

## ARLEE HIGH SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY

**Welcome to Arlee Cross Country!** We're looking forward to another great cross country season. Whether you are running to compete or just to get in better shape, our goal in the cross country program is to improve student fitness and confidence through exercise. Runners are expected to come to practices and meets ready to work hard and have a positive attitude.



### Contacting Coach Sproull

My school phone number is 726-3216, extension 2402. My e-mail address is [bsproull@arleeschools.org](mailto:bsproull@arleeschools.org). You should already have my cell phone number. Feel free to text or call me with questions at appropriate times.

### COVID Precautions

- We will meet outside the High School doors for each practice.
- Masks are encouraged at the beginning and end of practice, but not while we run as long as you are careful.
- Runners absolutely must social distance at all times during practice (at least 6 feet apart.)
- Avoid spitting while running. Do not share food/drinks/clothes with other runners.
- Do not attend school/practice if you feel sick or fevered.
- Masks will be required for students before the start of each race.
- Teams will be separated at the beginning of meets. From there they will be called to the starting line in small groups. Runners will keep their masks on at the starting line until the race starts.
- Runners must stay at least 6 feet away from other runners during races. As soon as you finish the race you must go straight to your team's area.
- Bystanders must also social distance while viewing races, and are not allowed to linger near the starting/finish lines.

### Requirements before Practice

- You must have your **physical** turned in to the office before you can practice.
- You also need to turn in all forms from the **sports packet** and to purchase an **activity pass** before you can participate in a meet. If paying for the pass is not possible, then talk to me.
- By MHSA rules, runners must have **10 cross country practices** before they are allowed to race.

### Other Sports

- Football and volleyball players are invited to join us for races. If there is a football or volleyball game on the same day as a cross country meet, the student decides which to go to.
- Football and volleyball practices unfortunately do not count toward the 10 required cross country practices. Therefore, these players need 10 practices with the cross country team before racing.

### Practice

- **Meeting Place:** Before the first day of School we will meet in front of the High School. After School has started we will meet in Mr. Sproull's room at the High School stage near the old gym.
- **Times:** Students must be changed out and ready to run by 10 minutes after school gets out. Practice ends between 5:15 and 5:45.
- **Attendance:** For the first two weeks, we will practice Monday through Friday. After that, practices will be Monday through Thursday. Practices will run regardless of weather conditions (with the exception of lightning or excessive smoke.)
  - Students must regularly attend practice each week to attend meets.
  - If a student is absent and excused from school (especially for illness) they are not expected to attend practice. Students who miss practice on a school day when they are absent and unexcused will be considered unexcused for practice.

- Students who must miss practice need to contact me ahead of time. I will verify the absence with parents/guardians to excuse the student from practice.
- **Locations:** We practice in and around the town of Arlee. Usually we run along the nature trail, the walking path along the highway, on Couture Loop or at the community center.
- **Practice Distances:** 3 to 6 miles long.
- **Tutoring:** If you would like to attend tutoring I respect that you are making your grades a priority. A runner who attends tutoring will remain on the team, but will not attend races until they return to regular practices with the team. Runners who become ineligible during the season will be required to attend tutoring in place of practice every school day until their grades have recovered.
- **Detentions:** Runners who have detention after school need to tell me by the time practice starts. Runners may then run a practice when they have finished detention. If they choose not to run after detention then those students will be considered absent and unexcused from practice.

## Meets

- **Distances:** Races are 3.1 Miles (5 KM) long.
- **Terrain:** Most races are either on golf courses or along nature trails.
- **Scoring:** Cross country is an individual sport and a team sport. Scoring varies by class but usually the team with the 5 (Class AA, A, B) or 3 (Class C) overall fastest runners wins the meet. A runner's score is the same as their finishing place (a runner who finishes in 4<sup>th</sup> place earns 4 points for their team.) The team with the fewest total points wins the meet.
- **Number of Runners:** Some races have only a couple dozen runners; other races will have hundreds of runners in one race. Some races combine boys and girls while others don't. Some schools hold varsity and JV meets while others have everyone run together.
- **Meet Behavior:** Students represent our school at meets, on the bus and in practices. This means being respectful to other runners and coaches, and avoiding disruptive behavior. Runners need to support their teammates, and are therefore not allowed to leave the site of the meet until all high school races are over and they have been signed out. Exceptions will only be made if arranged before the day of the meet.
- **Eligibility:** To continue to run in cross country races after each grade check, runners must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA and have no F's in any of their classes.
- **Travel:** If the meet is not on a school day, all team members are welcome to ride the bus to and from the meet with us (assuming their paperwork and physical are completed.) If runners are going to miss school in order to go to the meet then the rules are different. Runners who have frequently missed practice or have not run 10 practices will not be allowed to ride with the team. Runners who are not able to race will not travel with the team on a school day.
- **Checking Out of Meets:** Students who ride the school bus to the meet are strongly encouraged to go home on the bus as a team. If necessary, students may ride home with their parents/guardians, but must have filled out a **transportation release form** at least 24 hours before the race. Students can only be checked out by adults who have been listed in the release form in the sports packet.

