

The mission of TFS athletics is to develop GREAT character, competence, and competitiveness, to host GREAT events, and to create a Season of Significance.

GREAT Character - I Will Be GREAT!

Traits such as Gratitude, Generosity, Grit, Respect, Responsibility, Ripple effect, Enthusiastic Effort toward Excellence, Ambition, Accountability, Attitude, Trustworthy, Toughness, and Thinking critically will compel positive action - proactive choices and responses in various situations. GREAT character development is crucial and of utmost importance. It will guide all that the coaches structure for our team and should also guide your decisions and commitment. We will go out of our way to show appreciation, consideration, and service, to set an example, and to lead, no matter what adversities or obstacles we face. Though we say this each year, we look forward to creating a Season of Significance!

Enclosed is information concerning MS/HS team standards and lettering criteria for varsity athletes. If the schedule changes - usually due to weather - we will notify you as soon as possible. The school calendar will be the most up to date regarding meet changes. I will send out a renweb alert if it is at the last minute and a Sunday night letter for all other changes.

Practice - Practice is important! PLEASE do not ask to miss practice unless it is important. Everyone will have 3 excused "personal days" that can be used if they are communicated ahead of time; after that, consequences ranging from not lettering to missing a meet to service hours. Being on a team requires commitment, sacrifice, and communication.

2024 Reminders:

- **Bring your own water bottle and refill it from a water squid or container.**
- **Do not drink from anyone else's water bottle and do not touch lips to the water squids.**
- **HS - Have a towel and bathing suit (one piece or shorts and a dark tee for girls; swim trunks for guys) EVERY day for practice! We may use the pool any day.**
- **Parents may take their athlete to/from any meet (communicate), but athletes may not drive unless pre approved via parent and Coach Neal in writing ahead of time.**
- **PLEASE let us know when a parent is taking an athlete. It is Important in making appropriate transportation and food arrangements.**

Communicate tactfully and promptly. It is your responsibility to directly speak with the Head Coach concerning any outside of class practices that will be missed (or be late) or any meets that you will be unable to attend beforehand – SEE THE SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR! This communication should not come from a fellow teammate or from your parents, but from you directly either by way of an advance email or an advance telephone call or in-person. Emergencies may arise but out of respect for your coaches and the commitment you have made to the team it is your responsibility to make this conscious effort.

Doing your best in the classroom is of utmost importance. Nationally, XC runners typically have the best grades on campus as a group. We want to keep it that way.

Commitment Day. There is a “try out” time period in which you can decide whether to stick with it or do something else. Commitment day is picture day. Do not get in the team picture if you will not continue as a dedicated, committed, necessary team member! From picture day forward, you are expected to honor your commitment.

What are your SMART goals? What do you want to be able to say when the season is over? The plan and expectation is for everyone to stay healthy, improve, and compete well as a team.

SAFETY

Safety is a continual underlying focus. You are to never place yourself or teammates in danger. When crossing a street, ALWAYS look both ways and make sure no vehicles are approaching. NEVER try to beat an oncoming car! Run/walk against traffic; bike with traffic. When running in an environment you are unaccustomed to, run within sight or sound of a buddy. Know the trails and landmarks BEFORE the run (ask until you understand). If you get lost, backtrack if you can; otherwise stay where you are. We will find you!

Hydration – Drink water throughout the day! Do not wait until thirsty to drink. ***THIS IS CRITICAL!*** Sports drinks may be beneficial – energy drinks are NOT.

Heat - Temperature and humidity (cold towels, run with a water bottle, run with an ice cube in your hands, “feel the breeze”). Walk if necessary. Talk to Coach IMMEDIATELY!

Nutrition – Whole. Natural. Colorful. Variety. “Real.” Specifically, nutrient dense foods such as dark colored veggies, lean meats, legumes/nuts, raw fruit, and whole grains all help the body develop and help you to perform better. Eat often. Eat something for breakfast. Eat real foods first.

Other Information

School issued apparel (uniform, team warm ups, heart rate monitors, bags, rollers, bands, etc.) are to be returned before you may start another sport. Lost or damaged items will be billed to you and must be paid in full. Spending or snack money may be brought on team trips. TFS supplies food or \$10 for meals FOR THOSE WHO RETURN TO CAMPUS.

On meet day, EVERYONE must be dressed THE SAME to school in shorts/pants and team t-shirt.

