



Expectations, Policies, Records and Schedule for the 2024 Season

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to develop young men and women of integrity who strive to be the best they can be personally, academically, and athletically. We encourage athletes to live in a way that helps them (and their teammates) to meet their goals both in life and on the Cross Country team. We will represent Blaine High School in a positive manner and will display sportsmanship in all circumstances.

Blaine High School Cross Country Rules and Expectations

Contact information

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Captains: Xander Jund, Davis Haller, Grace Erickson, Oscar Aguilar, Sydney Kalina

All of the following must be on file in the athletic office prior to any Cross Country participation:

*Physical exam not older than 3 years on record with the school

*Paid participation fee (or waived fee for free/reduced lunch) and online registration.

Athletes MAY NOT participate in other 5k races during the Cross Country season. This could result in disqualifying you for the whole season.

Daily Rules and Expectations

- At practice start time (2:30 - 3:00 for HS depending on weight room days) you must be dressed and ready to practice. Middle School athletes will begin at about 3:20 and do core/abs after running instead of before. Meet in the wrestling room.
- Work schedules should be arranged around our practice schedule. Being in a high school sport requires a commitment and this is part of that commitment. **Do not miss practice for work.**
- School day practice ends at 5:00. If an athlete needs to leave early, which should be rare, a **parent note** will be needed to excuse the athlete early.
- NO use of cell phones/cameras in locker rooms. This is a VERY important rule.
- Anytime an athlete goes to the doctor during the season, the doctor must send a note either clearing or excluding the athlete for participation in Cross Country. This applies to ALL DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS.
- Workouts are assigned by your coaches and should be completed as assigned. Yes, they can be hard! That's what makes you better. Do your best and do not sit out of workouts just because they are hard. Push yourself to be your best! Also, you should not do unassigned workouts on off days.
- When the weather gets cooler, **athletes must have long pants to run outside in any temperature below 40 degrees.** This is because we care about your health and the health of your muscles.
- If you have an unexcused absence prior to a meet, you will not run in the meet. Each unexcused absence=another missed meet. A note from a parent stating that you **slept through practice** does NOT count as excused. Coaches will check the attendance list the day before each meet.
- **If you miss a practice or a meet, your parent/guardian must sign a note or send an email explaining the absence. If it is excused, you will not be penalized for the absence.**
- If you are absent the day of a meet, please notify Coach Everson or Coach Otto through sportsYou or email so that we know that you won't be there.
- Captains and other upperclassmen are expected to be positive leaders at all times.
- We will meet as a TEAM with coaches before leaving each day. Do not leave before stretching.
- **In the past, the soccer team hosted a +1 workout where they invited our athletes to their practice. Cross Country athletes are not allowed to participate in this activity if it happens again this year.**

Meet Expectations

- Athletes are **expected to ride the bus** unless an extreme situation arises. This will only change if we do NOT have a bus for a given meet. This did not happen at all last year, so **PLAN TO RIDE THE BUS.**
- Athletes are expected to stay for the entire meet and ride the bus back to school. If a family needs to take a student home after a meet for a family function, this **MUST** be arranged at least the day before.
- Be prepared at meets. Bring: **water, healthy snacks/meal, uniform, watch, warm up clothes (Appropriate for weather! Be aware of the weather!), spikes, training shoes, and schoolwork.**

Meet Rules

- Be in front of the field house before the bus arrives. We will leave on time.
- Help carry the tent and other supplies to the bus, especially when asked by a captain.
- Keep 4 seats in front of the bus for coaches and supplies. (2 seats per bus if 2 buses)
- Walk/jog the course **as a TEAM** upon arrival. This will be done together; don't start on your own!
- Know when your race starts and be at the starting line on time.
- Encourage teammates during all races.
- Begin your warm up 35-40 minutes before your race with your group (not alone), stretch and stay warm and ready to run. Warming up and cooling down alone or with competitors is unacceptable.
- Right after your race, return to camp and coaches to talk about your race. When recovered, run a 10-15 minute cool down with teammates **before** going out to visit spectators.

TEAM Philosophy/Expectations

Many people consider cross country to be an individual sport. This is far from the truth in the great cross country TEAMS. One of the most important parts of our sport is the TEAM that is created and nurtured within the 10 weeks of our season. The cross country TEAM can truly feel like a family if the right amount of care and attention are given to building a TEAM. Individual accomplishments are great, but the encouragement and strength in a TEAM are much more important. We play, run, celebrate, and grow as a TEAM each day and each week. Encouraging your TEAMmates lifts them up and creates relationships within the TEAM that can last a lifetime.

Contribution to the TEAM

Every individual makes his or her own contribution to our TEAM. Some of you will be on our varsity squad by the end of the season, others will be recognized as the most encouraging TEAM members or maybe those who can make you smile or laugh even after a tough race. Each of these characteristics is vital to the success of the TEAM as a whole. Be willing to learn about your running and to improve yourself throughout the season. We all have room for improvement in one or many aspects of our running.

Below are some of the things we, your coaches, expect from you every day:

1. **Do your best, every day!** We expect you to give 100% of what you have to offer that day. That might not be the same every day due to physical or other circumstances, but your best for *this day* is all we ask.
2. **Bring your TEAMmates up, not down.** When whining occurs in a sport like cross country, it can be very contagious. We expect you to encourage TEAMmates, help each other stay positive, and have a good attitude about what you're being asked to do. Positivity goes a long way!
3. **Take risks.** This sport is challenging! You will be asked to go out of your comfort zone. Don't be afraid to push your limits; extending your limits builds champions. Remember, if you want something you've never had, you have to do something you've never done.
4. This one is the most important: **HAVE FUN!** Running is fun (see pic below)!! The #1 answer given by high school students when asked why they spend so much time in sports is that it's fun. So let's make it fun! Every day we need to play and laugh with each other. Have fun with your TEAMmates and smile together, even if it's just a laugh over how many miles you ran this week. Racing and competing are great parts of this sport, but running and just enjoying the feeling of your legs flying along the trail or the feeling of the sun on your shoulders is really what brings us back every year.