## Varsity/JV Policy:

- The top seven runners of each gender will be considered varsity runners. All others will be considered junior varsity. This will be determined by practice results before the first meet.
- After the first meet, the top seven runners from each meet will be the varsity runners for the next meet.
  - This means that a runner who misses a meet will not necessarily run as a varsity runner in the next race. The only exception will be if students miss the previous race due to an extreme family emergency (hospitalization, funeral, etc.)
  - Students who lose their varsity spot due to injury need to earn it back by finishing in the top 7 at their first race back from injury.
  - If two students have nearly equal race times, and only one can make the varsity team, then seniority, attendance and attitude will be the deciding factors to determine who makes varsity.

- These rules will generally apply to the State meet, where only varsity runners and an alternate will be able to attend. An exception may be made if a runner who has ran varsity for most of the season is injured and misses the meet before State, but recovers in time to run at State. In that instance, I might allow that runner to return to run in the varsity race for the State meet. Upperclassmen would be given special consideration in circumstances like these.
- Runners may also be demoted from varsity due to extreme or repeated behavior issues including:
  1. Rude behavior or poor sportsmanship during a meet or practice,
  2. Frequently unexcused absences from practice or school,
  3. Becoming ineligible,
  4. Leaving meets or practice without checking out,
  5. Dangerous behavior while running (disobeying traffic laws). Violations like these will also be considered if a student is at risk of being removed from the cross country program.

## Gear

- **Uniforms:** Remember to bring them to meets! Each athlete will be assigned a uniform for the season and is expected to return it in similar condition after their last meet. Any lost or damaged uniforms will be paid for by the student.
  - At races, students who wear spandex leggings under their shorts that extend below the knees must wear the same color of spandex as their teammates. The spandex must be one solid color.
- **Jewelry:** Jewelry is not allowed unless it is for religious purposes, in which case it must be taped down.
- **Water bottle** - Keep hydrated everyday – especially at races. Drinking both water and sports drinks before and after running greatly helps a runner's performance.
- **Running Shoes** – Most sports shoes will work but ideally racers use trail-running shoes (lightweight low-tops that bend well at the ball of the foot and have good tread for trail running.) Avoid spikes unless you are certain that the course does not include pavement.
- **Watches** – Digital watches are not required but are encouraged for tracking practices. GPS watches are great for practice but not allowed at races because they can disrupt the electronic timers at the meet.
- **Sunscreen** - Especially for those who burn easily. Keep in mind that meets last for hours.
- **Cell Phones** – Students are allowed to practice with their phones for emergency use or to listen to music as long as they are aware of their surroundings. Practice is not the time to have phone conversations or to text or engage in any form of social media.
- **Clothing** – Have rain jackets and warm clothing ready – the weather at practice and meets can get nasty.

## Lettering:

- All runners who participate at the State Meet will letter.
- All girls who complete an official race in 32:00 minutes or less and all boys who finish a race in 26:00 minutes or less will automatically earn a letter.
- Runners who improve their meet time by at least 20% between the beginning and end of the season.
- Runners who have participated in Cross Country for 3 or 4 complete seasons and have not yet lettered.
  - Runners must finish the season on the team to be considered eligible for a letter.

## Health and Nutrition

- **Injuries:** Moderately injured students are still expected to come to practice to support their teammates. I can always use help with recording times and other administrative duties. Injured students who cannot run in races are welcome to come with us to meets on non-school days as long as they continue to regularly attend practices and help out. Injured students that do not continue to attend practice will not be allowed on the bus to attend meets.

Looking forward to a great season - Coach Sproull