

# Texas Conference Pathfinders

## How to run Pathfinder Leadership Training

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### Big picture planning:

In the TX Conference, every 3 years, PF Leadership Training is done in one location for the entire Conference, and all the AYMT tracks (or just about) are offered. The other 2 years, leadership training is held in each area.

### Picking a date:

- Usually, the dates for the following year's training are chosen at Conference Joint Council Meeting in Jan/Feb. The dates chosen then can be changed, but it's good for everyone to stay in touch with when the other areas are doing their training, so resources can be shared.

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- In general, Leadership training should take place in late-August or September timeframe. This allows the new directors and staff to attend, and is still early enough in the PF year that the information is useful.
- Traditionally, Leadership Training has taken place on one weekend (Sabbath and Sunday). There are other options, however, that might fit your area better. Below are the pros and cons of two options that we've tried so far.
  - One weekend
    - Pros: Easy to schedule for attendees (one weekend, then done), gets the event over at once
    - Cons: It can be difficult to organize and start on time when people are coming from church. Finding a location can be difficult, since so many churches use their facilities all day on Sabbath.
  - Two Sundays in a row
    - Pros: Sundays often have fewer conflicts than Sabbaths, making finding a location easier, and attendees may have fewer conflicts.
    - Cons: two weekends are taken up, will people remember to come to both days?

### Picking what tracks to teach

- The AYMT curriculum includes several tracks – the Basic Staff, and then specialized tracks for various roles in the Pathfinder ministry.
- Basic Staff should be taught every year, and is targeted for new staff members. It's designed to give a little bit of information in all areas (planning, teaching, organization, etc).
- Director is another common track. It goes into more detail about how to run a PF club.
- Instructor focuses on the details of how to teach honors, how to get through the investiture books, and how to best connect with the students.
- Staff Leadership track focuses on how to select, motivate, and lead your Pathfinder staff and volunteers.
- All tracks should be taught separately in English and Spanish (not one class where the material is translated)
- TLT training often takes place at the same time/location as leadership training. Work with your area and conference TLT coordinators. Each area should offer training for first year TLTs, returning TLTs, and TLT Mentors.

### Picking a location

- You'll need to find a location that has enough rooms for every track you're teaching. For example, if you're teaching Basic Staff, Director, Instructor, and TLT, you'll need 9 rooms (2 for each staff track, one each for TLT Basic, Advanced, and Mentor).
- A church or school in a central location to your area can be a good choice, as long as it has a sufficient number of classrooms big enough to hold everyone. While not necessarily required, it is also good to have a space large enough to hold the entire group for opening/closing.
- Remember to send a request letter to your desired location as soon as possible, to reserve the dates. Make it clear what part of the facility you will use, how many tables and chairs will be required, A/V equipment you want to use, specific support from the church members (deacons, etc), and any other specific information you think is relevant.

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## Registration and advertising

- Once you know the date, location, and which tracks you'll be teaching, set up a registration form for attendees.
- Make sure the registration process is available both to individuals and to a group. Some churches will want one person to register their entire team (so they only have to pay once), and others will want individuals to sign up themselves.
  - Leadership training should be open to everyone/anyone who wants to attend, including people from other areas/ministries. Make sure the opportunity is available to everyone.
- Decide how much you will charge for the event. The trick is to find a balance between making the training affordable, while also making sure that the Area's expenses are covered. The cost should take into account the following items: all materials (printing handouts, binders, etc.), gift for attendees (if applicable), meals, and cost for renting the facility (or love/thank-you offering).
- Send the registration form to the standard email distribution list, but also ask the MG and ADV councils to send it out as well. Also consider sending it to the various church pastors/secretaries for posting and putting it on social media.
- Information to send out
  - Date/time
  - Location
  - Tracks being offered (including a short description)
  - Deadline for registering (needs to be enough time so that you can plan handouts and food accordingly)
  - Meal plan/expectation (be clear that meals are only for paying attendees)
  - Cost & how to pay
  - Only registered students will be allowed to attend, get the materials, and have meals
- Be sure to get the following info from each attendee:
  - Name
  - Church/club
  - Email address
  - Phone number
  - Track & Language they want to take
  - Payment

