

**The Parent's and Athlete's Guide to
Old Abe Track and Field!**



2020

Introduction to Track and Field

Track and Field is a varsity Sport at Memorial that is unique in many ways.

1. We are a No-Cut sport! All athletes are welcome, regardless of ability.
2. Track and Field is Co-ed. The Boys and Girls compete separately, but practice together and attend the same meets together.
3. Athletes in Track and Field are challenged to improve their times/distances. We celebrate Personal Records for all athletes.

Track and Field builds strong individuals.

1. Athletes can't "hide" on the team. On meet day, they must compete as an individual and take full responsibility for their performance.
2. Athletes in Track and Field must be willing to work independently. We will have 180-200 athletes with 8 coaches. When workouts are conducted, it is the individual's responsibility to work their hardest. There won't always be a coach driving them every second of practice.
3. Athletes will use Track and Field as an opportunity to be better communicators, better teammates, and better athletes.

Team Goals

1. The Track and Field Program is a Varsity sport. Our primary goal is to field the most competitive team/individuals possible. This goal is realized in 2 settings.
 - a. Our goal for the Big Rivers Conference Meet is to maximize our team score.
 - b. Our goal for the WIAA tournament series is to qualify the most athletes to the State Meet.
 - c. The priority for all other meets is to develop athletes and train them to perform well at the end of the season. We do not attempt to win meets.
2. Our Program is PR (Personal Record) driven. Our priority throughout the season is to have each person improve throughout the year.
3. Within this Varsity setting, we offer an opportunity to any student who wants to strive to be better. We do not cut based on ability.

How does my athlete earn a varsity position?

1. There is no tryout procedure in track and field. Throughout the season, athletes will earn their way on to the varsity team. I keep an extensive database of every performance by each athlete.
2. There are 3 types of meets throughout the season.
 - a. Varsity Only. These have limited entries in each event and are for the top performers.
 - b. JV Only. These tend to be unlimited in entry and all athletes who did not compete Varsity that week will attend.
 - c. ALL. Some meets allow us to enter every athlete.
3. Throughout the season, we have 3 types of Athletes.
 - a. JV members are those athletes who are in the lower tier of performance. They always run JV. The goal is a PR.
 - b. Varsity Athletes are those athletes who are the top 2-3 in their event and always compete varsity. These are the athletes that can score team points and make up the competitive part of our team.
 - c. Swing athletes. The Swing Athletes are the athletes who are working hard and have times that are in the top 10 on the team. They will occasionally fill in Varsity spots (Especially on relays), but also will run some JV races. They are the athletes who we see as future contributors, and reliable hard workers.
4. Conference and Regional Teams.
 - a. At the end of the season, the Conference and Regional teams are put together to maximize performance. This is the method we use.
 - i. First, we select athletes we **are confident** will score points or qualify to the next round.
 - ii. Next, we analyze the other performers at the meet from other schools and find the events where some of our top swing athletes have **a chance** to earn points.
 - iii. We then fill in the remaining few entries with the most reliable, hardworking athletes, who we see as a future varsity athlete or have earned the honor.

We don't use the stopwatch and tape measure to make all our decisions. WORK ETHIC, TRUST, and TEAMWORK are used to round out our Varsity Team.

What does my athlete need for Track?

Track Begins on March 9th.

1. **Paperwork** must be complete to begin on March 9th.
 - a. If an athlete has been in a sport during 2019-2020, then most paperwork will be complete. Only the athletic fee form will need to be handled.
 - b. If you have not done paperwork, there are two ways to complete the paperwork. You can complete it all at code signing or you can pick it up in the athletic office.
 - c. **The Fee Payment:**
 - i. Some parents paid the fee earlier in the year when they signed up for another sport. Great. You are good.
 - ii. Some parents marked Track on the form but did not pay yet. Please pay before the season starts.
 - iii. Some Parents did not know their child would join track when they filled the fee form out for an earlier sport. Please fill out another form (with track marked) and pay the fee.
 - iv. Some athletes have reached the individual or family limit and don't have to pay. If you did not mark track on the original form, you need to send in another form with Track marked. Also check the box that says you met the maximum.
 - v. Some athletes receive free lunch and therefore don't have to pay the fee. You must still file a fee form indicating track and that you receive free lunch.

