

Cross country Team rules

Dear Athletes and Parents,

Welcome to the Garfield Heights High School Cross country Program! The coaching staff feels this may be one of the most influential and positive times in your life. We are looking forward to an enjoyable, fun, and successful season. We have assembled an *Athlete's Manual* with *Team Rules* so that you will have a clear understanding of the expectations the coaches have for you as an athlete and a parent.

We have published this set of rules, expectations, and policies that will apply to ALL Garfield Heights girls & boys cross country Team members. It is the responsibility of the coaches to establish, enforce, and apply all team rules to all athletes. If you have any questions about the team rules feel free to contact a coach to discuss your questions. Disagreements over team rules and policies should be discussed with the coaches in a one-on-one discussion. Complaining about and showing disrespect for team rules and policies during practice, or in group situations will NOT be tolerated.

The pages that follow in this packet contain the *Athlete's Manual* and *Team Rules*. We ask that both the athlete and his/her parent(s) read over the entire manual together. It is the responsibility of the athlete and parent(s) to read the rules and guidelines stated in this manual prior to the season. We ask that once you both have read the manual thoroughly that you sign an agreement stating you agree to the rules and guidelines set forth.

This Athlete's Manual is a guideline to help achieve our goals for the season. Remember that your attitude, desire, commitment, and teamwork are going to make a difference this year. By following the rules and guidelines set forth in this manual this season can be enjoyable and successful for everyone!

Sincerely,

The Garfield Heights 2013 Girls & Boys Cross country Coaching Staff

GENERAL CONDUCT

Student athletes at Garfield Heights must keep in mind that they are always in the public's eye.

Their personal conduct, on and off the field, is always subject to scrutiny of fellow teammates, fellow students, teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, fans, opponents, and the media. Student athletes have a responsibility to serve as positive role models and representatives of the Garfield Heights Area School District. In order to succeed in that role a student athlete should:

1. Show respect for authority, property, and peers at all times
2. Maintain academic eligibility throughout the season
3. Follow ALL team rules
4. Practice the ideals of sportsmanship, team loyalty, and fair play

A WINNING ATTITUDE

Striving to be your best is an important key to succeeding in all aspects of your life. Winning is an admirable goal. However, experience has shown that true victory rarely comes if the ideals mentioned above are not the top priority. Winning without having the proper perspective is a hollow victory at best. Track & Field is a great sport, but it is only a game. Strive to develop the winning mindset that will make you successful in ALL aspects of life.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory at all practices and meets. Attendance will be taken on a daily basis at ALL practices and meets. Times listed for practices are the starting times. Athletes are expected to be in proper apparel, and ready to go at the stated times. If there are changes to the practice schedule, the coaching staff will inform all athletes in advance. Athletes should be dressed, and ready to go at the stated starting time. Arriving late without a legitimate excuse is NOT tolerated. You are responsible for you - BE ON TIME!

Athletes must provide a written note from a parent, employer, doctor, or other responsible adult in order to be excused from practices and meets. Written excuses must include:

1. The date of the practice or meet you will be missing
2. Reason you will be absent
3. Signature of a parent, employer, doctor, or responsible adult

Athletes should try to notify the coaching staff in advance of any practices or meets they will be missing. If it is not possible to contact the coaching staff before the absence, the athlete must provide a written excuse upon returning to practice.

If an athlete is absent from school on a day when there is a regularly scheduled practice or meet, that athlete is NOT eligible to practice or participate in a meet on that day. This is the policy of the Garfield Heights Schools. NO exceptions will be made.

The coaching staff understands that situations may arise that prevent athletes from attending practices or meets. In those events, the coaching staff appreciates as much advance notice as possible so that they can make adjustments to team rosters as needed.

Attendance will be kept for ALL practices and meets. All absences and late will be kept on file.

"Late" is not being dressed, on the field, and ready to practice at the stated start time.

Unexcused absences and lates will be dealt with by suspending players for events and/or meet(s). Three (3) unexcused absences will result in a suspension. More than three unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the team, at the coach's discretion. Three late will count as one unexcused absence. This does not mean the athlete is to use the three absences as a "day off". If this is found to be the case, the athlete can be dismissed from the team immediately.

EXAMPLES OF EXCUSED ABSENCES ARE:

1. Death of a family member or close friend
2. Doctor Appointment
3. School related functions
4. Religious Functions
5. Illness

EXAMPLES OF UNEXCUSED ABSENCES ARE:

1. Work
2. Dance/Karate
3. Concert and Dinner Excursions

If you are unsure whether an absence will be considered as excused, check with the coaching staff. Remember, we as coaches put our time in to the program and we expect the same from you as an athlete. It is not the intent of the coaching staff to prevent athletes from attending necessary appointments. However, the coaching staff is responsible for knowing the whereabouts of all the athletes at all the times during practices and meets. Communication is the key in making this possible. **Athletes coming late to or leaving practice early must have a written note from a parent.**

PRACTICE SCHEDULE AND TIMES

(Monday – Friday)-- 7:30 – 10:am during the summer August 6th

(Monday- Friday) 2:30 to 4:30 when school starts

(These times are subject to change. They may be extended, and at times be shortened, only with advance notice.)

