

# 2024

## RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

### CROSS COUNTRY GUIDE



**Please sign and upload the “permission slip” page to Google Classroom by July 26th!  
Physicals for all grades are due July 15th to the Ridge Athletic or Health Office!**

TO: TEAM MEMBERS AND THEIR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

FROM:

NICOLE GILHULEY - BOYS HEAD COACH, ROBYN EVANGELIST GIRLS HEAD COACH

SUBJECT: RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY PROGRAM

This guide has been prepared to provide information on the Ridge High School Cross Country team. The specific expectations of each athlete, as well as program objectives, will be addressed. Athletes and parents/guardians should read this guide in its entirety. Athletes will not be allowed to participate until the permission slip in the guide is signed and uploaded to Google Classroom.

### **WHY COMPETE?**

Interscholastic athletics are a very demanding and rewarding experience for high school students. There is much to be said for making a commitment, setting goals, and experiencing both team and personal success in a unique sport such as Cross Country. Members often develop emotionally as they gain confidence in themselves through work habits, peer support, and the achievement of goals. Participation in a competitive environment provides opportunities and challenges that prepare students for the real world.

### **TIME COMMITMENT**

In addition to the student athlete's academics, Cross Country requires a serious time commitment. This may involve sacrifices by the athlete and the athlete's family as well. In order for the athlete to improve and attempt to attain their personal goals, **attendance at all practices and meets is mandatory.**

The 2024 season begins with practice on **August 19th**. Official practice in August will begin at 8am. When school begins for staff on September 1st, practice will begin at 3:15 PM Monday-Friday and at 9:00am on Saturdays. Practices roughly last between 2-3 hours based on the workout and supplemental activities planned for that day. **Members are required to be at every scheduled practice Monday-Saturday.**

Practice is held at Pleasant Valley Park, but occasionally a practice will be held at Ridge High School or at a local park. When practice is at Pleasant Valley, there will be a bus after school to transport students. The bus will not return to Ridge High School, so all students should bring their backpacks and books with them to the park. Athletes will need a way to communicate with their parents/guardians to coordinate rides home.

All team members will practice and/or compete up to and including Wednesday, October 30th, 2024. The NJ State Frosh/JV Championship serves as the last meet for our runners who are not competing or training with the Varsity team. Only those team members competing or training as Varsity alternates will be required to attend practice after this date. A [schedule](#) is available on Google Classroom and on <https://njridgerunners.com/>

**Please note that the schedule is tentative and changes may occur!**

Home meets are held at Pleasant Valley Park. Saturday meets are larger "Invitational" and "Championship" meets. Each meet may include a combination of Varsity, JV, and/or Freshman events. All team members will not necessarily compete in every scheduled meet. Athletes will earn this privilege based on entry size, attendance, ability, and work habits. Transportation will be provided for all away meets from Ridge High School.

### **ACADEMICS**

The Ridge High School Cross Country team is proud of its history of attracting a large number of quality student-athletes. Every year, many members of our team are enrolled in Honors and AP courses, and are on the Principals and Regular Honor Rolls. Our goal as educators and coaches is to encourage students to achieve excellence in the classroom, as well as in athletic competition.

Most of our athletes have learned to budget their time and perform well through self-discipline while in season. Often, students' grades are higher "In-Season" than "Out-of-Season" due to the way they structure their time. If students find they need to attend extra help with a teacher, or make up an assignment, the athlete should communicate with their coach to arrange a workout afterward.

Academic problems should be addressed immediately. It is important that the coaches be alerted to the problem and be given a chance to help. It may not be wise to "fix" a negative by taking away a positive. We have found many times that the program can provide the avenue and support needed to work through the difficulty at hand.

## **TRAINING**

All of our training is based on solid scientific research principles. As coaches, we pride ourselves on obtaining the knowledge necessary to deliver a quality program to every athlete on our team. As life-long learners of our sport, and educators, we strive to find the best way to yield the highest results, while never sacrificing the health or welfare of any individual on our team. Our program varies workouts based on ability, age, health history, and training age. We look at long term goals, not just short term, and always consider the volume and intensity of each and every workout. Each workout is a stimulus designed to produce a specific result as the body adapts.

