

Edina Soccer Association – Frequently Asked Questions Spring/Summer 2021

What will the Summer Programming look like:

A: At this time, it is too soon to know how the COVID-19 response will impact our upcoming summer programming, but right now, we are planning for a May 17th start. Rest assured, we will let you know as soon as we can if anything changes, particularly related to start dates. We continue to monitor CDC, MDH, City of Edina, Edina Public Schools and our league recommendations as they evolve related to the COVID-19 spread.

We do know we will not be hosting our Super Soccer Saturdays the first two weeks of May but hope to include these extra events mid or late season when capacity limitations are more clear for that timing.

Is ESA Safe during COVID-19?

A: ESA follows all guidelines set forth by the Minnesota Department of Health and the Center of Disease Control (CDC). We adhere to capacity guidelines, mask wearing requirements, spectator limitations, social distancing, and separate arrival and departure procedures. We successfully executed our Fall 2020 program, which included 1,050 athletes in Grades K – 6th the full 6 weeks, and our Winter Indoor Program (with the only closure being the Statewide mandate to close youth sports program for 4 weeks in late Nov/mid Dec).

Our Board of Directors is comprised of a variety of volunteers in our Edina community who work in healthcare, banking, retail management, consulting, engineering, marketing, communications, analytics and finance. This provides our executive team with many different perspectives on health, safety, program sustainability and reporting. We are always looking for new board members so please inquire if interested in learning more!

Who is eligible to participate in ESA?

A: We invite any child starting Kindergarten in Fall 2021 through current 12th graders to participate. ESA is under the City of Edina – Park & Recreation Department who has a 75% resident rule for all organizations to follow. Therefore, we require participants to either live in Edina or attend Edina Schools (i.e. open enrolled) which can include local private schools not physically located in Edina (i.e. Blake, Breck, Benilde, etc). If you have any questions about eligibility, please email: esasoccer@comcast.net for clarification.

Is ESA committed to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?

A: ESA welcomes all athletes (who meet the terms of participation listed above) and actively honors placement of all athletes on any and all teams.

Mission Statement: It is the goal of the Edina Soccer Association to provide for all boys and girls of the community an equal opportunity to participate in the game of

soccer at any ability level, and to have fun while building good sportsmanship, a sense of discipline and an understanding of the fundamentals of the game.

ESA provides scholarships (full and partial) for any athlete that requests financial assistance to participate in our program. ESA provides over 100 full scholarships per year with any limits.

What is the format?

A: Pre K – 2nd grade has a 1 hour session per week which includes 30 minutes of skills/drills and 30 minutes of a small sided game. A team of 12-16 athletes are divided between two soccer fields and play 4 v 4. Paid instructors run both skills/drills and games.

Grades 3 – 12th is all game format with 2 – 25 minute halves. The games have 1-3 referees. Grades 3-4 play 6 v 6 and Grades 5-12 play 7 v 7 or 8 v 8. There is a regular season and then playoffs in early to mid July. Grades 3-4 have an Edina Cup scheduled on a weekend in July to complete their season. Team sizes range from 12 – 20 (depending on grade).

What night will my child be playing?

Summer 2021

Pre-Kindergarten Boys - Wednesday or Thursday

Kindergarten Boys - Wednesday or Thursday

Pre-Kindergarten Girls - Monday or Tuesday

Kindergarten Girls - Monday or Tuesday

1st Grade Boys - Wednesday

1st Grade Girls - Monday

2nd Grade Boys - Thursday

2nd Grade Girls - Tuesday

3rd Grade Boys - Monday and Wednesday

3rd Grade Girls - Tuesday and Thursday

4th Grade Boys - Monday and Wednesday

4th Grade Girls - Tuesday and Thursday

5th /6th Grade Boys - Tuesday and Thursday

5th Grade Girls - Monday and Wednesday

6th Grade Girls - Monday and Wednesday

7th/8th Grade Boys - Monday and Wednesday

7th/8th Grade Girls - Tuesday and Thursday

9th /10th/11/12th Grade Boys - Tuesday and Thursday

9th/10th/11/12th Grade Girls - Monday and Wednesday

NOTE

Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, 1st Grade and 2nd Grade teams play one night per week.

Grades 3 and older play one night a week until school is out then 2 nights a week for the remainder of the season and playoffs.

The Edina Soccer Association reserves the right to combine age groups in the event that we do not have enough registrants in an age group to form a league.

Is my attendance mandatory for games and events?

A: Your participation is NOT mandatory and our program is very flexible to fit individual and family needs. No scores are kept during games (except playoffs) and if athletes wish to take a session off due to illness, injury, family vacations, other commitments, that is always acceptable.

How can parents get involved, even if having no soccer experience?