Practice is to be taken seriously at ALL times. The way you practice reflects the way you perform!

The coaching staff will try to integrate fun and enthusiasm into practice times. Athletes must come prepared with appropriate gear and appropriate attitudes to get the most out of practice. Garfield Heights has a "NO JEWELRY" policy. All athletes must remove all jewelry in order to participate in practices and meets. This includes necklaces, rings, earrings, and other pierced body parts. Failure to remove jewelry prior to practice will result in extra conditioning.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

1. To be eligible for Interscholastic Sports, a full time student must pursue a minimum four-year program as outlined in the Garfield Heights High School Program of Studies.

2. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of the grading period and shall be reported on a weekly Basis.

3. A student must be passing a minimum of five (5) credits and be eligible for promotion to the next grade level in order to participate in Interscholastic Sports.

4. In the event that a student is not passing the 5 credit minimum, they will be ineligible to participate in contests for a period of one (1) week. Ineligible students may practice with the team.

The coaching staff will receive weekly updates from the school office. Students whose performance is approaching the "Endangered List" may have their participation reduced at the discretion of the coaches until satisfactory academic achievement is demonstrated.

SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE

The use of drugs, including alcohol, by students - is illegal. The use of these substances by students in the Garfield Heights Cross country Program is strictly forbidden. Players using drugs or alcohol, in or out of school, are subject to discipline as outlined in the OHSAA hand book. In addition, players using drugs and alcohol will be immediately suspended from the team.

Students must meet with the coaching staff in order to be reinstated to the team. Subsequent offenses will result in immediate and permanent dismissal from the team and the student will be referred to the High School Student Assistance Program for further evaluation.

The use of tobacco products is also covered in the OHSAA hand book on substance abuse.

Tobacco products have been proven to be detrimental to one's health and are not consistent with the goals of the Garfield Heights Track & Field Program. Athletes that use tobacco products will be subject to discipline as outlined in the OHSAA hand book as well as disciplinary actions by the coaching staff.

DRESS CODE

Students are, and will be representing the Garfield Heights cross country Team at ALL meets, home (if any) and away. Athletes will be expected to maintain and exhibit a well groomed appearance at all times. Athletes will be expected to show up on the team bus wearing their team issued uniforms and warm ups. **Practice Apparel:** Each athlete is required to wear RUNNING SHOES, SHORTS, TOPS, & SWEAT PANTS to practice. Sweat Pants will be worn for warm-up, stretching, and drills every day regardless of weather. FAILURE TO BRING SWEAT PANTS WILL RESULT IN A WARNING. ADDITIONAL INFRACTIONS WILL RESULT BEING SENT HOME TO GET THEM. **Meet Uniforms:** Team uniforms & sweats are to be worn at all competitions. Athletes are expected to step off the bus wearing sweat top & bottom! Sweats shall remain on at all times before and after your races! This is important for warming-up, mental focus, team unity, & intimidating our opponents. Under NO circumstances are team uniforms or sweats to be worn at any other time! DO NOT WEAR UNIFORMS OR SWEATS AT SCHOOL! FOLLOW WASHINGIN STRUCTIONS

BEHAVIOR

Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will NOT be tolerated at any times. Any athlete that becomes a negative influence on the team through their behavior will be dealt with in the following manner:

1. Verbal warnings will be given to athletes asking for improvements in their behavior. No explanations are necessary. Discussions about the incident are most appropriately addressed one-on-one with the coaching staff after practice or the meet.
2. Athletes will be given a separate activity for inappropriate behavior. Athletes will not be allowed to re-enter the original activity until approval by the coaching staff.
3. Conferences will be held with the athlete, coaching staff, parents, and others as needed to evaluate the problem as well as the athlete's future role with the team.
4. Athletes can be suspended from the team for an indefinite period of time for inappropriate behavior. Length of suspension will be the coach's discretion.

*** Each incident will be handled on an individual basis and will not be subject to discussion! ***

EVENT SELECTION AND PARTICIPATION

Selection of athletes for events will be based on several factors including knowledge, ability level, attitude, sportsmanship, team spirit, as well as other aspects of track & field. ALL grade levels (9th - 12th) are eligible to compete in a maximum of four (4) events per each meet. Verbal feedback will be given by the coaching staff during practice sessions regarding athlete's performances. These comments are designed to be constructive and challenging and are only offered as ways to help athletes improve their skills. The coaching staff will be asking athletes to put forth their best effort. If at any time you are confused or questioning why you were placed in a particular event - do not hesitate to talk with a member of the coaching staff privately before or after practice or meets. Parents should NOT come to the coach to question event placement - ONLY athletes.

The coaching staff has final authority over the event(s) each athlete participates in.