The Fee can only be paid at the Board Office (500 Main Street). It can be dropped off or mailed, but it takes a couple days to process. **DO NOT SEND THE FEE FORM AND PAYMENT TO MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL!**

2. **Clothing:** Track and Field happens in all kinds of weather. We will practice outdoors every day. If an athlete is not prepared for the weather with warm clothes, they will not be allowed to practice. Frequent occurrences of this will result in disciplinary action. When it is cold out, we expect athletes to have arms and legs covered. Hats and gloves are also a good idea.

3. **Shoes:** Each athlete needs 2 pairs of shoes. Poor shoes lead to many injuries.
 - a. Training shoes that are in good condition. These are normal running shoes that we use every day. They do break down over time, so a fresh pair would be a good idea.
 - b. Racing spikes. These are used only for meets. They will provide better times and more success. They are specialized for sprints, distance, field events, etc.

Finding the right shoes can be hard. They need to fit your specific needs. I highly suggest getting evaluated at a running store. They can direct you to a shoe that fits your running form and foot structure. Here are a few places I am familiar with.

- a. The Blue Ox in Eau Claire (417 Barstow) is a great local business. They are offering discounts to high school kids.
 - b. The Run n Fun (St Paul or Woodbury) has a huge selection of spikes to try on. They also provide a high school discount.
 - c. Rogan's and Scheels will have a small selection.
 - d. Many of our athletes will order their shoes from an online source like Eastbay. They often have good deals. Once you know what works for you, it is easier and sometimes cheaper to order them online. The trick is finding the right ones initially.
4. **Other items:**
 - a. A digital watch is necessary for middle/long distance runners.
 - b. A refueling snack is recommended for after practice. Some kids eat a snack before practice to get a little more energy.
 - c. Swimsuit. Athletes should always have a school appropriate swimsuit with them. This will allow us to do pool workouts whenever the weather or training dictates.
 - d. Padlock. Athletes are allowed a locker in the Team Locker room. Always lock your locker.
 - e. Water bottle.
 - f. Prescribed inhalers, EpiPen, etc.

5. **Uniforms:** The WIAA has strict uniform rules.
 - a. Each athlete will be issued a top and bottom. They must wear the official uniform on meet day.
 - b. Undergarments such as tights, compression shorts and undershirts are recommended and should be black.
 - c. When you launder the uniforms, you must be sure that all race numbers are removed. Drying the uniform with a race sticker will ruin them.

6. **Extra costs:** Some sports programs tend to collect money continually. Track is not one of those.
 - a. We will sell spirit wear through Chippewa Valley Sporting Goods. This is entirely optional.
 - b. If we are going to stop for food after a meet, we will warn you ahead of time. It is rare.
 - c. Each Athlete is EXPECTED to sell coupon books for Booster Club once a year. If you haven't sold them, you will be expected to sell them this season. The cost can easily be recouped by shopping with the Festival coupons.

Communication

Communication is key to running this massive program. Here are the methods we use. Information is shared in the following ways.

1. The Remind App is used to send text messages to the team athletes and parents.
2. A Weekly email is sent to parents and athletes.
3. The ECASD Track and Field Website is up to date. Lots of information and data is available there.

When you need to contact our program, please use the following Email:

cfritz@ecasd.us

I check this email frequently. Please do not call me, since my school phone goes straight to voicemail. If you want to talk in person, shoot me an email and I will call you.

Understanding the Athletic Code.

The Athletic Code is a complicated document. When you do the paperwork, you will agree to follow the code. I realize that you may not read it thoroughly. Here are some highlights that I want to emphasize.

