finish positions and times if kids get out of their lanes. I have usually found it helpful to have a videorecording of the finishes to help clarify any questions

400M, 800M

Typically, these events will start from the waterfall line and will have a timer. As the athletes cross the finish line, they are handed a place card for their finish. Record the place for each of your athletes. The timer will print out one copy of the results similarly to the shorter dashes, and coaches should pass the results amongst each other. Again – I recommend a photo of this.

How to Email Your Team

- Sports Engine allows you to message your team
- Log in to Sports Engine
- When you log in, there is a menu to the left. Click on “Teams”
- If you have multiple teams, click on the one you are coaching (some families have many kids in many teams)
- Click on the three dots on the left and select “view team”
- On the menu on the left, click on “Roster”
- Click the “message” icon that has an envelope next to it
- Select who you are messaging in the drop down menu for “to” – generally your whole team
- Write your message and send!

Ribbon Distribution Guidelines

Each Coach will receive a packet of ribbons prior to the first meet. If the team has a Team Manager consider using them to help with recording results and filling out the ribbons. The Coach has the option to present the ribbons after the meet on Saturday or during practice the next week. Some Coaches may distribute ribbons differently. Please inform your team what your ribbon distribution plan is prior to the first meet.

Ribbon Guidelines

These are just guidelines or suggestions. Each Coach can modify to do what they feel is best for their team. Just remember that ribbons are cheap, and the athletes love to receive them. It's a good motivator, so don't be stingy.

- The top 3 finishers in each event will receive ribbons corresponding to the place they finished within the team. This should be separated by gender.
- A coach or team manager will document the athlete's individual results for each event on the back of the ribbon.
- All athletes in grades 1-3 will receive a Participation ribbon documenting their individual results for that meet. We do not typically provide Participation ribbons for 4th through 5th. However, coaches are free to ask for these ribbons. They may be used as participation or special awards which are discussed below.
- If any of the top 3 finishers end up tying, then both will receive the appropriate Place ribbon. For example, a team may have an athlete finish in 1st Place, and two athletes tie for 2nd Place. In this situation, a fourth athlete would receive a 3rd Place ribbon.
- Coaches may choose to distribute the ribbons at the end of the meet or at the next practice.
- The Head Coach will be the primary keeper of all individual athlete and team results data. Any information shared with participants will be used in a confidential manner.

Distribution

All grade levels will receive the following ribbons in their packets:

- 1st Place (blue)
- 2nd Place (red)
- 3rd Place (white)

In addition, grade levels 1 to 3 will receive Participation ribbons.

Special Awards

One of the main objectives for the EPTFA is to promote good sportsmanship and recognize the individual achievements all athletes bring to the team. Each Coach has the opportunity to reward athletes who may not receive place ribbons during the season. Here are some suggested special awards:

- Most Improved
- Best Effort
- Team Player
- Best Sportsmanship
- Hardest Worker
- Coach's Helper
- Best Attitude
- Most Committed
- Most Disciplined
- Biggest Heart
- Others at your discretion

Feel free to be creative and use your own method of recognizing special achievements, keeping in mind that every athlete should receive special acknowledgement at some point during the season. You can use certificates such as the ones available at <http://www.123certificates.com/trackandfield.php> or request additional Participation ribbons from the EPTFA board for these awards.

Meet and Practice Etiquette

- During practices we leave lanes 1 & 2 unassigned on the practice schedule. This allows teams to use those two lanes if they would like to run full laps.
- Coaches must make sure their athletes always maintain control of relay batons. Batons should never be thrown, used as weapons/swords, or treated in a manner that could cause damage.
- Coaches and athletes must always be aware of activity on the track and look both ways before crossing the track. Make sure your team crosses together at the Coaches order.
- Never cross over the approach area or runway of any field events.
- Never cross through the shot put or high jump areas.
- No spikes or cleats are allowed for any athletes.
- The last team at each field event during practice should help bring in all field equipment to the shed. It is ok to leave it right outside the shed so that board members can double check that all equipment is returned. Volunteers during meets at field events will let teams know when they should assist with returning field equipment.
- Stress with the parents the importance of arriving on time.
- Remind parents they are not allowed on the infield or anywhere that would impede any of the events or practices.
- Stress safety by instructing and encouraging athletes to stay in their lanes.
- Stress wearing the appropriate clothing and be prepared for any kind of weather conditions. Remind your teams that the track gets very cold – it is very windy.
- Have the athletes wear their EPTFA shirts over jackets, sweatshirts, etc. The names on the backs of the shirts are very helpful to the volunteers on your team.

