

Track & Field Manual



SY26



The Office of Sports Administration

A DEPARTMENT OF THE OFFICE OF COLLEGE & CAREER SUCCESS



Track and Field 2026

Please review the included manual document for key program information, requirements, and rules and regulations as it relates to the season, to the Chicago Public League (CPL), and to the Illinois High School Association (IHSA).

Non-compliance with any of the following information may result in the forfeiture of coaches' season stipend. All questions can be directed to the Athletic Program Administrator (APA) listed below.

Lead Administrator:

Thomas Smith
E-mail: tesmith1@cps.edu
Office: (773) 553-6735

Lyvonna Brown
lbrown10@cps.edu

Assignor of Officials:

Tiffany Seay
E-mail: msdilligence@yahoo.com

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OSA Mission Statement

The Office of Sports Administration oversees the equitable implementation of sports programs across all elementary schools and high schools within the Chicago Public School District (CPS) and Chicago Public League (CPL). Through effective sports policy creation and program management, OSA helps create an environment for schools to provide essential athletic and academic development for each student-athlete. It is the goal of OSA to promote sportsmanship, teamwork, integrity, and a sense of community as we prepare students for the next level in athletics and in life. Our students will be able to learn the importance of Academic, Athletic and Social Awareness as they advance through our program and become leaders in their communities.

League Governance & Key Links

The official rules of the National Federation of High Schools Association shall govern all Public League competitions. Any exceptions to these rules are listed in these Terms and Conditions. *The Chicago Public League is governed by the [Chicago Public Schools Athletics Constitution and By-laws](#). All coaches must read this document to be informed about CPL policies, procedures and expectations.*



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Whereas the specific Terms and Conditions are listed in this document, the following links that make up the [General Chicago Public League Rules](#) is an appendix to this document which lists issues of general governance, coach expectations, roster management/vertical movement/eligibility and eligibility certificates, and other issues of league contest management.

The [2026 Track and Field Resource Sheet](#) / [IHSA Boys Track and Field](#) / [IHSA Girls Track and Field](#) contains other logistical information regarding the season for coaches and athletic directors including the coaches directory.

League Calendar

Event	Day/Date	Time	Location
Track and Field Coaches' Meeting	January 15, 2026		D. H. Williams HS (DuSable)
Indoor Document Due	January 9, 2026		
Season Starts	January 19, 2026		
Electronic CORS Check (Indoor Season)	January 30, 2026		
1st Meet allowed	February 2, 2026		
CORS Hard Copy Due	April 17, 2026	<i>Both indoor and outdoor</i>	

Indoor Season Meets	Day/Date	Time	Location
Challenger Series Meets - Assignment Only*	Weds. 2/4 - 3/11	5:30 PM	Track and Field Center at Gately
Open Challenger Meet	February 4, 2026	5:30 PM	Track and Field Center at Gately
Single A Challenger Meet	February 11, 2026	5:30 PM	Track and Field Center at Gately
Select Challenger Meet	February 18, 2026	5:30 PM	Track and Field Center at Gately
Double A Challenger Meet	February 25, 2026	5:30 PM	Track and Field Center at Gately
Triple A Challenger Meet	March 4, 2026	5:30 PM	Track and Field Center at Gately
Open II Challenger Meet	March 11, 2026	5:30 PM	Track and Field Center at Gately
Saturday Indoor Invites - S/C - N/W	March 14, 2026	9:00 AM/2:00 PM	Track and Field Center at Gately
Championship Seed Meeting	March 18, 2026		TBD
Indoor Championships*	March 21, 2026	10:00 AM	Track and Field Center at Gately

Sports Administration Sponsored Meets	Day	Date	Time	Location
CPS Relays*	Saturday	April 11, 2026	10:00 AM	Hanson Stadium
Girls Invite*	Saturday	April 25, 2026	10:00 AM	Hanson Stadium
Boys Invite*	Saturday	May 2, 2026	10:00 AM	Hanson Stadium
Girls Last Chance Invite*	Tuesday	May 5, 2026	5:30 PM	Hanson Stadium



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Championship Seed Meeting	Wednesday	May 6, 2026		
Girls Varsity Championships*	Saturday	May 9, 2026	10:00 AM	Hanson Stadium
Girls Sophomore Championships*	Saturday	May 9, 2026	10:00 AM	Hanson Stadium
Boys Last Chance Invite*	Tuesday	May 12, 2026	5:30 PM	Hanson Stadium
Championship Seed Meeting	Wednesday	May 13, 2026		
Boys Varsity Championships*	Saturday	May 16, 2026	10:00 AM	Hanson Stadium
Boys Sophomore Championship*	Saturday	May 16, 2026	10:00 AM	Hanson Stadium