Do not bleach uniforms or school issued warm ups. ***Do not tie uniform or warm up strings in knots. TAKE ANY STICKY NUMBER OFF THE UNIFORM BEFORE WASHING!***

There are no boyfriend/girlfriend relationships during cross country practices or meets or in route. We ask that boys sit with boys on the bus and girls sit with girls.

You may go on any school trip that does not conflict with practices or meets. If a trip leaves earlier than practice is over, plan on NOT going on that trip. The exception is to speak with Coach well ahead of time to see if a different workout time would be ok. We practice daily after school and on some Saturday's (see calendar).

Estimated costs include shoes (you may find less expensive shoes/shoes on sale at Big Peach Running Company (15% off), firsttothefinish.com, final-score.com, eastbay.com, bsnsports.com shumaspports.com, dickpondathletics.com, anacondasports.com, runningwarehouse.com, or your local shoe specialty store) and the team package (\$50). Totally Running in Dahlonge may give you 10% or so off and will video your running gait and offer shoe advice. Other stores in Gainesville and Atlanta do the same.

Big Peach Mobile Unit will be on campus Tue, Aug 13 from 3:00-6:30 in the natatorium; they provide a 15% discount. You can contact Sean Ngorny at sean@bigpeachrunningco.com ahead of time if you know what size, brand, and name of shoe you want or just with your size. His staff can help determine what shoe may be best for you.

Team Leaders and Responsibilities

We are looking for Team Leaders to emerge from our runners that will help be an integral part of the success of our team. Each of these leaders will help support the team by taking on additional responsibilities. If this is of interest to you please meet with Coach Neal so that we may share with you the expectations of these positions. "To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart." — [Eleanor Roosevelt](#)

Home Meets

We will host a total of five home meets: TFS Gorge to Beach 3k, TFS Cookies 'N Quotes XC Festival, TFS Heroes Invitational, TFS Harrier Harvest, and the Region 6 GIAA Championship. To our parents and students these home meets are not only a competitive challenge for our runners to assess their progress throughout the season, but they are also a wonderful community outreach for us to show GREAT hospitality to other teams. As a team we will own these meets and each runner will be required to assist with the set up, follow through, and clean up. **Do NOT ask to leave early from a home meet.**

GREAT Service Project - Bart at the Park Mulch Madness! Wed Aug 21 during practice

We proudly commit to at least one service project that will be up to the team to decide.

The Tribe

We need a Team Parent Coordinator to assist with our team activities and meets, snacks, etc. We always need smaller bottles of PowerAde (please not red - it stains!) and snacks (small/mini Cliff Bars, Lara Bars, pretzels, NutriGrain, or other more healthy bars). Please no chips. Pretzels are dandy. **Also, we are a Coca Cola school (PowerAde), so please do not donate Gatorade.**

If you want to donate any other electrolyte drinks or powders, please check with Coach Neal.

If a meet is canceled, I will send out a Renweb alert; otherwise I will communicate via Renweb email, typically Sunday nights, for parents and the CLASSROOM for team members. **We will practice no matter the weather. We have plenty of indoor opportunities.**

Social networking sites can be a great way to stay in touch. Be VERY cognizant, however, that ANYTHING you post should not be considered private, that ANYTHING you post can be re-whateverd, that you are solely responsible for ANYTHING on your social media sites. Remember to conduct yourself appropriately and not put yourself in a compromising situation; what you think is private may end up on a site. Do not post anything that you don't want seen by everyone. Inappropriate use of social media may result in a range of consequences, including dismissal. Further, our culture is that of a team; inappropriate posts can easily tear down the unifying fibers of a team, so think thrice before hitting send.

Athlete Absentee Policy

Athletes must attend at least half of the day's classes (4 classes) to participate in that day's practice or contest. Any variation must be approved by the Academic Dean. Excused from this are doctor or emergency appointments that are communicated ahead of time.

Please understand that to enhance safety across campus and on buses, video monitoring 24/7 across campus and bus video monitoring may be utilized!

NEW for 2024: You have 3 practices you may miss for whatever reason (like adults have "personal days"), BUT YOU MUST COMMUNICATE AHEAD OF TIME that you will miss (this can be a doctor appt, a birthday party, you are tired and want a break, basically whatever AS LONG AS YOU COMMUNICATE WITH COACH AHEAD OF TIME). Practices missed outside of these 3 days - other than illness - may cause you to miss meets, lose the privilege of lettering, or another consequence.