Meet Etiquette

- Have your event recording sheets and related paperwork prepared prior to the start of the meet.
- Listen carefully to the announcer and be aware of what events are being run.
- Be mindful of the meet schedule event times and make sure your team is ready to participate ON TIME to ensure minimal delays in the meet.
- Have your team arrive to the track ~15 minutes prior to the first event for warm-ups and to allow you to set-up your heats, lanes and relays.
- To ensure the meet runs efficiently and on-time, Coaches or Team Managers must check-in with the start line volunteers at least 10 minutes prior to scheduled running events and relays. A copy of the running event recording sheet is the easiest way to provide the list of runners to the volunteers. This will allow time for the volunteers to finalize heat and lane assignments.
- Athletes should be ready to take their blocks in their assigned heat and lane immediately following the start of the previous heat.
- While not competing, encourage your team to cheer for their teammates and other competitors.
- Never “bad mouth” other competitors.
- Never pace or run along-side any runner during a race.
- Everyone needs to remain quiet near the starting line of a race.

Sample Introduction Email

Hello track athletes and parents! Track season is already upon us. I will be the head coach for your [1st/2nd/3rd/4th/5th] grade team. Our team's name on the website is Team [Number and Coach Last name] and I'm looking forward to the season!

Here are the basics that you should know:

- The FIRST practice will be held at Eden Prairie High School from 6:00 to 7:00 for 1st – 3rd grade, and from 7:00 – 8:00 for grades 4 and 5. This will be on Tuesday, April 8.
- After the first practice, the remaining practices will occur at Central Middle School. They are scheduled for 6:00 PM every [Monday for 1st to 3rd, Tuesday for 4th to 5th]
- Meets are held at CMS on Saturday mornings starting April 20th at [10:00 AM for 1st to 3rd grade, 8:00 AM for 4th to 5th grade].
- Here is a map to CMS:
<https://goo.gl/maps/RCxjU4yp8xeVnt8x6>
The track is northeast of the school. There is parking on both the east and west sides of the school.
- Please arrive early the first day to find me on the turf inside the track [Include any hints on how to find you. Having a sign is helpful.] If you need help check with the sign-in table just inside the fence before the first goalpost. We will have a parent meeting at the beginning of the first practice to discuss the season, meet the coaches, answer questions, etc. After that you will need to watch from outside the fenced area. No parents or spectators are allowed on the track or in the infield.
- We all know Minnesota spring weather can be unpredictable so the EPTFA website will post any cancellations or changes by 4:00 PM. on practice days. Please be sure your athlete is dressed appropriately for the conditions as well. The CMS track is notoriously windy, so it tends to feel colder.
- Please remember to bring a water bottle for each athlete with their name clearly labeled on the bottle.
- Athletes should also be dressed appropriately to run including running shoes. No spikes or cleats are allowed.
- EPTFA has a no snack policy.
- Please have athletes use the restroom prior to practice or meets. Port-a-potties are available, but coaches cannot leave their teams to escort the athletes to the bathroom so your child would need to go to the restroom independently.
- If you know your athlete will not be able to attend a meet, please let me know in advance.
- Parents are asked to volunteer to help with at least one of the meets. Parent volunteers will follow along with our team and assist with tasks like recording results. [Optional: I will specifically need a parent/s to volunteer for Team Manager. Your main responsibility is to document individual athlete results for each event and assist with keeping the team together. Note: With each team having at least one assistant coach this year this role might not be necessary.]
- The schedule and calendar is available on Sports Engine.
- I encourage you to follow EPTFA on Facebook. This is a useful backup communication tool for things like weather related cancellations.

I will keep you updated with anything that may be relevant prior to our first practice on [April 8th] and throughout the season. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. I look forward to seeing you all! Remember – the first practice is on TUESDAY, APRIL 8 at EPHS. This is an exception with the rest of the practices occurring at CMS.

[Coach's name]

[Cell phone - The more contact information the better, but you are not obligated to provide your cell phone number.]

[E-mail]

Sample First Meet Email

Just a quick reminder for everyone. Our first track meet will be this Saturday at the Central Middle School (CMS) track. Please arrive by [time] so we can have a short warm-up before the meet starts. Please have your athlete wear their t-shirt. Our meet schedule for Saturday is as follows [Note: the schedule will be sent to coaches in advance and will be different per grade. The following is just an example]:

9:25 – 100M Dash

9:30 – Long Jump

9:45 – Shot Put

10:15 – 4x100 Relay

We will try to stay as close to the posted times as possible, but please allow some extra time since we are likely to run into an unforeseen delay or two. I look forward to seeing everyone on Saturday. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

[Coach's name]

[Cell phone - The more contact information the better, but you are not obligated to provide your cell phone number.]

[E-mail]