



RHS BOYS CROSS COUNTRY AND TRACK & FIELD TEAM PHILOSOPHY AND RULES

TEAM PHILOSOPHY

The goals of the Ridgefield High School Boys Cross Country and Track and Field Teams are to provide young student-athletes with:

- the knowledge of the benefits of fitness and teamwork.
- the confidence to overcome difficult and adverse challenges in life.
- the understanding of the planning and determination required to make and meet successful goals.
- the opportunity to compete with a successful team at the intensity of their choice.

As with most athletic endeavors, the sport of track and field requires a year-long commitment. It is not required that the athlete trains year-round; however, it is highly recommended that the athlete takes no more than six weeks off from training throughout the year.

Although athletic success is one of our main goals, there are many other respectable goals for the athletes on the team to strive for. Respect, patience, integrity as well as countless other intangible benefits can and should be acquired through participation in this sport. In other words, even though how fast one runs is important, one will be respected for other forms of personal development.

REQUIREMENTS AND FORMS

The following forms are to be submitted to the RHS Athletics Department:

1. Physical Examination Form
2. Parent-Student Agreement Form
3. Participation Fee Form
4. Emergency Treatment Consent Form

In addition to these forms, both the parent and the athlete must read the following before practice begins:

5. Philosophy and Rules Form (Below)

PRACTICE AND PARTICIPATION

As communicated above, constant and consistent conditioning is extremely important in keeping an athlete fit. Any absence or lateness, excused or unexcused will make it difficult to compete safely and at a high level. Therefore, failure to attend practice will result in suspension from participation in competition, ineligibility for post-season awards, and the dismissal from the team. **This sport is expected to be one of your highest priorities.**

- Practice will be held every Monday through Friday and will begin at 2:30 P.M. Practices will be held every Saturday and will begin at 9 A.M. unless otherwise noted.
- Athletes are expected to participate in the entire practice. Athletes leaving before the practice has concluded will receive one-half of an absence.
- Only students who are absent from the normal school day will be excused from practice. All excused absences will be verified with the attendance office.
- Athletes are expected to communicate all injuries and illnesses to the coaches. Every injured or ill athlete will receive plans from the trainer in order to aid recovery. **In most cases, injured or ill athletes are still expected to attend practice if they are present at school.**
- All commitments involving other sports, clubs, vacations, doctor appointments, extra-curricular activities, and employment should not interfere with practice. These will not be excused.
- We encourage all athletes and parents to schedule college visits during the off-season. In the event that a visit must occur during the season, the athlete must communicate this as soon as possible.
- Information regarding missed practices or competition should be communicated by the athlete.
- Academic commitments, including teacher conferences, extra help, and test make-ups, should be scheduled before or during school. In the event that a student must use practice time to clear up academic issues, the student must notify their coach ahead of time and come with a pass from the teacher.
- Late arrivals equate to one-half of an absence.
- Athletes are allowed two unexcused absence per season.
- Athletes with three absences will be suspended from the following competition.
- Athletes with additional absences will be suspended one meet for each absence.
- Athletes with five or more absences will be dismissed from the team.
- Athletes with more than two absences during a winter or spring vacation will be suspended from the following meet. School vacation absences will not count towards the overall amount of dismissals.

- It is the responsibility of the athlete to communicate absences and punishments to their parents.
- Athletes who miss a competition without communication will be dismissed from the team.
- Athletes who do not participate in a scheduled invitational will not be scheduled for other invitationals.
- Athletes who qualify for postseason meets must attend all practices and arrive on time or they will be dismissed from the team.
- We do not allow athletes on the team who do not plan to compete.

Varsity Awards and Captains

Being a member of the varsity team is an honor and an achievement; it will take hard work, consistency, and determination to reach this goal.

- Varsity letters will be given all athletes who accomplish the following:
 - qualify for the FCIAC championship meet.
 - attend every practice.
 - show responsibility in tracking progress including mileage, times, and goals.
 - demonstrate passion and enthusiasm for the sport.

Captain status is reserved for those seniors demonstrating the highest level of leadership and integrity.

- Captains will be voted by the athletes on the team and confirmed by the coaching staff and Athletics Director.
- Captains must abide by the "Captain's Pledge" as described in the *RHS Athletics Handbook*.
- Captains must understand that their role as a leader is **a year-long commitment**.
- Failure to meet these expectations may result in the removal of captaincy.

Off-Campus Running Safety

- Distance runners typically run off-campus one to four days per week depending on the season. Some sprinters may run off-campus once per week.
- While running off-campus, all athletes are expected to run, according to state law, single file, against traffic, and with a reflective armband or belt.
- Athletes are to use extreme caution while running in the following locations:
 - The "S" turn approximately ¼ mile west of RHS on 116 (use shoulder on west-bound side)
 - Crossing Ridgebury from Mopus Bridge (use trail on north-bound side)
 - On Ridgebury near Ledges intersection (run on south-bound side)
- Approved routes include: Mamasasco, Old Sib, Hunt, Mountain Lakes Park, Hill Top, 116 to Norton, Wallace, Vail, Finch, Spring Valley, Mopus Bridge, and portions of Ridgebury. Please see team web site for a list of routes.
- **Parents may elect to have their sons stay on-campus.** Please communicate this choice to Coach Kovalsky.

Miscellaneous Rules and Expectations

- While running off-campus, all athletes are expected to run single file, against traffic, and with a reflective vest or belt.
- All athletes are expected to behave with respect and sportsmanship towards teammates, opponents, coaches, parents, and officials.
- The Cross Country and Track programs do not participate in or support dressing up beyond a shirt and tie or warm-up gear.
- All athletes must travel to and from competitions on the bus unless an alternate transportation form has been submitted to one of the coaches.
- The school policies concerning hazing, smoking, and alcohol and drugs will be strictly enforced.

Uniforms

*We take the collection of uniforms very seriously. Uniforms are expected to be taken care of and returned promptly at the conclusion of each season. **Failure to do so will result in a \$160 obligation.***

Parent Information

*Parents, please note the section, entitled "Parent Information," in the *RHS Athletics Handbook*. Please observe the list of appropriate and inappropriate issues to discuss with a coach. Inappropriate issues include questions about qualifying for the varsity team, inclusion in competitions, and the selection of captains. All other expected communication has been briefly outlined above. Please feel free to communicate with me additionally via email (bkovalsky@gmail.com).*