In order for coaches to be successful, we need the help of parents and guardians. You have an enormous impact on each student athlete. Being "on the same page," and allowing the coaches to do their jobs is vital to the success of this program. Please remember the role each of us play, and consider the impact on your child when discussing training and competition. Club and private coaches have become a common existence in many youth sports. Please remember that only the Board of Ed. approved high school coaches will decide workouts and race plans. Under no circumstance will we work with anyone outside of our staff to train our teams. We are available to discuss training with any parent or guardian who has questions or concerns.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Throughout the entire season your child will be a representative of both Ridge High School, and specifically, the Ridge H.S. Cross Country team. In order for each and every athlete to reach their individual potential, it is vital that all put forth their best effort both physically and emotionally. Cross Country is a sport that gives the opportunity to bring out the best qualities in all. As we practice and compete, we must remember that our attitudes and efforts affect others. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be met with disciplinary action.

## **COMMUNICATION**

**It is always the *athlete's* responsibility to communicate directly to his/her coach.** Part of the maturation process involves the ability to communicate and self-advocate. It is expected that our student athletes will develop the ability to discuss any problems personally with the coaches. One of the goals of this program is to aid this process and develop strong communicators. If an emergency should arise and the athlete cannot communicate personally with the coaching staff, he/she may email the coach: [ngilhuley@bernardsboe.com](mailto:ngilhuley@bernardsboe.com), [revangelist@bernardsboe.com](mailto:revangelist@bernardsboe.com)

***The athlete should never fail to communicate!***

In the event of inclement weather, cancellations will be communicated to the athletes directly. We will also use GroupMe and Google Classroom to communicate information to the athletes throughout the season.

## **Registration/Physicals**

Please follow all directions for registration included on the Ridge High School website:

[https://ridgehigh.bernardsboe.com/athletics/athletic\\_registration](https://ridgehigh.bernardsboe.com/athletics/athletic_registration)

No student may practice without a fully completed physical examination form which must then be "signed-off" by the school physician. COMPLETED PHYSICALS ARE DUE JULY 15th!!! Do not send physical forms to the coaches. Forms must be turned in to the Ridge Athletic Department.

## INJURIES

Any injuries incurred should be brought to the coaches' attention immediately. Coaches will send athletes to the athletic trainers as needed. The athletic trainers, Scott Hoagland and Aimee Mitchell, will communicate directly with the athletes and coaching staff, but will reach out to parents as deemed appropriate.

The athletic trainers will also communicate directly with your physician if necessary. Except in extreme emergencies, we encourage our athletes to use the trainers as their first source of treatment/rehabilitation.

Mr. Scott Hoagland 204-2585 ext. 249 shoagland@bernardsboe.com	Ms. Aimee Mitchell 204-2585 ext. 250 aimeemitchell@bernardsboe.com
---	---

## AWARDS

An athlete must successfully complete their obligations to the team in order to be eligible for any awards. Awards will be given to all athletes based upon their efforts, performances, attendance, and contributions to the team.

Awards given:

- 1) Varsity Letter or Pin      2) Junior Varsity Certificate      3) Freshmen Certificate

All uniforms must be returned/paid for in order to receive any awards.

## TRANSPORTATION

Athletes will be given race time schedules and directions prior to all meets. Bus transportation will be provided to all away meets. It is preferred that athletes travel home with the team; however, when necessary, an athlete may be transported home after a meet with their parents. If you are taking your child home from a meet, you must email the athletic director, Mike Mancino, prior to the day of the meet at [mmancino@bernardsboe.com](mailto:mmancino@bernardsboe.com).

