

BEARDEN HIGH SCHOOL
BOYS & GIRLS TRACK AND FIELD
2026 Season

Track and Field Head Coach: Matthew Eckert, matthew.eckert@knoxschools.org (720)-273-2238

Track and Field Assistant Coach: Erik Purschke, erik.purschke@knoxschools.org

Track and Field Assistant Coach: Gary Van Berkel gary.vanberkel@knoxschools.org

Track and Field Assistant Coach: Zach Sims zachary.sims@knoxschools.org

Track and Field Assistant Coach: Joel Bishop

Track and Field Assistant Coach: Gavin Bailey

Communication: General team info will be communicated via GroupMe, Facebook, Instagram, e-mails and/or text message. Make sure you give Coach Eckert your contact info (parents' emails/cells and student cell), otherwise you will miss out on important team info.

Philosophy:

Academics first, sports second. Ultimately, a coach's goal is to prepare you to have a happy and successful life, post high school. Your success in the classroom will have a greater impact on your life than anything you do on the track.

You are the keeper of your own success. Teachers, coaches, officials, parents are all part of your team to help you succeed, but in the end you are the one who controls your destiny.

Respect all others. You are representing your team and school, on and off the "field". We are a team, respect your coach and teammates. Your character is more important and lasting than your physical attributes.

"Success" is defined by you. Regardless of the competition, concentrate on self-improvement. Success is going from point A to point B. Complete goal form and sign up for meeting with coaches, so together we can set direction for your season, and define your "success".

Life's short-have fun! Although setting and working hard towards physical goals is important, many years from now, we hope you cherish all the memories with your teammates, and not simply a time/measurement achieved.

Forms: Please use <https://www.aktivate.com/> to upload your completed forms

1. **Annual Physical (every year) with Consent Form:** Turned into coach **prior to participation.**
Note: Regardless if physical was turned in to previous Bearden Sport Coach, student-athlete is responsible for turning in physical to the Track Coach.
2. Concussion Form: Turned into coach **prior to participation.**
3. Cardiac Arrest Form: Turned into Coach **prior to participation.**
4. Media and Publish Release Forms: Turned into coach **prior to participation.**
5. Safe Stars Parents/Guardians Code of Conduct. Turned into Coach **prior to participation.**

Participation Fee: \$250.00 (due March 20th)

Collected fees cover entrance fees, additional coaches salary, and all other team expenses. This can be paid online using the Schools Online Payment system (GiveBacks.com) due March 20th. No Refunds after first track and field meet that the athlete participated in. *Additional costs required for some student-athletes to cover some of their own travel expenses incurred at selective away meets. **Student-athletes will NOT be issued a team uniform until his/her team fee has been paid.**

KCS Insurance waiver Fee: \$60.00

Make sure to pay for the KCS insurance waiver fee online using the Schools Online Payment system (GiveBacks.com) **within two weeks of start of season**. If you have paid the insurance fee for another sport, you do not have to pay again.

Uniforms: \$60.00

You will need to have the team fee paid prior to receiving uniform. Uniforms will be \$60 and are a separate fee from the Participation Fee using the Schools Online Payment system (GiveBacks.com). You will keep your uniform for future years. Training shoes should be replaced each season. Spikes/specialty shoes: Recommended, but not required.

Grades:

See TSSAA for academic eligibility for minimum. Team expectation is that you achieve higher than minimum in order to best position yourself for whatever direction you want to go post high school.

****Student-Athletes with an F during the season will be required to attend Extended Learning tutoring two times per week to participate.** Tutoring takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30-8:15 am and/ or 3:45pm to 4:30pm. If a student-athlete misses Bertelkamp, they will be unable to participate in meets and practices.

School Disciplinary Issues:

If a student/athlete is suspended from school, they will not be able to participate in that week's competition. If suspended a second time, the student/athlete will be removed from the team.

Transportation:

You and your parents are responsible for you getting to and from practices and meets.

Team Expectations/Requirements:

As a coach, I do not believe in cutting athletes so that they can better themselves in athletics. However, there are limits to the number of student-athletes at track meets and some track meets have qualifying standards. The event a student-athlete is entered in is at the discretion of the coaches. In order to compete at the highest levels and at track and field meets, you must put in your best team effort at practice and meets. Our goal is to produce a competitive team, but also to help each athlete to obtain personal success.

Due to our increasing numbers, limited entries into meets, and maintaining our team as a non-cut sport, **student-athletes are not guaranteed participation in meets.**

Please see attached Tentative 2026 Meet Schedule. The expectation is that you attend every meet! KIL (Apr. 4/27-28), Regional (May 9), State (May 21) are very important.

If you cannot commit to attending these meets, please do NOT join the track and field team.

Please respect your coaches and teammates, and plan your spring accordingly. We do understand circumstances arise which may cause you to have to miss a meet. Please contact Coach Eckert via e-mail/text and the coach in your specialty area, two weeks prior to meet for approval. Our expectation is that you attend all practices and meets.

Cell phones and Airpods/headphones are to be in a backpack or away during practice and at Track and Field Meets. Using these during practice are not needed to run, jump, or throw and not permitted at meets.

