

Lansing Varsity Cross Country Policies & Procedures

A cross country team is comprised of athletes who are dedicated to the process of setting goals and striving to achieve them, both as individuals and as a team. We are a team that 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. Successful athletes excel at time management and work to achieve both academic and athletic goals. 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.

Captains

Captains are selected by the coaches. Nominations are gathered from the team. The invitation to accept the title of captain indicates an athlete's willingness to be held to higher standards of judgement and leadership than other members of the team and also to uphold the responsibilities laid out in the captain's roles and responsibilities handout presented upon being invited to be a captain. An athlete who is invited to be a captain may decline this title and remain an important part of the team. An athlete who accepts the title of captain may have this title revoked if standards of leadership or captain's responsibilities are not upheld; the athlete may still remain an important part of the team.

Communication

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

- 1) Varsity 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 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:
 - a) knowledge of an upcoming absence from practice
 - b) any injury or concern about a possible injury
 - c) conflicts within the team or with other athletes
 - d) academic problems
 - e) any other issue that may keep you from performing to your potential.

Practices and Attendance

A practice schedule is distributed and discussed each season. Practices are mandatory. At times, you may be asked to run or cross-train on your own. Distance running requires consistent training to be undertaken safely and successfully. Practices are intended to help you achieve your best and are an essential part of upholding your fitness as an athlete as well as your commitment to the team. You need be at practice.

A special note about cross country training: distance running requires that we practice off campus, on both local roads as well as trails. It is imperative that athletes maintain high standards of safety and courtesy when running! While on the road, athletes should 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 their 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. All health and safety protocols related to COVID-19 are also expected to be upheld on and off campus.

Please review the following attendance requirements carefully.

1. Athletes are expected to be on time, dressed and ready to practice when each session begins. 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 in writing to a coach. Coaches and athletes (and parents and medical professionals, if necessary) will determine if athletes should attend practice or complete recovery/rehab at home. This is a decision to be made together and through communication. Please do not decide on your own that you should or should not attend practice due to injury.
4. Attendance at practice is essential to generate improvements in performances and fitness as well as to avoid injury. Furthermore, absences affect the team as a whole. We are a small group that relies on each team member to be present, physically and mentally, as we challenge ourselves and each other to put forth our very best effort daily.

Sportsmanship and Personal Conduct

Athletes are ambassadors. 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 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 your teammates and coaches. Listen when coaches are speaking.
3. Respect yourself. Reflect on your own conduct and performances as you would that of a good friend.
4. Conduct yourself with a sense of purpose and urgency. Complete workouts to the letter. 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

Generally, everyone will compete, but some meets are limited in the number of entries, availability of bussing, or are by invitation only.

1. Athletes are expected to travel on the bus to meets. Approval from the athletic director must be given at least 24 hours in advance for a parent to transport an athlete and/or an athlete to drive him/herself to a meet.
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. An athlete who will be transported home by anyone other than his/her parent/guardian must have received written approval from the athletic director at least 24 hours in advance.
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. These types of injury will dissipate with rest that is built into the training program. 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 attend practice unless they are receiving treatment for their injury. You can help at practice, support teammates, and work to develop goals or complete your physical therapy homework.

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. Spikes are the only meet apparel not provided. They are not required but will help your performance. If you need assistance procuring running shoes or racing spikes, 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.*

No-Cut, but...

Lansing cross country is a no-cut sport, which means that no one will be dropped from the roster due to ability level. However, our team mission is to hold ourselves to standards that enable us to achieve our best. Athletes will be expected to demonstrate a high level of commitment. This is a team for athletes who want to increase their skills, extend and push their limits, compete in a sportsmanlike manner and be a member of a team that sets individual and collective goals and works hard to achieve them.

Goals

Athletes will be encouraged to set short term goals and long term goals for the season. Set standards that will push yourself and better yourself. 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? Do you recognize that it's not pressure you feel on race day, but *responsibility*? Will you fight for those places not just for yourself but for your teammates? And will you celebrate your teammates' successes as if they are your own? **If each person on the team makes these commitments, we will achieve great things.**