The email should read, "**I (parent name) request to take my son/daughter (student name) home from (Venue/game information). I assume all risks and responsibility and agree to hold harmless the BTSD and their employees.**" No athlete may leave with another athlete's parent unless they have a note from their parent stating very specifically whom they are traveling with on that particular date. No athlete may be transported by another student/friend. Please utilize the team website as a resource for additional information: <https://njridgerunners.com/>

## SHOES/CLOTHING/EQUIPMENT

Be sure to purchase new running shoes this summer! We encourage all athletes to get assessed at a reputable running store to determine the right shoes and level of support needed for their specific feet. Some local running stores provide discounts, as well as expertise that you will not receive at the larger chain stores. We recommend the brands Brooks, New Balance, Asics, Mizunos, and HOKAs. As we begin to race, spikes will be necessary. We will have a local spike night once the season begins. The local store we use is the Sneaker Factory in Basking Ridge: 25 Mountainview Blvd. Basking Ridge, NJ (908) 542-1212

All athletes need to wear weather appropriate clothing. This is especially important as we can experience a wide variety of weather throughout the season. Extra clothing should always be on hand. Do not show up to practice in shorts and a t-shirt if it is under 60 degrees! Athletes are required to wear pants to warm-up if the weather is below 60 degrees. We also run in the rain, so don't forget a rain jacket! Please view the Ridge

Runners “Welcome Letter” in this guide for more information on team clothing.

In addition, **each athlete is required to have a watch with a timing feature.** Athletes must be able to time themselves during practice, and especially during workouts. Timex watches are the most affordable, but GPS watches are also permitted.

## SUMMER TRAINING

Summer workouts will begin on June 24th. These are completely optional; however, those that begin to build their “base” mileage over the summer tend to avoid injuries, as well as achieve greater improvement levels throughout the season. It is strongly suggested that all potential runners start to work during the summer months. Even if you cannot attend consistently, it is suggested that you try to attend sometimes so that the coaches can help to structure a plan for progress. Workouts are more productive when completed with a group. Summer workouts mainly involve easy runs to build endurance, and weight training to both build strength and prevent injury.

*If running on your own produced the best results, we would not hold practice sessions!*

## BRIARWOOD

Briarwood Running Camp is a summer camp located in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Our team has attended for the last 34 years and will continue to do so this year as well. The best part about this camp is the camaraderie and team-building experience it offers our athletes. Going to a camp that runs 2x/day is not for the brand new runner or someone who has not worked out consistently throughout the summer. Please consult with Coach Gilhuley or Coach Robyn if you are interested in attending. This is not necessary or recommended for any freshmen. Information at: <https://briarwoodrunningcamp.com/>

## RIDGE RUNNERS

Ridge Runners is a Parent Sponsored Booster Club that supports the Cross Country program as well as Indoor Track and Spring Track & Field. Please view the “Welcome Letter” from Ridge Runners for more information.

Dear Parents,

Ridge Runners would like to welcome you to the 2024 Cross Country season. We are a parent-run Booster Club for Cross Country, Winter, and Spring Track & Field. The purpose of this club is to provide assistance to the team, through both fundraising and volunteering, so that our kids can have the best experience possible.

Through the help of Ridge Runners, we have been able to accomplish a tremendous amount over the years:

- Purchase weight/stability/video training equipment
- Provide awards for Most Improved
- Organize awards nights and supplement the cost of banquets for all three seasons
- Award scholarships each season to selected seniors
- Provide stipends for additional “volunteer” coaches
- Provide end of season gifts for the coaching staff
- Provide funding for coaching workshops
- Maintain the team website
- Provide recognition for Meet of Champions and Nationals performances
- Purchase team equipment such as uniforms, javelins, high jump and pole vault pits, and more!
- Provide entry fees and travel support for non school sponsored meets

We are asking you to become a member of our group by contributing. By contributing to Ridge Runners, there will be store incentives given out for discounts on clothing. (More information to come on this!) Athletes are



RR Membership Form



	1 Child	2+ Children
Only 1 Season	\$275	\$375
2-3 Seasons	\$325	\$450

expected to wear Ridge XCTF clothing to all team competitions. All athletes will receive one team t-shirt per season, in addition to a school issued uniform singlet and shorts. In lieu of team issued warmups, athletes are encouraged to purchase the following items from the team store:

- XC Season: long sleeve t-shirt & sweatpants
- Track Season: sweatshirt & sweatpants

Please use the attached mail-in form to pay by check, or pay by Venmo at @Ridge-Runners-1 (please include: "Membership" and athlete/family name in the comments). This information is also available on the Ridge Runners website: [Become a Member of Ridge Runners](#). Ridge Runners Club, Inc. is a 501(c) non-profit organization and your donation will be tax deductible. Please also consider submitting your donation for company match.