## Detailed Planning

### Selecting Instructors

- Teaching is different than preaching – it's important to find people who will engage the students, and not just lecture them.
- Suggestions for instructors:
  - PF Area Council Members
  - ADV and MG Council Members (remember that PF clubs are run differently than ADV and MG clubs, so consider carefully which classes you ask them to present. Ones that deal directly with how a PF club is organized and run may not be the best choice, unless they have experience running a PF club)

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- Other PF Area Council members (from other parts of the conference)
- Local Pastors can do a great job with some classes, particularly those that have to do with working with the conference, dealing with parents/volunteers, or PFs as a ministry.
- Local church members with specialty areas, who are also good at explaining things.  
For example:
  - Teachers or Counselors are great options for the Education classes! (learning styles, teaching styles, etc)
  - Medical personnel or Social Workers can teach Risk Management
  - Leaders in church or work can teach leadership skills, conflict resolution, etc.

### Laying out the lesson schedule

- Every class should be scheduled for 1.5 hrs, with a short break between classes. That allows time for the material to be covered, an activity or discussion, and questions from the students.
- The AYMT flows are outlined in the flow (available at <https://www.pathfindersonline.org/leaders/aymt-training/564-aymt-checksheets-portfolios>) in a recommended order. It is possible to change the order as needed, but keep in mind that some classes naturally follow others. For example, in the Instructor track, there are general classes, followed by practical seminars on the same topic. It doesn't make sense to have the Practical or Workshop before the general seminar.
  - EDUC 200 "Teaching Investiture Achievement: Intent and Organizations" should come before EDUC 210 – 214 "Practical applications for teaching Investiture Achievement".
  - EDUC 230 "Teaching AY Honors, General Introduction" should come before the Seminars on teaching specific honors.
- If time and location allow, it's a good idea to have a short opening/closing service to both give instructions for the weekend and thank everyone for attending.
- For each track, make sure that someone explains the additional requirements to complete certification at the beginning and end of the event, and include ways to follow up with the students to make sure they are completing the homework (other than Basic Staff, every track requires work to be done throughout the PF year before certification is complete).

### Materials & Supplies

- For the students:
  - Binder: Every student needs a notebook/binder where they can take notes and hold the sign-off paperwork. Aside from the Basic Staff track, all tracks require some homework throughout the year before certification is met, so give your students a way to hold that information.
  - Pen and extra paper
  - Copies of any handouts
  - Sign off sheet for their specific track
  - Cover sheet for their specific track
  - Schedule of classes for the weekend
  - Meal tickets
  - Students will want a copy of the presentations! Determine the best way to do that for your group. We do NOT recommend letting the students get copies from the

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instructor at the end of each lesson, as it takes too much time and disrupts the flow of the event. Potential options include:

- Print out the presentations (requires you to have all the information in advance), and can cost a LOT of money
- Provide the presentations on a flash drive (requires you to have the presentations in advance, or have someone updating the drives during the event)
- Provide a link to where the presentations can be found online, either on a website, or on Dropbox or another file-sharing program.
- **IMPORTANT:** use the registration numbers to determine how many binders to make. Additionally, you'll want 10-15 additional copies of each track to allow for last minute changes.
- For presenters:
  - Projector & screen in every room for AYMT tracks (check with the TLT coordinator to see if they need one, or are providing their own)
  - Laptop in every room, to show presentation
  - Water bottles, snacks
- Other items:
  - Signs for each room, to say which track is there.
  - Tape
  - Pens (to sign forms)
  - Sharpies
  - List of Registered students
  - Name tags for attendees and presenters
  - Receipt book / petty cash box (for registration fees)
  - Gifts / thank you cards for presenters

