**Ella Banks Jr. High School**

**Cross Country**

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**Coach Robin Driver**

**robin.driver@lcisd.org**

**Banks Cross Country**

**Team Rules/Policies**

**Note: In order to run effective practices and have effective meet strategy, it is extremely important for the coaching staff to know exactly what personnel will be available on each day. Athletes and parents should make every reasonable effort to notify the coaching staff of every absence.**

Each day the coaches will check their e-mail and ParentSquare. Players and/or parents should e-mail or message Coach Driver, robin.driver@lcisd.org to report any absences that have not been reported to the player’s coach in advance.

**Excused Absence**

An excused absence is one of prior approval in the event of sickness, emergency, etc., where the coach has been notified in advance by a parent or the absent student and provided documentation of the absence (ex: Dr. Note). The coach has been notified by phone, parent square, or e-mail at least a week prior to the scheduled missed day in the event of previously scheduled Dr. appointments. If a student is too sick to attend practice or a cross country event, they should not attend school either.

**Unexcused Absence**

**All practices are mandatory.** It is understood that circumstances will arise when you must miss a practice (Illness, death in family, etc.). An unexcused absence is any absence from practice that is not a sickness, emergency, or previously listed circumstances, and where the coaching staff is not notified at least a week prior to the scheduled practice or meet day. Asking another player to notify the coaching staff is **not** acceptable. An athlete that has an unexcused absence during the week will not be permitted to participate in that week's meet.

**Unexcused Absence from Cross Country Meet**

Suspension from the team until a meeting with the player/coach/parent or guardian/athletic director/principal is held to determine what action will be taken.

**Suspension Related to Tardiness**

1st unexcused absence from practice, 30 Burpees, suspended for one meet.

2nd Two-meet suspension, meeting with coach/player/parent, and contract.

3rd Suspension from program until meeting with coach, player, parent, and campus athletic coordinator/principal can be held to determine the appropriate action.

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct on The Cross-Country Course and/or Insubordinate**

**Conduct in Class**

**Unsportsmanlike/Insubordinate:** 10-minute halo run; meeting with coach/player/parent.

**Fighting during a meet/Severe unsportsmanlike or insubordinate actions:** Meeting with player/coach/parent or guardian and athletic director/principal concerning appropriate action to be taken. Consequences could range from practice/meet suspension to expulsion from the program.

**Infractions Causing Police Action Unrelated to School Activities**

The student-athlete(s) involved will meet with the coaching staff, his parent(s), and school administrators to determine the appropriate action. If warranted, extended suspension or removal from the team will be considered. There will be a zero-tolerance policy for any drug/alcohol related infractions.

**Suspension and/or Disciplinary Action Not Covered Above**

A meeting with the player, his/her parent(s), and the coaching staff to determine the appropriate action. Removal from the program or a contract will be written during/following the meeting that will detail the suspension length and the consequences for further problems.

If, however, the coaching staff, principal(s), and/or athletic director feel that the action warranting the suspension is sufficient to consider extended suspension and/or removal from the program or there is a second infraction, the student-athlete(s) involved will meet with the coaching staff, his/her parent(s), and school administration to determine the appropriate action.

If any situation arises that is not covered above, the coaches, principal(s), and/or athletic director reserve the right to handle the situation and enforce disciplinary action as they see fit.

**Property Loss**

Each player will sign for the receipt of school equipment. If the players lose the apparel or equipment or fail to turn in all apparel and/or equipment issued, the player will be responsible for paying the cost of the equipment lost:

* **Cell Phones:** Players may carry cell phones with them in their backpacks or equipment bags during/after school hours only. The phones must be turned off during practice and during their event times at meets. Players may use the phones for emergency situations and may use them 10-15 minutes of arrival back to school from a competition in order to inform their parents to come and pick them up at Banks. SOCIAL PHONE TIME IS NOT PERMITTED DURING PRACTICE OR MEET TIMES.
* **Student/Coach Communication:** Players, when you first have a question or concern, contact your coach as a first step to problem solving. If we cannot solve the problem, we will then consult parents, administrators, etc. as the situation demands.
* **Parent/Coach Communication:** If a question arises, please contact the coaching staff by phone, in person, or through e-mail. As a coaching staff, we feel that we can respond to concerns more completely and satisfactorily in writing. However, we recognize that some questions and concerns do not need to be addressed in writing and can be solved quickly. Please use the communication method with which you feel most comfortable and that is situation appropriate. We do ask, however, that you refrain from asking for a conference on a meet day, either prior to or after the meet.

