

2024 Dunwoody Cross Country Contract

It's not about how fast you can run. It's about how far you can push your team.

General Team Rules:

1. Be on time.
2. Be at practice.
3. No drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
4. Give your best in every situation.
5. Treat all of your coaches and fellow runners with respect [no matter your running level].

If you break them, it is grounds for removal from the team.

Team Policies and Procedures:

The following policies and procedures have been established to ensure the safety and success of every athlete on the Dunwoody Cross Country Team. As a no-cut sport, cross country welcomes runners of all skill levels who are willing to dedicate themselves to working on and improving their running technique, endurance, and speed. The procedures outlined in this document will be enforced by the coaching staff. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in a suspension from the team, inability to compete in meets, and/or expulsion from the team. *This contract will expire following the end of the 2024 Cross Country Season.*

Attendance:

Our time is limited, so any absence is a missed opportunity to improve. As such, attendance at all practices is expected and mandatory. Injured runners are still expected to attend practice. Practice will be held Monday-Friday. Mondays & Fridays, we will meet at 6:00am at the DHS Track. Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday we will meet at 3:40pm at the DHS Track. *Note: pending a hotter than normal fall, Monday practices will be flipped to 3:40pm beginning on the first Monday after Labor Day (Sep. 9th). Parents and athletes will be notified of this switch in the fall and updated should this plan change.*

Doctor's appointments and other commitments that result in a missed practice **may** be excused at the discretion of the coaching staff provided they are notified ahead of time with a note from a parent. Any unexcused absence will disqualify the athlete from competing in the next race and repeated unexcused absences will result in expulsion from the team.

Attendance at all meets is also mandatory unless excused by the coaching staff. Meet attendance means that all runners arrive with the team in advance of the first race and remain with the team through the last race. If a runner cannot attend a meet due to unexpected illness or family/school/religious event, the absence **may** be excused by the coaching staff provided the runner presents the coaches with a note explaining the absence at least **two days** in advance of the meet. Injured runners who cannot compete are expected to travel with the team to each meet and support the other runners.

Uniforms:

Athletes are expected to wear the Dunwoody High School Cross Country Team uniform to every meet they are competing in. This includes a racing singlet and shorts. On race days, wearing the uniform correctly includes tucking in the singlet and removing any jewelry (necklaces, earrings, bracelets, rings, and anklets of any kind. Finally, no athlete will be permitted to race wearing a watch of any kind. See “meet protocol” for further explanation.

Transportation

All runners must be picked up from practice no later than 20 minutes after the end of the scheduled practice time and no later than 30 minutes when returning from a meet. If a runner is staying at school for another reason (staying for a game, meeting, etc.), they must have a note to give to the coaches.

Practice Protocol:

The following policies apply to all Dunwoody Cross Country practices:

1. Attendance is expected and mandatory (see above.) If you are injured, you are still expected to be at practice. Bring your homework or a book. A running-related injury is not an excused absence from practice.
2. At all practices, runners must listen to the directions given by the coaching staff regarding pace, intensity, recovery times, distance, etc. Runners are expected to follow these directions as prescribed by the coaching staff. Failure to do so will impede the progress of the runner.
3. Runners must be aware of the need to hydrate in a consistent manner. A general rule is to drink one bottle of water (16-20oz) per class period every day. This will generally ensure the safety and success of runners at practice. It is not safe to run dehydrated in the Georgia heat. **Runners must come to practice with a full bottle of water every day.** Failure to do so will result in the ineligibility for that runner to participate in that day's practice. Please bring a reusable water bottle to cut down on waste products.
4. Running off campus is a privilege afforded to those mature enough to discipline themselves to do so. At any time, this privilege may be revoked by the coaching staff. For safety reasons, only runners who have proven themselves capable of completing our designated route for the day without walking will be permitted to run off campus. This is up to the coaches' discretion.
 - a. General off campus policies:
 - i. **Act Appropriately.** Be aware of everything you say and do when we are out in our community. You are representing not only our program, but the school as a whole. Even if you think no one is paying attention, people may still hear or see what you are doing.
 - ii. **Don't Try to Beat Traffic Lights.** Approach traffic lights with caution. Obey the walk/do not walk signals. Do not try to sprint across a light to beat it as it changes. Do not jaywalk, run into, or cut across streets. Act in accordance with all signs.).
 - iii. **Do Not Assume Cars Know What You Will Do.** Keep in mind that drivers may not see you or be alert to your presence. Not all cars yield at crosswalks or turn as they should.
 - iv. **Be Courteous.** We often share the roads and trails with other walkers, bikers, and runners. Give enough room for them to pass by safely, run in a single file line to allow more space, if necessary. Don't block paths or take up space unnecessarily when waiting at a stoplight. Call out to someone you're approaching from behind. Let them know you're there in a non-aggressive manner. (ie. “on your left”).