### Gift/food

- You'll want to provide at least one meal for all attendees for each full day of training.
- Make sure to account for the meal cost when you decide how much to charge each attendee. Food costs are usually \$4-\$5 per person.
- When deciding on a menu, make sure it's easy to distribute (consider pre-packaging meals into bags/boxes), and quick to eat. Menu should be vegetarian, with consideration for vegans.
- Meals should only be offered to paying attendees and instructors. Meal tickets are a good way to make sure only attendees are eating.
- It's also usually a good idea to give a gift to the attendees. Cost should be \$10 or less, and is covered by the registration fee.
  - Gift ideas include things that can help the club, or things the student can use when working with the club (water bottle, lunch box, backpack, etc)
- Gifts should also be given to the instructors, and a good practice is to also give a thank you note signed by your council members.
- Gifts will need to be ordered several weeks prior to the event, to make sure they arrive in time.

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## During the Event

### Registration

- Registration is the worst part of the entire event – people are anxious to get in, afraid they will miss something, want to change what they registered for, etc, and will often be difficult to work with (such as blaming you or the website for any mistakes/misunderstandings). Make sure you have calm, friendly people working the table, as well as at least one Area Coordinator or designee who has the power to make decisions. Treat everyone fairly.
- You'll need multiple people working the registration/sign-in desk.
- Items to give attendees at the registration desk: binder for the appropriate track, meal tickets, gift, schedule, pen, name tag.
- Have a spot for instructors to check in and receive their nametags, gift, and any additional information.
  - Generally, instructors should be allowed to attend other classes without paying, although they will only get the materials if some are left over.
- Recommend two registration lines for students: one for “no changes from on-line registration”, and one for “changes required”.
  - The No Changes line will have people sign in, pick up their binder, meal tickets and gift, and then go to their first location.
  - The Changes Required line is for anyone who wants to change which track they are part of, someone who wasn't registered wants to attend, or attendees want to trade (someone isn't coming, so someone else takes their place).
- You should also have council members mingling with the folks waiting to register, to make sure they go to the right line, and answer any questions.
- Have a plan for people who need to pay on the day of (late registrants). If on a Sunday or Saturday night, you can accept cash or credit cards. If on Sabbath, work out a plan to make sure you get the money after sundown. **MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW UP!**

### Welcome

- Depending on time, you can have an “opening ceremony” for everyone attending. That's usually a good opportunity to welcome everyone, explain the overall plan for the event, and have opening prayer. This isn't required, as you'll still need to have an opening discussion in every track that you offer.
- For the Track Opening, someone will need to go over the following items:
  - Review materials in binder
  - Review the schedule for that particular track
  - Explain how students can get the presentations (Dropbox, website, etc)
  - Explain how lessons will be signed off (when it will be done, and by whom)
  - Explain the homework to be done throughout the year. It's important to make sure students know that there is more work to be done!

### During the Classes

- Designate people to keep an eye on the bathrooms and general areas, cleaning up as necessary
- Designate timekeepers, who will let the instructors know when the end of the class is approaching, and then when time is up. These timekeepers can also help sign sheets after the class.

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- At least one council member should always be in the general/common area to answer questions, work issues, etc.

### Closing

- At the end of the track, have someone review the following items:
  - Make sure all classes have been signed
  - Review the homework, and share ideas for how to accomplish it (and who can say it's complete)
  - Provide info on how to get the presentations and lesson materials
  - Closing prayer
- If time allows, you can consider having a joint closing ceremony. Thank everyone for coming, have closing prayer. Another idea is to give away prizes via drawing: extra patches/pins, PF manual, etc. Make sure only people who attended the full session are eligible for the drawing.

### After the Event

#### Be thankful

- Send thank you email to all instructors
- Send thank you letter and love offering to the church/school you used for the event
  - Historically, HBA has given \$500 to a church as a love offering for an event that went the full day. For a weekend or 2 Sundays, you may want to give more (\$800, as a suggestion).

#### Follow up

- Send out link to the presentations/materials.
- FOLLOW UP ON HOMEWORK TO MAKE SURE FOLKS ARE DOING IT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.