



Cross Country

Dear New Trier Cross Country Parents,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well.

First and foremost, I want to express how honored I am to have been selected as the next head coach of the New Trier Boys Cross Country program. I am very much looking forward to leading this program, building on traditions of past head coaches, and sharing with your son my passion for running. I hope this letter will detail my vision for the program and provide some helpful information about the upcoming 2020 season.

As the head boys cross country coach, my *raison d'être* will be to maintain and enhance the program so that it develops runners and individuals who will represent the team, school, and your family with utmost respect and integrity. Moreover, the coaching staff and I want to create a memorable experience for your son so that he develops a passion for running and will want to continue the activity throughout his life.

Our team culture will ask your son to *buy-in* to our training philosophy and process, *work hard* during practice, in the classroom and sleep 8+ hours each night, and *grow as a runner and an individual*. Your son will be asked to *bring value and positive momentum* to practice every day and then race with a “never give up, never give in” attitude during competition. We will strive for excellence in everything we do collectively and as individuals. Together we will achieve great things.

Information about the upcoming season:

The first day of practice will be Wednesday, August 12th. This means we will have 12 practices before the first day of school on Wednesday, August 26th.

- **Our assumption is that EVERY member of the team will be present on the first day of the season.** Please note that our start date is actually two days later than dictated by the IHSA. **I believe, unequivocally, that missing days at the start of the season makes building camaraderie and teaching our training and ancillary principles more difficult for our program.** When athletes have trickled in late to the season they miss vital foundation work for a successful season and are therefore at a greater risk of injuring themselves. *Any reason your son will miss the August 12th start date needs to be communicated directly to the head coach with a phone call.* Thank you in advance for having your son at practice on August 12th so we can start our journey as one cohesive team!
- At least one week prior to the season, your son will need a valid athletics physical on file with the Health Services department & your family will need to complete the Athletics registration process.
- If your son has a summer job, employers are generally accommodating of our practice schedule if communicated well in advance.

Expectations:

- Cross country is a six day/week commitment.
 - The only days we do not have practice are on Sundays and religious holidays (in 2020, Rosh Hashanah falls on Sat., September 19th while Yom Kippur is on Mon., September 28th).
 - *Daily practice times for each level can be obtained by checking the Google calendar found on the New Trier Cross Country website* while meets can be found at trevisionschedule.org.
- Cross Country is a no-cut sport, which allows all athletes to participate, regardless of their ability level or athletic background. With that being said, our program requires your son to fully commit himself to the process of developing habits that will enable him to grow as an individual.
 - **Preseason Fitness:** Athletes should arrive to the season with a moderate level of fitness. It is our expectation that sophomores through seniors should be averaging *at least* 30 – 40 minutes

of running 5 times per week during the summer. Starting the season in poor shape puts your son at risk of avoidable injuries, something the coaching staff works very diligently to prevent. I strongly encourage signing your son up for the summer school cross country program. We meet daily (M-F) 6:30-8AM (slightly later end times for those who can do important ancillary work) from June 15th-26 & July 6th-24th at the Winnetka Campus. Our summer camp will aid your son in learning the Trevian way of training. This means he will develop his aerobic foundation while gaining strength and flexibility for a successful season this fall.

- **Behavior:** Again, athletes will be asked to buy-in, work hard, and get better. Athletes will also be expected to follow all team policies established by the head coach and respective level coaches, as well as strive to do their best during each workout session and meet. Negative behavior or attitude, poor effort, or walking will not be tolerated.
- **Post workout:** After each workout, all athletes are expected to do our stretching routine and core exercises together as well as shake a coach's hand before departing. The latter request is vital as it allows coaches to make sure all athletes have safely returned to campus following their workout.
- **Meet participation:** Athletes are expected to participate in every meet for which they are eligible.
 - In 2020, there will be a minimum of eight competitions for all athletes.
 - This includes the Oct. 10th Wheeling Invite for all grade levels during the four-day Fall Break weekend. In 2020, we will be sending all grade levels to the Wheeling Invite because the Rosh Hashanah holiday has resulted in the cancellation of an early season invitational.
 - For juniors and seniors, missing two (2) meets will result in the removal of the KW exemption privilege. For all athletes, three (3) missed meets will result in dismissal from the team.
- In terms of items for practice your son will need each day:
 - A new pair of **proper fitting running shoes** specifically for practice only. I strongly encourage taking your son to a running specific store, such as Dick Pond in Park Ridge or Road Runner in Wilmette. Selection of a shoe should be based on what is best for your son's foot. Trying on multiple brands is beneficial for comfort and fit.
 - **Sports watch** – GPS is helpful, but a Timex Ironman works great, too.
 - A **good nutritious snack** for after his workout will also enable your son to take advantage of the optimal 30 minute refueling window.

Our coaching staff recognizes that these requests may ask the athletes to make some difficult choices. However, the team camaraderie and resolve in difficult situations will only be strengthened when each athlete makes consistent effort, commitment and determination in our pursuit of excellence in everything that we do. We appreciate your respect and support of these policies.

I expect the 2020 season to be a fun and historic season for both athletes and coaches alike. Our schedule is included with this letter and an electronic version can be found at trevianschedule.org later this spring, so you can start making plans to attend meets, the sports information meeting and end of season banquet. I look forward to seeing you this fall. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give me a call at: 847-784-7636.

Sincerely,



Matthew D. Sloan

Head Coach Boys Cross Country, New Trier High School