- v. **Understand Where You Are Going.** If you are unclear with the route, ask for clarification beforehand or stay with someone who knows where they are going.
 - vi. **Practice the Wildcat Way.** Be cheerful and friendly, greet everyone you pass with a “good morning” or “good afternoon.”
 - vii. Any other policy stated by a coach.
5. Light, loose running shorts and tops, running shoes and socks, and a wrist watch are **mandatory** on the Dunwoody Cross Country Team. Wearing jeans, hoodies, non-running shoes etc. to any practice disqualifies a runner from participating in practice on that day. A cheap (~\$10) wrist watch can be found at most large stores (Wal-Mart, Target, etc.).
 6. In the case of rain or inclement weather (without an afternoon activities cancellation from Dunwoody/DCSD), runners and parents should know that the varsity and JV teams will still meet. All runners should report to the overhang outside of the gym lobby at our normal practice times. A stormy afternoon does not count as an excused absence. See “attendance” policies. Parents and runners will be notified via remind no later than 1:30pm if practice has been canceled. No text = practice is still on.
 7. Any runner who fails to meet these expectations of practice will be warned. **The third offense will result in removal from the team.**
 8. Weekly practice schedule will generally follow this routine*:
 - a. Monday - Endurance/Stamina workout. It is imperative that runners arrive on time to Monday workouts as they are typically longer than any other workout we do.
 - b. Tuesday - Easy run. Mileage will vary. Should be completed at +1:30-2:00 of 5k race pace (ie. if you average a 6 minute mile in a 5k, you should complete this run at 7:30 - 8:00 minute per mile pace.) Core workout after the run.
 - c. Wednesday - Intervals workout. These will all take place in the afternoon. See the “hydration” section and know staying hydrated is especially important for Wednesdays.
 - d. Thursday - Long run day. Mileage will vary and paces are slower. Core workout after the run. So, expect Thursdays to be our longest practices of the week. We love running so we love Thursdays!
 - e. Friday - Race prep for runners competing in a Saturday invitational. Runners not competing will complete a workout similar to a Wednesday interval workout.
 - f. Saturday - Race day if competing. If not, run the same mileage and intensity as a Tuesday easy run. See “Meet protocol”.
 - g. Sunday - Rest Day. All runners are expected to not run on Sundays unless directly instructed to do so by a coach.

**This schedule is subject to change. For example, on weeks we are racing a Tuesday meet, practice will be adjusted for those competing.*

Meet Protocol:

The following procedures will be enforced at all cross country meets:

1. All runners competing in the meet must ride the bus to and from the meets. Everyone must be in front of the gym lobby at Dunwoody High School at the time indicated by the coaches. If another school or family commitment requires a runner to depart early from the meet in a separate vehicle, the runner must provide the coach with a written note explaining the need for early departure in a separate vehicle at least **two days** before the meet. All runners are expected to stay through all of the races in which

Dunwoody is competing on that day. If a meet is local to your home, please contact the coach to discuss riding with parents.