IHSA State Series Calendar

Event		Date	Location
IHSA Girls Participants Due online		May 10, 2026	
IHSA Girls Sectional Meeting		May 12	
IHSA Girls Sectionals		May 13-15	Various Site
IHSA Girls Finals		May 21-23	Eastern Illinois University
IHSA Boys Participants Due online		May 17, 2026	
IHSA Boys Sectional Meeting		May 15-17	
IHSA Boys Sectionals		May 20-22	Various Sites
IHSA Girls Finals		May 28-30	Eastern Illinois University

Team Approvals and Expectations

Team Approvals consist in a series of tasks that must be completed by the Athletic Director and Head Coach from each team. Failure to complete the following tasks will result in the resignation of coaching stipends or delayed payments. Anticipated team approval will be reflected in the [Inventory](#). It is the responsibility of the school Athletic Director (assisted by the head coach) to communicate with the appropriate Athletic Program Coordinator regarding the confirmation of team Approval.

- A. Teams must have the requisite number of students listed as "Eligible" in the ASPEN program and submit a hard copy [Central Office Record Sheet](#) to the Office of Sports Administration by the specified deadline.
- B. Teams must compete in all CPL-regulated matches, including conference games, phase matches and CPL playoffs (2 forfeits in a season result in loss of team approval).
- C. Teams are expected to compete in the IHSA Series, if signed up. For teams who sign up and do not show up to games, there is a \$500 penalty fee that must be paid directly to the IHSA. [Online Entry Process for the IHSA Series](#)
- D. Teams looking to join the League for the 2025 season must complete the Google form, [School Request to Add a Sport/Level](#).



Coach Expectations

- A. Coaches are expected to review the [Chicago Public League Coaches' Code of Conduct and General Expectations](#)
- B. Coaches must complete IHSA and CPS certification requirements before coaching student-athletes. [Certifications for all coaches](#) - Note, all coaches must be at least 21 years old.
- C. All coaches (paid or volunteer) must register with OSA as coaches of record for the team/level for which they working through the [CPL High School Coach Registration Form](#) [CPL Charter High School Coach Registration Form](#)
- D. The Chicago Public League requires all of its students, officials, coaches, spectators and school staff to promote sportsmanship before, during and after every game. Offensive language, including profanity and/or derogatory or intimidating remarks of any kind directed at officials, event staff, student-athletes, coaches or team representatives, will not be tolerated. In order for sportsmanship to prevail, all coaches, students, staff, and spectators must display respect and civility in an effort to enthusiastically support our student-athletes to create a safe and inclusive environment. [Sportsmanship Guidelines](#).
- E. The coaching staff is expected to organize and prepare athletes through consistent practice/workouts specifically designed to enhance their performance in soccer matches.
- F. **The coaching staff is responsible for the following Meet Management for every contest:**
 - 1. Preparing a printout (preferably laminated) of emergency contact information identified for each student (name and jersey number) for quick reference by medical personnel.
 - 2. Possessing an ASPEN Generated Eligibility Certificate. *Only students listed on this certificate are eligible for that contest.*
 - 3. Reaching out to the host school (OSA Administrator, coach, athletic director) if there are transportation issues which would delay your prompt arrival.
 - 4. Oversee the online event entry and participation of athletes in a full season of sanctioned meets, culminating with entry and participation in the Sophomore and/or Varsity Championships.
 - 5. Submit all meet results to the Regional Athletic Director in charge of Track and Field or indicate where they may be found online.
- G. **Designate at least one person to assist in the management of each Sports Administration sponsored meet.** (Finish line/Field event judges, timers, hurdle crew, relay marshalls, etc.)
 - 1. Create/Maintain a school/team account at www.athletic.net which enables you to enter Sports Administration sponsored meets. This site can also be used to accept meet entries, upload meet results, search for meets, and to organize team statistics.
 - 2. Rating the IHSA officials assigned to the contest through the IHSA Schools Center. It is highly recommended to wait 12 hrs. after the game before submitting an official rating report.

Playing / League Regulations

General Participation Regulations

Contest Limitations	18 dates per team 21 dates for individuals
Minimum Contests for Team approval and receipt of coach stipends	Indoor Season Approval - 100 hours (Varsity) 1. Students submitted to ASPEN by the deadline (January 30, 2026)