- **3rd quarter grades.** In Early April: 3rd quarter grades will post. Failing one class will result in a suspension of 20% of the season. If an athlete has 2 or more Failing grades, they are ineligible for 50% of the season. This will take them out of commission until the conference meets. We will not consider them for the Varsity Team for Conference.
- **Unexcused Absences:** The code indicates that an unexcused absence results in a 1 contest suspension. This will be enforced.
- **Conduct Unbecoming of an Athlete:** This is the result of a behavioral issue that may occur. It results in a penalty determined by the Athletic Office. It includes, academic dishonesty, criminal behavior, etc.
- **Inappropriate Use of Social Media:** This is considered Conduct Unbecoming of an Athlete and will receive the same consequences as listed above.
- **AODA:** This includes Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and Vaping. Vaping is always considered a code violation. It is becoming quite prevalent. The Penalty is 25% for the first occurrence and 50% for the second. Third violation results in a 12 Month Suspension.

Practice

1. We will practice every weekday at 3:20 pm. On Wednesday, some groups will start at 4:10. We will meet in the Aux Gym. Athletes must be on time. Practice Starts with a large group meeting.
2. Athletes will then join their primary event group.
 - a. Distance (1600-3200)
 - b. Middle Distance (400-1600)
 - c. Sprints (100-400)
 - d. Throwers
 - e. Hurdlers

Pole Vault, Long jump, high jump, and triple jump will be incorporated into practice.

3. Practice has a variable end time. This will be frustrating at times, but each day of training has a different goal; some workouts are shorter, and some are longer.
4. Some meets have a portion of the team competing. Typically, there will be practice for the rest of the athletes on those days.
5. Athletes who are consistently missing practice will be removed from the team. This includes athletes who leave practice early.
6. Athletes should always have their spikes at practice to work on starts, field events, etc. However, they should never train in them.

How will my child know what event group they are in?

1. Athletes can self-select their group to a certain degree.
2. Sometimes the coaches will ask them to make a change based on our observations.
3. If your athlete is uncertain, we will help them find the right group.
4. All new athletes will be skills tested on the first day. This may help them make a choice, or help the coaches direct them.
5. Ultimately, Coaches have the final say.
6. If you want to be competitive and earn a varsity spot, try a specialty like hurdles or field events!

What does a meet look like?

18 events are contested at a typical Track and Field meet.

<u>Running Events (In Meet Order)</u>	<u>Field Events</u>
4x800 Relay	Pole Vault
100/110 Hurdles	High Jump
100 M Dash	Long Jump
1600 M Run	Triple Jump
4x200 Relay	Discus
400 m Dash	Shot Put
4x100 M Relay	
300 M Hurdles	
800 M run	
200 M Dash	
3200 M Run	
4x400 M Relay	

On the Track, Girls always run first, followed by Boys.

Field Event Order is set by host meet management.

Meets Last 3-5 Hours!

1. We often leave before school gets out on Meet days.
2. Your child will likely run events that are spread throughout the meet. You literally might watch them, go get a bite to eat, and return for a later event.
3. Meets have a rolling schedule. We can't predict the exact time your athlete will run.
4. We have 3 tents we set up at a meet as a "camp." The athletes then have a place to hang out.
5. We rarely stop for food on the way home. Athletes should pack their own healthy food. If we do stop, it will probably be a weekend and a smaller group at the meet.
6. We bus both ways to meets, except UWEC, North, or Altoona. When we go to these places, we have a bus drop off, but expect athletes to get their own ride home. Athletes who drive, can drive to those meets with parent consent.

Track Meet Details

1. Athletes are limited to 4 events at a meet. Athletes seldom do this. At each meet we want athletes to do well in the events they do.
2. Athletes will not be entered in an event until they are ready. This means they are conditioned properly, know the skills, and can safely participate.
3. In most cases, an athlete is competing against the clock/tape measure. We might attend meets with 50+ kids entered in the 100m. Only one kid can win! Only a handful of athletes can think in terms of win or lose. Most are trying to improve and put themselves in position to earn team points or earn a varsity spot.