2. Runners must wear the appropriate uniform to every meet. See “uniforms”.
3. All runners are expected to conduct themselves appropriately on the team buses. Standing, screaming, hanging out windows, using offensive language, etc. will be addressed according to Dunwoody High School rules.
4. All runners are expected to help the managers and coaches load and unload the team buses and set up and break down the camp site. You are required to do so even if you ride with parents to and/or from the meet. With a large team, this should be effortless and efficient. If a captain asks you to complete a task of such nature, it is just like a request from a coach. **We will leave the location of our tent cleaner than how we found it.**
5. Runners who have finished their races or are waiting to begin warming up for their race are expected to stand along the race course and support their teammates. Runners who choose to spend their time sitting on their phones, playing games, listening to music, etc. at the tent are clearly not teammates and will be dealt with appropriately. Consequences include push ups, cleaning detail, leaves of absence, or removal from the team for consistent and flagrant disrespect to the Dunwoody Cross Country Program.
6. Soda and unhealthy snack food (see “Nutrition”) is prohibited on the buses or at the meets. It will be confiscated and runners may be prohibited from participating in that day’s meet. We strongly encourage a healthy snack following competition that is a mixture of protein and carbohydrates in order to promote quick recovery.
7. Runners are not permitted to wear a watch of any kind while competing in a race. Scoring for XC is based on place, not time. Runners are expected to be racing against opposing teams and not a clock.
8. If a runner cannot finish a race due to a medical emergency, they are to seek help from a volunteer or meet officials and find their way to the medical tent ASAP. Runners **must** wait for a coach at the medical tent. In short, if you cannot finish a race, it is expected that you are seeking medical attention. Fatigue is not an excuse for failure to complete a race.
9. All runners must respect the sport. Failure to give your full effort in a race, taunting other competitors, sacrificing your race to pace other athletes (including teammates) or any other behavior that demeans the sport or the athletes competing in it is automatically grounds for dismissal from the team.

Meet Placements:

To avoid any uncertainty regarding who will be running Varsity, JV, or Open races this season, the coaches will use following guidelines to determine meet placements. The coaches will enter the fastest times at the previous Saturday Invitational up to the entry limit for either the Varsity or JV Race. **All final decisions regarding meet placements are made at the coach’s discretion.** Meet directors specify entry limits for varsity races and the coaches will communicate this to the athletes.

- For example, the Warpath Invitational allows for 7 Varsity runners to compete in the Varsity race, 10 runners to compete in the JV race, and an unlimited number to compete in the Open race. So, the top 7 fastest times from the Milton Invitational (previous Saturday invitational) will be entered into the Varsity race and the next 10 fastest times will be entered into the JV race. All other runners will be entered into the Open Race.

This means that a Varsity spot is never guaranteed and must be earned every Saturday. It also means that any runner, in any race, can earn a spot on a Varsity Race at the next Saturday Invitational.

A Varsity runner who is absent for an extended period will be placed in the JV race upon their return. Any runner who is absent from practice unexcused or is tardy to two practices in a given week will not be permitted to race at the next Invitational. This includes morning practices.

This guideline applies to both the Sectionals Championship and potential State Team Rosters. The 7 runners who will run in the Varsity Sectionals race will be determined by the times at the previous invitational (Coach Wood). Again, coaches' discretion **may** be used in certain situations and will promptly and properly communicated to athletes and parents.

Summer Running Logs:

Summer training logs are to be handed out to the athletes at the Spring Interest Meeting. Runners are expected to follow the mileage/minute work loads to the best of their ability over the summer. Any runner that does not turn in a summer running log by the first day of official practice (July 31st) will not be permitted to run a workout, run off campus, or compete in a race before September 5th. **Honesty is most important for these logs.** The coaching staff needs accurate logs to ensure no runner is taking on a workload that could result in an injury. It is the opinion of the coaching staff that they would prefer a log full of 0s over a dishonest summer training log.

Good Standing Definition:

As a member of the Dunwoody Cross Country team, we expect you to be in good standing in order to participate and receive a varsity letter. Good standing is a fluid definition but relies upon athletes running the workouts/runs appropriately and as prescribed by the coaching staff, being present and on time to practice and meets, not leaving practice or a meet early without checking out, **maintaining a passing grade in all classes**, honesty in all communications with the coaching staff, and giving full effort in both practices and races. Engaging in behaviors contrary to our ideals will result in losing good standing. This puts an athlete on probation until they have earned good standing back. Probation prevents an athlete from earning a varsity letter and a permanent loss of leadership positions. Consistent appropriate behavior can earn good standing back at the discretion of the coaching staff: however, a second infraction will result in dismissal from the team.