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	<p>2. Participation two (2) meets including the Chicago Public League Indoor Championship Series.</p> <p>Outdoor Season Approval - 100 hours (Varsity)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students submitted to ASPEN by the deadline (March 7, 2026) 2. Participation in four (4) meets including either the Sophomore or Varsity Championships Series. <p>A coach can use additional indoor meets to count for the outdoor season mandate.</p>
<p>Levels of Participation and minimum numbers for team approval</p>	<p>In order to obtain initial team approval for a varsity team there must be 10 eligible athletes listed on the CORS. In order to maintain team approval, a minimum of 6 athletes must be represented in the minimum number of meets required (2 indoors, 4 outdoors).</p> <p>In order to maintain team approval for a sophomore team/coach, there must be an additional 8 athletes listed on the CORS (irrespective of year in school) participating in meets throughout the season and entry/participation in either championship meet.</p> <p>In order to maintain team approval for a freshman team/coach, there must be an additional 8 athletes listed on the CORS (irrespective of year in school) participating in meets throughout the season and entry/participation in either championship meet.</p>
<p>Special Considerations</p>	<p>A program that is only approved/registered for the Outdoor season must compete in 4 meets instead of 6 under the same conditions.</p> <p>A varsity program that participates in twice the number of required meets per season can petition for recognition of the Sophomore coaching position (if the team participation falls short of the 18 required).</p>
<p>Stipend Forfeiture</p>	<p>Failure to participate in the required number of meets with the required number of participants will result in forfeiture of the coaching stipend and possibly loss of recognition for that team for the next season.</p>

<p>Uniform Considerations</p>	<p>Track and Field and Cross Country Uniform Rules</p>
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Selection of Officials

- A. The Lead Administrators shall designate an assignor of officials for all OSA Sponsored meets. Schools/Coaches must assign officials for all non-conference meets from a list of approved officials provided by the APA from OSA. These officials must have IAMS numbers.
- B. Officials for OSA Sponsored meets will be paid through Arbiter and confirmed for payment by the assignor.

Student Eligibility

- A. A student is eligible to participate in a contest when listed as “Eligible” on an ASPEN-generated Eligibility certificate (or otherwise documented pertaining to Charter Schools).
 - 1. [Student-Athlete Eligibility](#)
 - 2. [Home School Student Eligibility](#)
 - 3. [Newcomer Student Eligibility](#)
 - 4. Students who have transferred to your school since the end of the previous season are ineligible for **interscholastic competition without a ruling from the Office of Sports Administration or the IHSA.**
- B. Competitive Levels
 - 1. Varsity teams shall consist of students in the first, second, third, or fourth year of attendance who will not reach their 20th birthday at any time during the sports season.
 - 2. For sophomore competition, the student shall be eligible in the first or second year in attendance and shall not have reached the seventeenth (17th) birthday before September 1 of the current school year.
 - 3. Contest results can be protested according to [Article XI – Infractions and Protests of the Chicago Public Schools Athletics Bylaws](#) if there is some irregularity or infraction of the rules occurring during the contest.

Program Administration

<p>Indoor Document Submission</p>	<p>Submit your Indoor Practice Document to the Athletic Program Administrator (APA) in charge of Track and Field by January 9, 2026.</p> <p><i>This is a document (not a form, a document that you draft) detailing your safety precautions associated with practicing inside of the school building and should list/include the following:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request for permission to practice. 2. Summary of practice activities including time of practice and the days which practice will be held. 3. Diagram (floor plan) of the practice area, including the strategic placements of cones and signs. 4. Detailed assessment of safety, security, and first aid procedures. <p><i>Teams may not practice in their school halls until the Department of Sports Administration grants permission!</i></p>
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<p>Formal Declaration for an Outdoor (only) team</p>	<p>Coaches can wait to declare a team by March 3rd by submitting all pertinent documentation, but they will only be entitled to 100 hours of pay which is the outdoor portion of the stipend. After March 7th, no other teams will be recognized.</p> <p>A hard copy of the Central Office Record Sheet listing all eligible athletes must be submitted by April 18, 2025.</p>
<p>Coaches' Stipend</p>	<p>The receipt of the coaching stipend will be based upon fulfilling the responsibilities and expectations of coaches in addition to maintaining team approval.</p> <p><i>Note: Practice hours alone spent with students without meet participation will not justify the formal status of a coach or the approval of the team.</i></p> <p><i>Coaches will only be compensated for one sport per season. If for instance an individual serves as a basketball coach as well as the indoor track and field coach during the winter season, the coach will be remunerated for the higher stipend of the positions.</i></p>
<p>Vertical Movement</p>	<p>Freshmen and Sophomore athletes entered on Freshmen and/or Sophomore level CORS will be allowed to compete in the outdoor varsity championships. Freshmen and Sophomore athletes entered on varsity level teams will be allowed to compete in the outdoor sophomore championships, but recognition of sophomore and freshman teams will nonetheless be contingent upon the aforementioned requirements. Moreover, Freshmen and Sophomores regardless of what eligibility certificate in which they are declared will only be allowed to participate/be entered for one level during the Outdoor Championship series. Participation/entry by a Freshman or Sophomore in the Varsity championships as well as the Sophomore championships will result in disqualification from the entire championship series for the athlete and potential forfeiture of meet results from the team.</p>
<p>Individual Participant Petition</p>	<p>Students that wish to participate in Sports Administration sponsored meets that do not belong to an approved team will be allowed to participate as long as formal registration for the season has been confirmed through a Central Office Record Sheet and eligibility certificates submitted by the school athletic director. The student(s) must be supervised at meets by school volunteers (certified as an IHSA coach). The APA in charge of track and field must be notified of these instances so that instructions on formal online entry of meets (when necessary) is communicated.</p>