Track Meet Data/Numbers

1. All our meets are electronically timed by a timing service. This gives us accurate times to the hundredth of a second.
2. Results are sometimes posted throughout the meet on a wall or bulletin board in the facility.
3. The Timing companies upload the results to the internet after the meet. Sometimes they are updated throughout the meet. Most of our meets are timed by one of the following services:

www accuracetimeing.com

www.pttiming.com

State Tournament Sequence

1. Regionals: Tuesday, May 26th at Menomonie HS.
 - a. We can enter 28 individuals and 1 team in each relay.
 - b. Top 4 athletes/relays qualify for the Sectional Meet.
2. Sectionals: Friday, May 29th at DC Everest HS
 - a. 8 athletes qualify from two Regionals.
 - b. Top 3 qualify for the State Meet.
3. State: Friday and Saturday, June 5-6 at UW-LaCrosse
 - a. Trials and some finals will occur during the Morning Session on Friday.
 - b. Saturday will have finals.
 - c. We will not stay the night. We travel back and forth each day.

Parent Responsibilities During a Meet

1. Parents are fans in the stands. Track is no different than any other sport. Unfortunately, the “boundaries” at a track meet are confusing. Generally, we would like you to stay away from your child during their competitions. You are welcome to congratulate them on all races, and there will be plenty of time for you to visit with them after they are done competing.
2. Parents should do the following at a meet.
 - a. Cheer, Cheer, Cheer
 - b. Have positive responses to your child, regardless of their performance.
 - c. Please help your child be prepared for meet day with the appropriate clothing for the weather and good food to travel with.
 - d. Coaches love to meet the parents but will be very busy on meet day. A hello and a quick introduction are always welcome.
 - e. When we return on the bus, please be ready for pick up. After a long day, everyone needs to get home quick and relax.
3. It is not acceptable for Parents to do the following at a meet.
 - a. You must stay out of restricted areas. This will include the inside of the track fence and any roped off areas at field events.
 - b. You are asked to let your child’s coach do the coaching. We have specific goals and plans for each race. Although you might be an experienced runner, you may not know the plan, so please don’t give technical device. Simply cheer and be positive.
 - c. Please don’t attempt to talk to a coach about specific concerns or questions during the meet.
 - d. Please don’t expect your child to ride home with you because it is convenient. All athletes must stay until the end of the meet and return to Memorial on the bus.

Common Difficult Situations

Graduation: Eau Claire Memorial Graduation is at 7:00 pm on Friday, May 29th.

1. This is the night of the Sectional Track Meet. This meet begins at 5:00 at DC Everest in the Wausau Area. So...There is no way to attend both!
2. This is a tough decision that your family will have to make. The coaching staff will respect your decision.
3. If a senior chooses Graduation over Sectionals, then we will not enter you into Regionals. We will use regional entries that will commit to participating at Sectionals.

Advanced Placement Testing: May 4-15

1. AP tests are an important part of the academic life of our students.
2. Students will need to be prepared to attend meets during these weeks. Studying for AP tests will not be an excuse to miss a meet.
3. We will work with Meet day/Test day conflicts individually.

Injury/Illness:

1. We have Athletic Trainers at Memorial every day. When an injury occurs, they will be the first people to respond.
2. If a student is injured and sees a physician, they must have a clearance note to rejoin practice. This is monitored by the Athletic Trainers.
3. After evaluation by the trainer, the athlete will be given a plan for recovery. This plan is what we will follow. Coaches and parents have no authority to override the athletic trainer's recommendation.
4. When you are asked to revisit the trainer, you will do this after the opening meeting and attendance.
5. Athletes need to know the difference between injured and sore. Sore and tired are not excuses to skip workouts.
6. Unfortunately, sometimes the injury will cause you to miss a long period of training and end your season. We may have to have a hard discussion about continuing with the program.