Varsity Letter Information:

All of the following conditions must be met by an athlete to receive a Varsity Letter:

1. Zero unexcused absences at Practices or Meets
2. Less than three unexcused tardies at practices (this includes morning practices)
3. "Good Standing" conditions met

At least one of the following conditions must be met by an athlete to receive a Varsity Letter, in addition to the previous list:

1. Running in a Varsity Race at a Saturday Invitational, excluding the first Invitational of the year (Bob Blastow, Aug. 24th) or competing at Varsity County Championships/ Varsity Sectional Championships (See Meet Placements section).
2. Placing Top 10 Overall in any race
3. 5k time benchmark:
 - a. 18:45 for Boys
 - b. 23:00 for Girls

Injuries:

The single biggest reason for injuries is a lack of preparation over the summer. Running a minimum of 15 miles a week will almost guarantee a much healthier, successful season for all runners. Part of committing to a team is preparing for that team. Make the decision to be healthy by running over the summer. Injured runners are expected to come to practice/meets and assist the managers.

Nutrition/Rest Expectations:

As athletes, all runners are expected to follow nutrition guidelines as established by the coaching staff. A consistent low-fat, high carbohydrate, **iron-rich** (leafy greens, red meat, and/or an iron supplement is encouraged), and protein rich diet will best complement both practice and race routines while preventing nausea and other medical problems. As a meet approaches, all runners should especially adhere to this diet the day before a race. Being smart about nutrition and hydration is a very simple way to prevent unnecessary health problems and improve one's running ability. The coaching staff clarifies that they are not providing medical advice but simply encouraging a healthy diet for runners. Please speak to your licensed physician about any medical or dietary issues that may arise due to a running program.

As athletes, rest and recovery are extremely important to performing at a high level and preventing injuries. Dunwoody students are typically very involved and spread thin; however, it is important to understand that your body needs appropriate amounts of sleep. According to research, adolescent bodies need 8-10 hours of sleep even when inactive. It is understood that obtaining this much sleep is not always possible, but it is highly encouraged. As meet days near, getting a good night's sleep is very important for the two nights preceding the race. This means that Friday night football games can only be attended if the athlete leaves at halftime. This is especially important for varsity athletes.

Runners must be aware that during the season, they are prohibited from running any road race or other running competitions outside of the team schedule. This includes participation in outside running clubs as well as working with private coaches. Please be aware that Dunwoody coaches are working very hard to monitor your training, recovery, and races, and participating in additional competitive running can lead to overexertion and injury. Runners who violate these rules will face consequences.

Being Part of a Team

Runners should be committed for the duration of the Cross Country season. If a runner voluntarily leaves the team before the completion of his or her season, he or she will be declared ineligible to participate in Cross Country the following year. Any runner needing to try out for winter sports that may conflict with the Cross Country season will be worked with on an individual basis along with the other team's coach(es).

All runners are to listen to and act respectful toward all coaches and captains. Runners who question coaches' decisions or fail to follow directions given by the coaches OR the captains may be suspended from the next race. If the behavior continues, the runner may be dismissed from the team. Any player who puts their interests above the team's may be dismissed.

Final Notes:

All policies and procedures runners are expected to follow at school apply at all times including practice, parties, meets, or other extracurricular activities, even if they are not directly related to Dunwoody High School. **Any major infraction, including but not limited to the use of or possession of alcohol, tobacco or drugs, will result in immediate dismissal from the team at the coaches' discretion.**

Please be aware that aspects of this document are subject to change. The coaching staff reserves the right to edit, omit, and add to this contract within reasonable bounds at any point during the season. Parents and athletes will be notified of any major changes to the Dunwoody Cross Country Team's policies and procedures.

Parents, please review the above expectations with your child. Any questions can be directed to a coach before/after practice (**not at a meet**) or via email to Jonathan_Chriszt@dekalbschoolsga.org under the subject line "XC Contract Question".

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I have read the policies and procedures within this document and agree to follow them so long as I am a member of this team.

Student Athlete Name (Print): _____

Student Athlete Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Once signed, please return just this last page to the coaching staff to keep on record. Hold onto the rest of the document to reference.