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<p>In-Season Indoor Meets</p>	<p>Schools must contract meets with outside schools/venues. Meets should be booked 1 year in advance.</p> <p>Indoor meets must be contested on an oval of at least 150m.</p>
<p>CPS Indoor Championships</p>	<p>The Indoor Championship Series will be a comprehensive event conducted over two Saturdays (an invitational and the finals) Participants must meet a qualifying standard to qualify for both meets).</p> <p>Qualification Standards TBD</p>
<p>Non-Public League Outdoor Meets</p>	<p>Schools are encouraged to contract meets with outside schools/venues and are not mandated to participate in Sports Administration sponsored meets with the exception of the Varsity Championship series, as long as the minimum meet participation is satisfied.</p>
<p>Outdoor City Meets</p>	<p>All Public League school teams and individuals are invited to citywide meets.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City Relays 2. Sophomore Championship Series 3. Varsity Championship Series (participants must meet qualifying standards) <p>Championship Qualification Standards and entry criteria - TBD</p>
<p>Other meets</p>	<p>Schools with track and field facilities are encouraged to host meets.</p> <p>Schools also have the ability to host meets at CPS municipal stadiums upon availability. Formal requests and further instructions will be available from the APA in charge of Track and Field.</p>

Media and Social Media Expectations

The Chicago Public League is proud to offer in-depth coverage of CPS teams and student-athletes across each sports season. In order to continue to publish these stories, the CPL Sports Communications team asks the following of all participating athletics staff members and student-athletes:

- A. Ensure all student media consent forms are signed via the standard CPS enrollment packet
- B. Ensure coaches and/or players are available as requested for pre- and post-game interviews
- C. Share accomplishments and milestones with the CPS Sports Communications team so your teams and athletes can be recognized
- D. Interact and follow all CPL athletics content via our website CPSAthletics.com or via [Social Media](#).

CPS Sports Communications Team:

- A. Communications Manager: Joey Gelman – jdgelman@cps.edu
- B. Communications Specialist: Dominic Scianna – dscianna@cps.edu



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C. Communications Specialist: Michael Wojtychiw – mmwojtychiw@cps.edu

Digital Citizenship Expectations

Being a good digital citizen means that athletics staff members and student-athletes are positively contributing to the digital space, respecting other people's views even if in disagreement, and reporting issues that disrupt a positive digital environment.

A digital footprint and reputation is left online when videos and pictures are uploaded, and when posts and comments are made on websites and social media. Athletic staff and student-athletes must consider the temporary and/or permanent effect actions online can have for themselves and their community both in the digital space and in person.

That is why the Chicago Public League asks all athletics staff members, coaches, and student-athletes to engage in respectful and positive social media interaction. Should there be any inappropriate social media being created or shared in your community, please report it to CPS administration within your school building so the situation can be properly assessed and appropriate action can be taken as necessary to ensure a safe environment for all those involved.

Misc Sports Information

A. Accessing Sport Schedules

There are a number of ways to access the CPL Track and Field schedule.

1. Your VNN School site: [District Managed Schools](#) / [Charter Schools](#)
2. The [CPS athletics site](#) - Choose the sport/level
3. The Rschooltoday mobile app - download this app, change the settings to access different levels
4. The AD can go directly to the AS and print it for you or he can set you up with an administrative log in so that you can enter your team scores.
5. cpsathletics.info - go to school athletic calendar, choose your school and then the sport

B. Protocol for Handling Fights on the Floor

Make sure to review this Guidance: [Protocol for Handling Fights](#).

Additionally we believe that it is important to provide you with guidance toward proactive preparation for these activities hoping to promote the safety of the student-athletes and likewise protect you in these situations.

1. The only person that should run onto the court to stop a fight is the Head Coach.
2. Build your culture and instruct your players that the rules of engagement in regards to interscholastic competition requires absolute sportsmanship and **that all fighting is unacceptable.**
4. **Retaliatory actions also have consequences.**
Instruct/train your players to respond in the moment that are not involved in an/the altercation to turn away and return to their team area **rather than run toward** the altercation.