Attendance:

Attendance will be taken at the start of each practice, and it is a requirement. All outside commitments should be arranged around track practices. Practices will vary for certain athletes. **Coach has discretion to scratch an athlete from an upcoming meet of which he/she does not attend practices, Bertlkamp tutoring (if required to attend), or is consistently tardy to practice.**

Those seeking PE credit, must attend practice for the entire season (if injured, one must attend practice and refrain from activity.)

Coach has full discretion for dismissing student-athlete from upcoming meet or from team, if he/she has attendance issues, school behavior issues, academic issues, other issues meeting team expectations.

Parents are important to team:

We greatly appreciate parent support. Please help your student-athlete promptly turn in forms/fees on time, respect and encourage others, and meet team expectations. Be your student-athlete's biggest cheerleader, but please leave the coaching to the coaches.

Parent Volunteers will be needed. Please contact Coach Eckert if you would like to be a parent volunteer. We appreciate your help!

TENTATIVE PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Winter Practice: October 20th Monday through Thursday from 4:00-5:30pm. These are endurance/speed practices to work on form and stamina. Wednesday are hurdles and Thursday jumps workouts to start working on approach and form in these areas. **Morning lifting is Tuesday through Friday from 6:30-7:30 am in the weightroom.** We alternate lifting arms and leg days. These are optional lifting workouts.

Tuesday Jan 6th: Required Forms Collection Day: Coach Eckert will collect papers at practice. Turn in all forms on this day. All required forms must be turned in to participate in practices.

Mandatory Pre-season Practices: Starts Tuesday, Jan 6th We will be practicing on the track and field to prepare for the season. Utilizing Weight Bands and TRACK... Plan to go inside and OUTSIDE. → Monday through Friday @4:00pm -5:30/6pm. (OFF during school closings/holidays)

These practices are for those not in other sports at this time of the year.

First Day of official practice: Monday, Feb 9th @4:00pm -5:30/6pm. Meet on the track on this day. After that, meet on track, weather permitting. Check the GroupMe for alternate practice locations. **All Practices will be held Monday through Friday @4:00pm.**

Spring Break Practice: Yes, we will have it. It will be optional, but highly encouraged.

*ALL student-athletes are to report to the Track at the start of official practice for attendance, team announcements and team warm-up.

I have reviewed and understand the Bearden Track and Field Guidelines:

Please use this link to sign off that you have read and review the guidelines. Thank you

[Parent/Guardian Signature Link](#)

Please return **before first practice** with all your paperwork.

[Use this link to Upload Physical and Consent forms to Aktivite](#)

[Instructions HERE for Aktivite.](#)

- [Physical Form](#)
- [Consent Form](#)
- [Insurance Form](#)
- [Concussion Form](#)
- [Cardiac Arrest Form](#)
- [Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct Star Schools Pledge](#)

Parent GroupMe link: [GroupMe](#)

Athlete GroupMe Link: [GroupMe](#)

2026 Tentative Bearden Track Meet Schedule

***Schedule is tentative and subject to change.**

***Student-Athletes are responsible for their own transportation to and from meets.**

If unable to find transportation, please notify the coach well in advance of a meet.

Track and Field Head Coach: Matthew Eckert, matthew.eckert@knoxschools.org

2026 Tentative Bearden Track Meet Schedule

| Date | Track Meet | Location | Arrival Time | Race Times |
|---------|---|--|--|--|
| 2/26 | Track Kickoff Banquet | Cafeteria | 5:30pm | 5:30-6:30 |
| 2/28 | East Tennessee Jamboree | Farragut HS | 8:30am | Field 9:45am Track 12:30pm |
| 3/7-15 | Spring Break | Practice | 9:00am | |
| 3/20-21 | Karns Invitational | Karns HS | Friday: 4pm Field: 8am Track: 11am | Friday: 5pm 9am Field Events 12:00pm: Running events |
| 3/24 | ECCA | Eagleton College Career HS Maryville | 4pm | 5pm |
| 3/27-28 | Hardin Valley Invite | Hardin Valley HS | Friday(4pm) Relays Sat: 8 am | Friday:(5pm) All Events: 9am |
| 4/3-4 | Oak Ridge Legends | Oak Ridge HS | Friday: 4pm Field: 8am Track: 11am | Friday: 5pm 9am Field Events 12:00pm: Running events |
| 4/11 | Farragut Invite | Farragut HS | Field: 8am Track: 11am | 9am Field Events 12:00pm: Running events |

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|----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 4/16 | Sabota Classic | Karns HS | Throwers Only 4pm | 5pm |
| 4/17 - 4/18 | Vol Classic | UT Knoxville | 4pm 9am | 5pm 10am |
| 4/20-21 | Section 1 Decathlon/Pentathlon | Jefferson County | 9am | 10am |
| 4/21 | Webb Invite | Webb Academy | 4pm | 5pm |
| 4/27-28 | KIL | Hardin Valley | 4pm | 5pm |
| 5/9 | Section 1 AAA | Hardin Valley | 10am | 11am |
| 5/13-14 | State Decathlon | Hardin Valley | 8am | 9am |
| 5/21 | State Meet | UT Knoxville | TBD | TBD |

Apr 20-21 (MON-TUE) 10AM Section 1 Pent/Decathlon @

May - (THU-FRI) TBD State Pent/Decathlon @ TBD

-Schedule subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

-Some meets have limited entries, qualification and other requirements so not all will participate.