18. The athletic academic standards are as follows:

All grades will be reviewed after the first three weeks of the semester. The Academic Dean, teacher(s) and coach will collaborate on a plan for any student athlete with a grade of 70 or below in **one or more classes**. Students will be given a set time (often one week) to raise their grades. Students will attend mandatory tutorial during this time period. If after one week the student's grade has not improved to a passing grade, the following conditions will apply:

1 week - Student will not travel with their teams during the week.

2 weeks - Student will not travel or participate in team games.

3 weeks - Student will not participate in practices or games.

Grade reviews will occur weekly during season. If at any point a student's grade is above a 70, the student will resume normal team activities.

The Academic Dean and the Athletic Director may review a student on a case-by-case basis and make any changes that benefit the student's academic success.

Finally, we sincerely prefer principles over policies and responsibility over rules. The above reminders are simply to help you be aware of the Be GREAT culture we wish to develop and enjoy. Our track & field program desires to set standards, not just meet them. Champions Choose GREAT in all we do. You are choosing to be held to high behavioral expectations and leave a legacy of GREAT!

Tallulah Falls School Athletic Transportation and Day Student Pick-Up Policies

8-6-24 revised

Pick up of Day Student Athletes After PRACTICES

To enhance safety, reduce vehicle congestion, and improve traffic flow, parents of day students should pick up their child after practice at the parking lot below the academic building. Athletes at the field may be picked up at the practice/event site; however, students may NOT wait for a ride at the field without adult supervision. Once the coach releases the team, the next step is to be picked up at the day student parking lot.

PLEASE DO NOT PARK ON UPPER ROAD NEXT TO GYM/STUDENT CENTER.

Please pick up the athlete at the parking lot in front of the HS academic building or at the tennis courts or track parking lot.

Pick up of Day Student Athletes After CONTESTS

Estimated return times are on the sport's schedule. Athletes should contact the parent on the way home concerning the estimated arrival time. Coaches will provide as close as possible return time after the contest or at a place of eating, if the time is different than on the schedule.

Team Travel

We highly encourage parents, friends, and TFS community to support our teams, both home and away; however, transportation to and from contests on TFS vehicles is for team members only.

Athletic Student Transportation Policy:

- Students are allowed to go home with their parent after a contest if they request from the coach ahead of time. **The athlete must be checked out from the coach to the parent.**
- A student may ride with another parent IF BOTH parents request **in writing** ahead of time. We must have the okay from both parents and it must be in writing, not just verbal. Again, the students must be checked out from the coach to the driving parent.
- **Students are allowed to leave ONLY with the approved person.**
- Any deviation of team transportation must be approved by Coach, AD, and Dean of Students.
- Parents may pick up their child at a location on the team's route back to school as long as the bus doesn't have to wait on the parent. **If the parent is not there at the pick up, the bus will return to campus without waiting.**

If a contest occurs when school is not in session, transportation to and from the event will be specified by the head coach, but travel to and from the event is the responsibility of the parents. TFS may provide transportation depending upon the situation.

2024-25 TFS VARSITY Lettering Criteria. Meet the program's expectations in **ALL** of the following areas:

Attendance: Unexcused absences or continual tardiness may affect lettering.

Attitude: Consistent "Team First" actions, "ownership and a consistently positive attitude (not complaining...)

Demonstrated GREAT character, team support, sportsmanship, and actions directed toward peers, opposing teams, and officials

Displayed work ethic toward team goals and individual improvement, Responsibility, including prompt and thorough communication of practice/contest conflicts. Role fulfillment.

Performance: (see below for sport specific requirements).

NOTE: Performance is only one qualification and does not automatically equal a varsity letter.

Lettering one year does not automatically qualify for subsequent athletic letters.

Any high school athlete or manager in good standing of the same interscholastic sport for three consecutive high school years meets the performance criteria to earn a varsity letter. Exceptions to the three year criteria must be made from the coach to the AD.

Any exceptions pertaining to lettering must be approved by the Athletic Director, such as a player making significant contributions to the team but unable to finish the season due to illness or injury.

Cross Country Performance Criteria 1) A runner finishes in the top half at the Region Championships or (2) A runner participates in every practice and competition (perfect attendance) (3) The team goes to the State Championships; top 7 runners would letter.

If you would like to donate to the cross country fund please contact me or send your donation to:
Tallulah Falls School, Cross Country: Coach Scott Neal, PO Box 10, Tallulah Falls, GA 30573

Scott Neal, Head Coach scott.neal@tallulahfalls.org 706-968-9879 cell