

## **BENSON/KMS BOYS & GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY TEAM PHILOSOPHIES**

The philosophy of the boys & girls 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade Cross Country team is to provide for every runner the opportunity to develop, improve, and experience success as a runner. Each athlete will be given the opportunity to contribute to and help promote the success of the team. As coach I seek to provide an environment in which athletes can practice and develop personal characteristics such as dedication, perseverance, discipline, teamwork, and a respect and care for the well-being of themselves and others. I challenge and encourage each athlete to work hard while having fun with their teammates. My hope is that every athlete will develop in character and develop a love for running, both of which can have life-long benefits.

### **VARSITY TEAM**

In Cross Country, the varsity team consists of the top (fastest) 7 runners on the team. The coach will look for consistency in times, but athletes need to understand that this can vary from race to race. Coach will most often take the top fastest runners to run in the varsity race depending on prior performances. When a decision needs to be made between two runners, the coach will look at prior times and how consistent those times are. Every athlete (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) has an opportunity to fill the varsity squad.

### **JV TEAM**

All other runners on the team will run in the JV race unless they qualify for the Jr High race. If a JV runner out runs a varsity runner with a faster time they may be eligible to run varsity the next meet. If they consistently out run a varsity runner they will run on the varsity team.

### **JR HIGH TEAM**

Jr High runners, most often 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade, run together in shorter distance races as they may not have yet developed the stamina for the longer races. Jr High runners who have demonstrated the ability to perform at the varsity or JV level will have the opportunity to compete at that level.

## **BENSON ATHLETIC HAZING POLICY**

1. Benson has a ZERO TOLERANCE for hazing.
2. No student, athlete, teacher, coach, or volunteer shall plan, direct, encourage, permit, or engage in hazing.
3. Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions of hazing.
4. This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours.
5. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline and/or take appropriate action against any student, athlete, teacher, coach, or volunteer who has violated this policy.

### **PENALTY FOR HAZING**

Students and athletes participating in hazing may be required to forfeit participation in one half or more of the season in which he is she is participating. This penalty is at the discretion of the school administration and the coach.

### **DEFINITION OF HAZING**

"Hazing" means committing an act against a student or coercing a student into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person in order for the student/athlete to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose. The term hazing includes, but not limited to:

- Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, or placing a harmful substance on the body.
- Any type of activity such as sleep deprivation, confinement in restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental health or physical health or safety of the student'.
- Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental health or physical health or safety of the student.
- Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student/athlete to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.
- Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing will report the incident to the coach or school administration. There shall be no retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report of hazing. Any retaliation shall result in further punishment.

## BENSON/KMS CROSS COUNTRY TEAM POLICIES

1. Minnesota State High School League rules apply to ALL athletes.
2. Maintain good academic and behavioral standards in school.
3. GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP & RESPECT is expected and should be demonstrated on and off the course. Please remember you are representing Benson & KMS High Schools. Take pride in yourself, your school and your team.....your actions affect all.
4. Athletes must attend at least 10 practices before they can compete in a meet.
5. You are EXPECTED to be at every practice and on time. If you cannot attend practice or a meet, notify the coach ahead of time. Unexcused absences are not acceptable. Just because the coach understands your absence does not necessarily mean it is excused. Athletes may contact the coach via phone or cell, but ahead of time and in person is preferable.
  - a. 1<sup>ST</sup> unexcused absence, some extra work will be assigned
  - b. 2<sup>ND</sup> unexcused absence, will be a 1 meet suspension
  - c. 3<sup>RD</sup> unexcused absence, coach's discretion with possibility of being off team.
6. Being late for practice, may result in disciplinary action as well.
7. ALL RUNNERS must ride the bus to and from meets. If you choose to ride home with a parent, the parent must provide a signed note. Riding with a friend's parent is not an option.
8. All athletes are expected to remain at the meet until all races have completed and athletes are expected to encourage and cheer for their teammates.
9. On the day of a meet, you must be in school no later than 11:00 am and remain in school for the remainder of the day. All exceptions must be cleared by the head coach, athletic director and principal.
10. Conflicts, problems or concerns should be brought to the coach as soon as possible.
11. All athletes are expected to **BE PREPARED** for all types of weather! **ALWAYS** have appropriate clothing available (hats, gloves, sweatshirt, jackets, pants etc.) for practice and meets.
12. Athletes are prohibited from listening to iPods or cell phones during workouts. Some of the routes we run require crossing roads and I would like the runners to be as alert as possible.
13. Athletes are responsible for their own uniforms. All athletes are responsible to turn in school issued uniforms at the end of the season or they will be charged.

## LETTERING POLICY

- Compete at the Varsity level (finishing in the top 7 for the team) in at least 4 meets.
- Placing in the Conference or Section Meet as Varsity (top 7 for the team).
- Coaches discretion (above & beyond in team contributions such as leadership, attitude, and work ethic).
- Any violations of the MSHSL rules will disqualify you from receiving a letter.
- Managers are eligible to letter with Coaches discretion after their second year of managing.

Dear BKMS Cross Country Parents/Guardians,

I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to coach your sons and daughters. My hope is that they develop as runners, develop in character, and have a fun time doing it.

For those of you who are new to Cross Country, here are a few facts about the sport:

- Cross Country is competitive running on grass and dirt trails, usually in parks or golf courses.
- High School girls and boys run a 5K (3.2 miles), Jr. High can vary but often about 1.5 miles.
- Results are kept for individual places and team scores by adding the finish place of the top 5 runners of each team. The next two runners on the team are considered displacers. Seven can race in a Varsity race and everyone else can run in the JV race.
- Fans can watch the races any place on the course that you can get to without interfering with the race. Common courtesy is to stay off the greens at golf courses or any other places designated by the race managers.
- Fans should never run alongside a runner as this would be considered pacing and would disqualify the runner.

The purpose of this handbook is to establish the philosophy and policies of the Cross Country team. I want both athletes and parent/guardians to be knowledgeable about the expectations and standards of the team. In order to be a successful program and to allow a good experience for all involved we need the full support of the athletes and their parent/guardians.

Please sign this form to indicate that you have read and understand the philosophy and policies of the Cross Country program.

Thank You!

Sincerely,

Samantha VanHeuveln  
Head Coach, Boys & Girls Cross Country

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Athlete

Date

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Parent/guardian

Date