Multiple Sport:

1. Track and Field is a varsity sport. We take this sport seriously. We expect our athletes to prioritize Track and Field from March 9th until the end of the Season.
2. Playing in other sports leagues is not advised. We find that athletes who try to play AAU Basketball, United Soccer, etc. often develop injuries and fatigue when they try to balance them with Track and Field. This is overtraining.
3. While we can't police this situation, we want you to think seriously about trying to do both things at once.
4. AT NO TIME WILL WE COORDINATE WITH ANOTHER SPORT. Track comes first. If you aren't willing to do Track 100%, then don't do Track!
5. If you are deceptive or dishonest about your sport participation, you will be dismissed from Track and Field.
6. Athletes who are participating in team lifting (Football) during Track will be expected to modify their work at certain times.

Before you ask a question, related to other sports...Reverse it in your head... Would you ask your basketball, soccer, volleyball coach for the same consideration during their season?

Overtraining:

1. The coaches develop a training plan with the correct amount of workload. Training and rest are balanced to make the best plan. Doing extra workouts and weightlifting sessions will not help you be a better athlete. This will lead to injuries and poor performance. Trust the Process.

Community Fun Runs:

1. The WIAA recently relaxed the rules on running in a community event. This does not mean you can just do them.
2. We don't want you to do this, so permission will rarely be given.
3. The WIAA requires a form to be completed and on file BEFORE the contest.
4. We will only allow this in special circumstances. Please communicate with Coach Fritz before you commit to a race. (INCLUDING THE EAU CLAIRE MARATHON)

Jobs

1. Working during the season can be tricky. You will need to be a good communicator with your employer.
2. Work is not an excuse to miss a meet or practice. Shifts should not start until 6 pm on weeknights.
3. Chronic conflicts will result in a request to make a choice.

Behavioral Expectations

Track is a serious endeavor. Problems occur when an athlete is there for purely social reasons. When an athlete isn't putting out a full effort to get better, they are a disruption and a waste of time and resources for our staff.

While your child will not be cut due to ability, they may be cut due to behavior and/or effort. Here are some unacceptable behaviors that give examples of things that will be addressed behaviorally. Keep in mind...we will have between 150-200 athletes in our program! We must be able to trust our athletes. We can't be monopolized by problematic participants who don't want to do the work

MAJOR Violations: Track requires individual responsibility. These are examples of things that will result in immediate dismissal from the team

- a. Leaving the meet site during a meet. We have a responsibility to monitor all students and this breach of trust is not acceptable.
- b. Theft, vandalism, or controlled substances at a meet or practice.
- c. Physical altercations.
- d. Dishonesty. For Example, misrepresenting an injury or reason for missing track practices/meets.

- e. Harassment or bullying of another athlete. Track is a safe place for everyone. We will treat everyone positively.
- f. Track and Field is co-ed, but it is not a venue to find a date or conduct a romantic relationship. Any type of romantic activity is forbidden.

These situations are rare, but the bus is a common location for behavioral issues.

Other Violations

These are other behaviors that will result in disciplinary action. Three steps of action will be taken.

1. A warning will be given to the athlete and emailed to the parent.
2. A call home and a meet suspension.
3. Removal from team.

Here are some examples of behaviors that will result in this three-step process. I cannot predict every situation, so other behaviors will also be addressed.

1. Disrupting practices or meetings by being disrespectful or inattentive.
2. Missing practices without prior authorization.
3. "Cheating" on warm-ups or workouts. This occurs when an athlete does not complete the prescribed warmups or workouts. This usually involves lying about the number of repetitions they do.
4. "Hiding": When an athlete, especially when off campus, disappears from the group to avoid a workout. This also includes getting "lost" on the way to the weight room or pool.
5. Taking a non-authorized route when off campus.
6. Leaving practice early.
7. Obnoxious behavior on the bus.
8. Refusing to help with their assigned jobs on meet day.