Captains

Captains are expected to be positive leaders and to follow all team expectations and rules. Coach Everson and Coach Otto has met with all captains and given them detailed explanations and expectations of their role as leaders. If captains are not fulfilling the roles that have been laid out for them through meetings with the coaches before the season, they will be removed as captains. MSHSL Violations also result in a loss of captaincy (for 12 months).

Potential Captains

At the end of the 2024 season we will vote for captains for the coming season. In order to be eligible for a role as a captain, a junior must follow all team rules and expectations. If you are interested in becoming a captain for next year, please keep in mind everything the coaches have asked of you and behave this year as if you were already a captain (in terms of your actions and team interactions). This includes warming up and cooling down with the team every meet and staying with your team after racing as well as encouraging your teammates. Treat this season like your audition for a captain role in 2025!

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement in a high school sports team is an essential part of having a great team atmosphere with fun events. We would like to outline how we hope Bengal CC parents can be involved in the team and also when the team/athletes need to be separate from parents.

Ways Parents can be involved:

1. Host a carbo load! Can be catered at BHS Cafeteria (if available) or done however you wish in your home. Team up with another parent or two to make this easier financially and logistically!
2. Bring snacks to a meet for the team: There will be a sign up for this as well. We would love for the kids to have healthy PREPACKAGED snacks for meets. Ideas are: granola bars, crackers, fruit snacks, whole fruit like clementines, water, low sugar sports drinks (Vitamin Water Zero, G2, Powerade Zero, Aspire)
3. Come to the meets and cheer for your athlete and his/her teammates! Kids love to hear their names or Go Bengals! Encouragement is essential during a cross country race.

Parents/Spectators at meets:

1. Cross Country meets are a ton of fun for spectators! Plan to come in comfortable shoes and clothes so that you can run around the course to cheer for your athlete and their teammates. There are no limits on spectators this year, at least as of now. Bring the whole family!
2. **Spectators are not allowed at the team camp area/tent.** This is a team area and is for team members and coaches only. Stay in the spectator areas around the start, course, and finish area, please.
3. Please refrain from distraction of athletes from **arrival at the meet** until after they have talked to their coaches and **completed the group cool-down**. Yes, this means don't bug them while they're warming up. It also includes texting. Think of it this way: Does a football team allow parents on the field during the warm ups before a football game? Allow your athlete to focus and prepare by giving them space.
4. We expect the groups who race together to cool down as a TEAM and this does not happen if all the runners go their separate ways immediately after racing. Thank you for helping us make this TEAM vision happen. Your athlete will be ready to visit with you after their cool down is complete!

Expectations for Athlete/Parent/Coach communication (per district/school policies):

1. Be a great encourager. Encouragement is the biggest thing high school athletes say they want from their parents with regards to sports! A great question to ask after a race is how they feel about their result.
2. If there is an issue that an athlete needs to address, the athlete should talk to the coach directly. Let your athlete learn how to advocate for himself/herself in this way-it's a hugely important life skill that lots of American teenagers miss out on due to parent "help".
3. Help your athlete prepare for conversations with coaches if issues arise, but don't step on his/her toes in talking with coaches. If we are unable to resolve the issue, we will certainly involve parents at that point.
4. Please avoid giving your athlete **strategies for racing** that might contradict what a coach has told them. We expect our athletes to follow the training plan and to employ race strategies that we discuss as a team.

Message for athletes and parents:

Endurance sports are particularly demanding and require paying attention to recovery and regeneration. Training for cross country requires a disciplined approach to doing the little things in between workouts that will prepare athletes for the next bout of work. Nutritious eating habits that include complex carbohydrates, lean proteins, and healthy fats are crucial for fueling a high school cross country runner. Athletes should be taking on water throughout the day to stay hydrated. Make sure to bring a full water bottle to practice. Sleep is when the body rebuilds itself to prepare for the next workout. Set a bedtime routine where you can go to bed at the same time every night and get a restful 8-9 hours of sleep.

Lettering Standards

Lettering Philosophy

Lettering in a varsity sport at Blaine High School is a great accomplishment. Being a participant in a sport does not automatically mean you will earn a letter. It is a privilege to letter, not a right. If you do not earn a letter this year, you now have a goal for next year! Lettering places you in a select group of individuals. There are many accomplishments that can be achieved throughout the season by all athletes, regardless of whether or not they will earn a letter. Set your own goals and watch yourself grow this season!

Category 1

*Athletes must meet **all** standards in Category 1 before they earn a letter:*

- *Show good school citizenship
- *Achieve at least 90% attendance for practices and meets
- *Contribute positively at practices and meets
- *End the season in good standing with coaches
- *No MSHSL Violations during the season

Category 2

In addition to the above criteria, athletes must meet one of the following standards:

***Sections:**

Run on varsity (7 runners) for the **section** meet at the end of the season.

***Time Standard (must run standard twice in a season):**

Boys under 18:00 for a 5K

Girls under 21:45 for a 5K

***Coaches' Discretion**

Due to injuries or other extenuating circumstances the coaches have the right to award a letter to deserving athletes.

***Seniors**

Any senior who participates in Cross Country for 3 or more consecutive seasons earns a letter as long as they meet all requirements in Category 1.

****Coaches have final say for all letterwinners.****