In addition to membership dues, the Ridge Runners Booster Club generates funds through the annual "Are You Faster Than a Ridge Runner?" 5K race. Parents and athletes come together to organize and participate in this event, the largest of our fundraisers. There has been tremendous community support and the Cross Country, Winter and Spring Track programs have benefited greatly from the exposure and funding attained through the 5K sponsorships, entry fees and more.

During the spring season our school hosts several multi-level meets, including a state sectional meet. Your contributions to our organization greatly assist in providing an excellent facility and experience for our students and their competitors. During these meets, our Booster Club runs the concession stand. This has always been a very successful fundraiser, due largely in part to the dedication of our parents and their donations of time and food/beverage.

**AND, we are looking for volunteers!** There are many opportunities to help out, both large and small. So, if you're interested in volunteering... for a few hours or for a larger role... please let any of us know.

As always, if you have any questions or ideas, please contact Ridge Runners at [njridgerunners@gmail.com](mailto:njridgerunners@gmail.com) or feel free to reach out to any of us to learn more. We thank you in advance for your continued support and hope to see you at upcoming meets.

Sincerely,

The Ridge Runners Board ([njridgerunners@gmail.com](mailto:njridgerunners@gmail.com))  
Tara Dachnowicz - President ([taradachnowicz@gmail.com](mailto:taradachnowicz@gmail.com) / 908.400.6496)  
Frank LaCapra - Treasurer ([fjlacapra@gmail.com](mailto:fjlacapra@gmail.com) / 908.399.5376)  
Cindy Mays - Secretary ([cindymmays@aol.com](mailto:cindymmays@aol.com) / 908.781.6981)

# RIDGE RUNNERS Membership Form

Online Membership form: [Click Here](#) OR Scan Code

Online Payments can be sent via Venmo: @Ridge-Runners-1

- Please include "Membership" and Athlete/Family Name in comments

Or Mail attached:

-----  
--- Athlete Name(s)/Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email address (\*for parent information, volunteering and fundraising purposes only) \_\_\_\_\_

Season(s) athlete involved (Please circle all that apply):

Cross Country

Winter/Spring Track

Membership Fee:

	1 Child	2+ Children
Only 1 Season	\$275	\$375
2-3 Seasons	\$325	\$450

If paying by check, please make check payable to: Ridge Runners

And mail to:

Frank LaCapra, Ridge Runners Treasurer  
3 Hampton Court  
Basking Ridge, N.J. 07920

Thank you for your membership and support!

**RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL**  
**CROSS COUNTRY PERMISSION SLIP**  
**2024**

NAME (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Ridge H.S. Cross Country Guide and understand the time commitment, as well as the responsibilities outlined. This includes the practice and meet schedule, and I agree to have my son/daughter attend all practices and meets.

(Practice begins August 19th!!!)

I am aware that the athletes will be able to directly contact the coach through GroupMe. Coaches will not be expected to answer messages outside training hours and this does not replace email communication.

I give my son/daughter permission to become a member of the Ridge High School Cross Country program. I also understand that uniforms, warm-ups and any equipment issued must be paid for if not returned at the conclusion of the season. I understand that absences not within Board policy may affect my child's participation and possibly membership on the team.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parents/Guardians

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian E-mail address Please print neatly!

I am familiar with the training rules and commitments and will conduct myself at all times according to the rules and regulations of the Cross Country team and school. I have read the Cross Country Guide and understand and accept the responsibilities and time commitment involved including all practices and meets.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Athlete

**Return this page only to Google Classroom no later than July 26th!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**