A: ESA welcomes all parents and guardians to volunteer to be a coach during our Spring/Summer and Fall seasons. Our program's success depends on having enough parent volunteers available. The term "Coach" is relative to the age groups. For example, our Pre K – 2nd grade teams have paid instructors who run the 30 minute skills/drills portion of the session then referee the 30 minute game. Coaches are necessary to email communications at the start of the season, substitute players on and off the field during games, organize the team at the beginning of the session, be available for parent questions, motivate the players and be a positive adult mentor. For Grades 3-12, Coaches are actually providing game strategy to the players in addition to player substitutions. ESA provides multiple in person training opportunities to ensure understanding of the game of soccer and their role in addition to online coaching resources.

How are team assignments handled?

A: Our analytics team codes our software to develop team rosters based on the following criteria hierarchy:

1. Coach with requests (parents clicking "I wish to volunteer" on the player registration page and completing the information, including "Coach with" requests. This is how the software builds a team starting with coach assignments then adding the players.
2. Mutual player play with requests (i.e. Johnny requests Sam and Sam requests Johnny).
3. School affiliations (especially during COVID-19 – this function is very important). If school is "other" – typically these athletes will be assigned last as they will complete a roster that has space. We highly recommend not putting "other" down unless you are ok with any assignment on any team.

Other factors for team assignments include:

1. Night of Week Preference – this is relevant for Pre K and K teams that due to the strong participation and our commitment to starting games earlier than later into the evenings, we have two nights an athlete could be assigned (i.e. Pre K/K girls are assigned on either Monday night OR Tuesday nights for the entire season). We do accept parent/guardian requests to choose a night by

emailing: esasoccer@comcast.net. If other parents with the mutual play with request or from the same school also make a request that contradicts the night you requested, then the software makes a decision who to place where.

2. Emailed requests from parents. We do accept emailed requests for a small group of athletes to play together or special circumstances you wish for us to be alerted to (i.e. neighborhood pod requests with kids from different schools). You can email: esasoccer@comcast.net

If changes are requested after rosters have been published and uniforms customized, there will be a jersey replacement cost passed along to the family in the amount of \$30.00.

How is the High School Program structured?

A: Since ESA is a recreational program; the biggest benefit to high schoolers is they can play this sport with friends (no tryouts!). For seniors it is often a “last sports hurrah” enjoying an outdoor sport together after graduation.

Grades 9-10 play games against each other and Grades 11-12 receive the same scheduling. We attempt to make the teams as even as possible and always encourage and enforce fair play and good sportsmanship.

Team sizes are up to 20 athletes supporting game participation flexibility with many athletes having jobs, other sports conflicts and family commitments.

New in 2019 we added a CHAMPIONSHIP night with a round robin format, trophies for the 1st and 2nd place teams and pizza served for all participants. These games attract a fun crowd of students, friends and family and played at Highland Fields.

Does ESA have job opportunities?

A: Yes! We have opportunities to referee including a Jr Referee program for 11-12 year olds and certified referee program for Ages 13 and older. Referees make good money per game (up to \$25.00) and have the flexibility to choose the games they wish to work via Game Officials site. ESA also has Instructors hired each Spring/Summer for anyone recently graduating from high school through college aged. We provide on field training for this position to prepare them to teach skills/drills to Pre K – 2nd graders and referee their small-sided games. For more information on either Refereeing or becoming an Instructors please email: esasoccer@comcast.net

What does my participation fee pay for?

A: ESA is a 501c non-profit organization so we carefully price our participation fees each year to ensure coverage of all program costs. If there is any overage, we put it back into the program and community with “added value” options including clinics, expansions to age groups, events, scholarships and equipment.

The fees cover: Field usage (paid to the City), uniforms (players, volunteer coaches, staff) equipment (goals, balls, cones, pinnies), insurance, administrative, site supervisors and referees and community support.

To note, ESA has only raised their fees twice in the past 16 years and is repeatedly considered the “best value” program offered in our community.

Who does ESA partner with?

A: ESA have many partners starting with Edina Soccer Club (ESC) where we share resources such as staffing, equipment and fields. ESA works very closely with the City of Edina and Edina Schools participating in cultural events, holiday events (i.e. 4th of July parade, HalloBoo, Open Streets) and through Edina Education Fund providing senior scholarships to college-bound students. We provide subsidy funds for the Edina High School Soccer programs (boys and girls) for purchases such as training tee shirts for all level programs, game balls and assistant coaches’ salaries. We also partner with Twin Cities Orthopedics (TCO) through their first aid kit donation program and Minnesota United co-hosting Fan Appreciation Nights at summer games. We are active participants in our community and provide donations of equipment (soccer balls and pumps) and extra uniforms for global mission trips providing resources throughout the world.

ESA also receives grants and matching funds from companies such as US Bank and Target for serving our community by providing inclusive youth sports opportunities.