STRATH HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL

BOYS CROSS-COUNTRY

TEAM GUIDELINES

MISSION STATEMENT

As a team, we firmly believe that when you commit to do the little things well, the big things take care of themselves. Just as a team is only as strong as its individual members, the success of those members is dependent on sustained commitment to shared goals. At Strath Haven, we seek to empower you to be the very best student-athlete you can be, confident that team success will necessarily follow.

- Guiding Principles - Team
- Guiding Principles - Individual
- Expectations for Coaches and Student-Athletes
- Rules for Maintaining Team Membership and Meet Eligibility
- Meet Transportation and Conduct
- Earning a Varsity Letter

GUIDING PRINCIPLES - TEAM

• We place sportsmanship, respect, honor and personal ownership as the cornerstones of the program.

• We aim to:

> Place among the top 3 teams at the Delco and Central League Championships and achieve a top 6 finish at the cross-country District meet so that we are perennial *team* participants in the State Championship meet.

• We will build a winning tradition through accountability, communication, leadership, support, diligent training, and competitive effort, thus providing the best team atmosphere possible.

• We strive to empower teammates, managers, captains, and coaches to fulfill their duties with confidence.

• We understand that with a focus on the team approach, we expect everyone to perform to the best of their ability in order to support and drive the team forward.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES - INDIVIDUAL

- Because the goal is to win meets *as a team,* we aim to maximize the student-athlete's ability in the event(s) in which they have the most potential to achieve a ranking on the PA state performance list.
- Student-athletes' first obligation is to the team, always understanding that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.
- Our focus is on being *competitive*, always cognizant that *place finish*, not individual performance (PR), determines whether the team achieves its collective goals.
- We will seek every possible competitive opportunity for any individual who has the ability to compete at an appropriate level.
- We require that you train in a *consistent* fashion and compete at the highest level while understanding that your overall health is always a higher priority.

EXPECTATIONS FOR COACHES AND STUDENT-ATHLETES

- Student-athletes are students first and athletes second. Ideally, the two pursuits are complementary, but if not, academics must always come first.
- Student health (mental and physical) is of paramount importance to us, both as coaches and mentors. A healthy diet and sufficient sleep are crucial to sustained good health and performance.
- **Treating teammates with care and compassion is vital to foster positive team chemistry.**
- Treat practice and meets as a class. Listen. Focus. Take notes, if necessary. Prepare yourself mentally as you would for any other class.
- The team comes first in all matters of policy or behavior. While we should all feel empowered to speak openly, share opinions, and air disagreements, it is essential that we come together with respect, to achieve our common goals.
- Be punctual. Tardiness is disrespectful. Your time is not more important than the time of your teammates and coaches.
- Coaches and student-athletes alike should take a moment after practices and meets to reflect on what went well and what might be improved. Acquire a growth mindset.
- Exemplary behavior by coaches and student-athletes is essential, including appropriate dress, language and respect for teammates, competitors, coaches, officials and spectators.

RULES FOR MAINTAINING TEAM MEMBERSHIP & MEET ELIGIBILITY

- You must attend practice *every day*. You will not improve when you are absent, and we cannot maximize our potential without your total commitment.
- To the extent possible, arrange “routine” healthcare (doctor and dentist checkups), driver’s license exams, haircuts and other non-school-related commitments around the team practice and meet schedule. Our seasons are short. We cannot afford to waste the moments we have.
- Since practice begins promptly at 3:15, ***roll will start a few minutes prior to that***. If you are not marked as present, you are considered absent. Don’t be tardy!
- Please notify coaches of unavoidable conflicts via Ball Frog email in advance of practice. *Unless arrangements have been made with a coach prior to practice, the absence will be counted as unexcused.*
- **You may only be excused from practice if and when you notify the coaches for the following reasons:**

  (a) you are absent from school.

  (b) you had an appointment involving illness or injury that would prevent you from attending practice

  (c) you have a personal or family emergency.

  (d) you have an appointment with the trainer, counselor or teacher

  (e) you are attending a scheduled school-related function.

  ***NOTE*: One (1) unexcused absence will make you ineligible for the next meet. Three (3) unexcused absences will result in removal from the team.**

- Don’t goof off at practices—it just wastes your time and ours. Listen to the coaches and do what they say, when they say it. Our goals for the season are achieved incrementally, practice-by-practice. If we underperform at a single practice, we lessen the chance of achieving those goals.
- Profanity is forbidden. It reflects badly on you, your team, and the school. You will be suspended from the team if you refuse to comply with this simple rule.
- Harassment and hazing will not be tolerated. A team is a family, and we do not hurt our family. Ever. Suspension or expulsion will result.

- Alcohol, tobacco, or drug use is strictly prohibited. These substances are bad for your health and your performance and run counter to everything we stand for, as coaches and teammates. Violations will result in suspension and/or expulsion from the team.
- You must be at school on the day of a meet or practice in order to participate.
- You are responsible for any equipment issued to you. If you lose or damage something, you must pay for it. Return it at the end of the season.
- Come to practice prepared, with appropriate shoes and clothing, cold weather gear, inhaler (if needed), and water.
- To avoid injuries, please refrain from non-cross country and track & field-related athletic pursuits during the season. Any exercise or other sports practice that extends beyond what has been assigned (including, for instance, running in gym class) must be brought to a coach's attention, so that training volume and intensity may be adjusted.

MEET TRANSPORTATION AND CONDUCT

- We ride the bus together to and from meets unless a student's parent signs a travel waiver and drives him (to and/or from the meet). The travel waiver must be presented via email to a Coach prior to bus departure from SHHS.
- Rude, rowdy and disrespectful behavior during bus rides WILL NOT be tolerated. Such behavior can lead to team suspension or expulsion.
- We set and write goals, both team and individual, and commit to achieving them, always prioritizing team first.
- There's only one name on the singlet—HAVEN—because the team always comes before self. We acknowledge that representing Haven is both a privilege and a responsibility.
- On race days, we remain relaxed yet focused, calm yet prepared.
- We pay close attention to coaches' pre-race instructions and strive always to bring them to fruition.
- We execute our race according to agreed-upon individual and team strategy, always in control and unafraid to excel.
- At the conclusion of the race, we cheer on our teammates, recognizing the indispensable role each boy plays.
- We will be humble in victory, and gracious in defeat—always.

- After the race, we regroup to cool down as a team, thereby ending the day as it began—together.
- We project team unity by warming up at the same time, stretching, and lining up at meets in a single, tight-knit group.

EARNING A VARSITY LETTER

To Earn a Varsity Letter in Cross Country athletes must meet one of the following requirements:

(a) earn a qualifying time on the Rose Tree Park course of equal to 20 minutes or less, or
(b) finish in the top 10 of SHHS runners in 75% of the meets

Letters are not awarded to those who are removed from the team.