Factors that the coaching staff will consider when adjusting event placement are as follows:

1. Grades and scholastic performances
2. Attendance and performance at practice and meets.
3. Athletic ability and event skills
4. Attitude and sportsmanship
5. Interaction with the team and coaching staff
6. Time trials
7. Competitive event challenge

VARSITY LETTER REQUIREMENTS

Achievement of one of the following automatically earns Letter Award

30 points earned in league competitions

SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship is an essential quality that all athletes need to possess and practice. Poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated and will be addressed by the coaching staff. Guidelines for good sportsmanship include:

1. No cursing or swearing, on or off the field of play (punishment of additional conditioning)
2. Respect your fellow teammates, coaches, and volunteer staff (Trainer and Athletic Directors)
3. Respect your opponents. Shake hands after events and show appreciation for others.
4. Never argue with the officials, other coaches, or competitors. Never argue with the coaches in public. One-on-one meetings and discussion regarding team issues are welcome.
5. Flagrant fouls will NOT be tolerated.

TRAVEL

Garfield Heights school district will provide suitable transportation in authorized school vehicles for all athletes, support personnel, and coaches to all away meets. Travel guidelines are listed:

1. The head coach, in conjunction with the bus driver, will assume responsibility for conduct and discipline on the bus.
2. All athletes must be at the point of departure on time. Athletes will be dismissed from classes 15 minutes prior to departure time. This time is to be used to collect everything needed for the meet and to make your way to the bus. It is NOT time to be used for socializing.
3. Athletes that miss the bus and then travel to the game using their own transportation will NOT be permitted to participate in the meet.
4. Food and drinks will only be allowed on the bus after the bus driver gives permission.
5. The coaching staff is responsible for making sure that the bus is left in a clean state after the team leaves the bus.
 - a. For every piece of trash that is left on the bus – athletes will encounter additional conditioning during the following practice.
 - b. If trash continues to be a problem, food and drinks will NOT be permitted on bus trips.
6. All athletes are representatives of the Garfield Heights and are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.
7. The emergency door on the bus is to be used only in times of emergency unless authorized by the bus driver.
8. Athletes will show respect for the host school by cleaning up benches before leaving.
9. **All students must return home on the bus provided by the school. Exceptions will only be granted to athletes who secure a signed document from the Athletic Director. *Travel releases need to be secured several days in advance - not the day of the meet. Plan Accordingly!***

EQUIPMENT

Each person on the team will be issued uniforms. Priority in selecting for uniforms will be given as follows.

Uniform Selection Order:

1. Senior Returning Letter Winners
2. Junior Returning Letter Winners
3. Sophomore Returning Letter Winners
4. Senior Non-Returning Letter Winners
5. Junior Non-Returning Letter Winners
6. Sophomore Non-Returning Letter Winners
7. Freshmen

All equipment issued by the school will be treated with respect and taken care of by the athlete. Each athlete will be asked to sign a receipt for their equipment, which will list all of the equipment they received and the condition it is in.

Athletes will be held accountable for the equipment they are issued. Athletes must pay for any lost equipment or equipment repairs due to carelessness or neglect. Normal wear and tear does not count. Athletes that are unsure about problems with any of their equipment should contact anyone on the coaching staff. Athletes that do not pay outstanding balances for equipment replacement or repairs can have any track & field awards and high school diplomas withheld until payment is made.

Some equipment is the personal responsibility of the athlete. All athletes must supply their own running shoes, event spikes and/or flats.

Athletes are required to bring all of the proper equipment for a meet to practice when applicable. This includes running shoes, warm-ups, practice shorts, undershirts, socks, etc. The coaching staff reserves the rights to spot inspect any athlete's equipment to ensure that athletes are prepared for practices and meets.

Athletes are to be responsible for keeping track of their own equipment and belongings. Any clothing, equipment, books, homework, audio gear, food, etc. left after practices or meets becomes property of the coaching staff and will be put in the lost and found collection. Items can be purchased out of the lost and found by paying a small fee. You may only purchase back your own belongings. Any fees collected during the year will be used to benefit the team in some way.

GARFIELD HEIGHTS ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

In addition to the above team specific rules, all athletes and parents are required to follow and obey all school athletic and student activities code of conduct. Please be sure to also read and go over the code of conduct understanding that you will also be held accountable for knowing them as well!

PLEASE CUT THIS PORTION OFF, FILL IT OUT, AND RETURN IT TO THE COACH!

I, _____, the parent of _____, an athlete on the Garfield Heights High School's Track & Field Team has received a copy of the code of conduct *and Team Rules* from the coach. We both have read over and reviewed the code of conduct and *Team Rules*. Both my child and I understand and agree to the rules set forth and understand that it is important to follow ALL rules and procedures stated in the code of conduct. We also acknowledge the fact that it is the coach's responsibility to implement ALL rules and procedures stated in the code of conduct and team rules. We also understand that it is important as a parent and athlete to promote and follow ALL the rules and procedures stated in the code of conduct and team rules.

X _____
(PARENT'S SIGNATURE)

X _____
(ATHLETE'S SIGNATURE)

X _____
(DATE SIGNED)