**Lansing Modified Cross Country**

**Policies & Procedures**

Welcome to modified cross country! You are joining a team that will focus on setting individual and team goals and will work hard to achieve them. Our team is committed to being our best selves and to supporting our teammates in a challenging and fun atmosphere.

**Academics**

You are a student athlete. It is your responsibility to keep up with your schoolwork and to remain in good academic standing. Use your time wisely and remember: student first, athlete second.

**Alcohol and Drugs**

Alcohol, tobacco, and drug use are strictly prohibited. Not only is their use in violation of school policy (and the law!) but their use explicitly counteracts the goals that we are trying to achieve. Team members must refrain from the possession, consumption, purchase, or sale of these substances and should not attend any function at which there is underage use of these substances.

**Communication**

Communication with coaches is extremely important. Coaches are here to guide you and want you to be successful.

1. Modified athletes are expected to communicate directly and in writing with coaches when they will be absent, late, or need to leave early.
2. Athletes need to inform the head coach know ASAP if you will not be available for a meet because of a conflict. More than one week notice is appreciated.
3. You should keep the coaches informed of anything that may affect training including but not limited to:
   1. knowledge of an upcoming absence from practice
   2. any injury or concern about a possible injury
   3. conflicts within the team or with other athletes
   4. academic problems
   5. any other issue that may keep you from performing to your potential.

**Practices and Attendance**

School-year practices are Monday through Friday. Generally, practice will be Mon-Thurs from 3:30 until 5:30 and Friday from 3:30-4:30. Read weekly emails for details on practice times.

A special note about cross country training: distance running requires that we practice off campus, on both local roads as well as trails.

* Athletes must run on the left side of the road with no more than 2 people across at all times (moving to single file when a car approaches).
* As the days grow shorter, athletes will be required to wear reflective vests and/or Lansing XC hats on the road.
* When on trails, athletes should not block trails or run in packs that block trails, and they are expected to wear their Lansing XC hats when on the trails.

Please review the following attendance requirements carefully.

1. Practice begins at 3:30. Modified athletes are expected to be dressed and ready to walk as a group by **3:15.** Unless otherwise notified, coaches will expect modified athletes to arrive at the track, as a group by 3:30. Attendance will be taken.
2. If you cannot be at practice, you must communicate this in writing to a head coach. Acceptable absences are illness (absent from school), a family emergency, and school sanctioned events or trips.
3. If you are unable to run as a result of an injury, you must communicate with the coaches directly to determine a plan for your practices while you recover.

**Sportsmanship and Personal Conduct**

Your conduct and attitude are a reflection of you, your family, coaches, teammates, and school. Represent them all in a positive, sportsmanlike manner with excellence and integrity. No one person is above the **team**. Everybody on the team is important and deserves your **respect**and **encouragement.** Unsportsmanlike or disrespectful conduct will not be tolerated and repeated offenses will be grounds for dismissal from the team.

1. Have a positive attitude and support, encourage, and congratulate your teammates.
2. Respect others. Listen when coaches are speaking. Demonstrate respect for instructions from coaches and officials.
3. Respect yourself. Reflect on your own conduct and performances as you would that of a good friend.
4. Follow directions. Be efficient with your time. Practice should be productive.
5. Always display good sportsmanship to other teams. Congratulate and encourage your competitors. Respect their effort. Take the opportunity to extend your hand in friendship.

Failure to uphold these expectations will result in the following action steps:

1. Verbal warning by a coach
2. Removal from the exercise and/or practice
3. Suspension from one or more practices and/or competitions
4. Meeting with athlete, coaches, parents, and/or athletic director

**Cross Country Meets**

Participation in meets is our goal and reason to practice. You are expected to attend every modified meet! Generally, everyone will compete, but some meets are limited in the number of entries or are by invitation only.

1. Athletes are expected to travel on the bus to dual meets.
2. Athletes are expected to stay at the meet until the team cooldown and stretch is completed.
3. Athletes may travel home from meets with their parents if the parents have spoken directly to the head coach. Parents will have to check athletes out at meets with the head coach.
4. Do not be late for the bus. The scheduled departure times are carefully planned to allow enough warmup time for the team and for coaches to attend mandatory meetings. Bus departures will be prompt.
5. All athletes will do the initial course walk and team warmup when we arrive at a meet (including our home meet) and will participate in the team stretch at the end of the meet.
6. During a meet, you are expected to cheer for your teammates and help teammates however you can (collecting their warmups, waiting at the finish line, offering encouragement).
7. At a meet, you may not pull yourself from the start line unless you receive permission from a coach. You may not leave a meet before the completion of the final race unless you have received permission from the head coach.
8. Athletes receiving an award must wear their team warm ups or jersey, or a T-shirt with the school name on it while receiving their award.
9. Meets, especially invitationals, are several hours long. Plan to bring appropriate attire and plenty of water and healthy snacks. Before the first meet, the team will discuss meet day nutrition.

**Injuries**

You may have some aches and muscle soreness at different points in the season; this is to be expected and is a natural response to new physical challenges. Persistent muscle soreness and any sharp or sudden pains, however, can be a problem or may lead to other problems.

Any ache or pain should be communicated to the coach. It will then be determined if the ache or pain is a natural outcome of training or if further investigation by the trainer or your doctor is needed.

1. Athletes are expected to communicate all injuries to the coaches before going to the trainer.
2. Athletes unable to practice or compete should discuss a practice plan with the coaches.
3. Athletes who have been restricted from practice and competition due to injury must provide a letter from their doctor before resuming practice free of restriction.

**Equipment and Implements**

Good running shoes are a must for the season. They will help you stay injury free. *If you need assistance procuring running shoes, please speak with a coach. We have vouchers and donated shoes available.* In addition:

1. Please dress for the weather. We will be outside, we live in central New York, and you will need to bring clothing appropriate for whatever Mother Nature throws at us, be it hot, cold, rain or snow. This means hats and gloves/mittens in the cold and planning to bring layers on most days. It is always recommended that you bring extra layers on meet days.
2. Water bottles and running watches are required at all practices and meets.
3. Athletes will be issued a singlet and meet shorts as well as team warmups. *These are for meets only.*

**Goals**

Athletes will set short term goals and long term goals for the season. Goals should be realistic, specific (a time or mark), and progressive (build upon each other). Make sure they are based on your training and fitness level at that time. Your coaches will work with you to set goals.

Both the boys and girls teams also will set team goals. Team goals give us a sense of unity and purpose.

You will have to ask yourself if you are willing to make the commitment to achieve your goals and the team's goals. Are you willing to show up for practice each day to work hard? Are you willing to make sacrifices and go outside your comfort zone? Do you look for ways to better yourself and your teammates? If each person on the team makes these commitments, the season will be limitless.