**Banks Cross Country**

**Philosophy**

The philosophy of the Banks Cross Country Program and its coaching staff is as follows:

* Cross Country athletes must succeed academically in order to provide a foundation for their future success as members of society; to provide them with the opportunity to continue participating in athletics.
* Being on the Cross-Country team is a privilege, not a right. Academics come first, and the Cross-Country program will provide academic monitoring and assist in student/parent/coach communication concerning academic progress.
* In order to maintain a strong, consistently performing program, the fundamental skills of each individual must be improved and/or maintained on a daily basis.
* Cross Country is an individual **AND** team sport. Our goal is to maximize the performance of the group by training both the individual athlete and the team as a unit. In order to accomplish this task, we ask for each player’s commitment to a strong work ethic, an attitude that sets a good example for his/her teammates, and a commitment to the philosophies and goals of the program.
* Being a part of the Banks Cross Country Program should be a positive, rewarding experience for the athletes and the coaches.
* No program can be successful without the support of the school district, its administrators and especially, the parents!
* Coaches will praise good effort and success. Coaches will correct and/or reinforce when unsatisfactory effort and/or execution takes place.
* Our goal, put simply, is: To enhance the lives of each athlete through their involvement in Cross Country at Ella Banks Jr. High School and to win at the District level.

*No student ever attained eminent success by simply doing what is required of him/her; it is the amount and excellence of what is over and above the required that determines the greatness of ultimate distinction.*

 ~ Charles Kendall Adams

**Banks Cross Country**

**Practice Protocol**

Goal: To create a disciplined, hard-working group of athletes, by conducting drills that are focused on targeting the physical and mental needs of the athletes and team.

* Be on time. Drop off starts at 6:30am at the Banks Gyms. Tardies start at 6:45am. On time does not simply mean that you are physically present. It means that your running shoes are on and laced up, and you are ready to begin. If the coach is ready to start the warm-up and you are still getting ready, then you are late, and the consequences outlined in this packet will be applied.
* It is expected that all players are always hustling and putting forth their best effort
* Players should be totally silent and maintain eye contact when a coach is talking. Whispering, giggling, making comments, looking around at other courts/players, etc. will not be tolerated.
* You should put forth the same effort in practice as you would in a championship meet. Remember, great players/teams become great at practice…if you are used to practicing at only 80% effort, then that is all you will get out of yourself in a meet. Push yourself to your limits and demand that of your teammates, as well. Don't think you can make up for something by trying twice as hard the next time. If you have it in you to do twice as hard, why aren't you doing it now?

*Practice like a champion today, and practice like a champion tomorrow, and soon you won't have to practice "like" a champion, but rather "as" a champion.*

 ~ Anonymous

**Banks Cross Country**

**Meet Day Protocol**

* All players participating in the meet that week will be dismissed from their class at the appropriate time by announcement or by passes from their Cross Country Coach
* When wearing the uniform or school name and colors, players should keep in mind that they are representing themselves, their family, Banks Jr. High School, and our program, and should act accordingly.
* **Parents** --- ***Please refrain from visiting with your daughter/son before their event/s.*** Athletes need to stay focused, and it is very difficult to stay focused with distractions.
* **Athletes**--- Stay focused on the meet. You are part of the team during each moment of the meet. Be present and encouraging to your teammates.
* **Athletes** --- Make sure **all equipment and meet day duties** are done make sure our team area is left clean (both at home and away).
* **MUSIC:** Players listen to music during team travel the music should not be able to be heard by anyone other than the user.
* **Parents -**-- Remember that, like your son/daughter, you are also representing Banks Jr. High School when you attend a meet. Talking negatively about another player or coach while attending as a spectator does not reflect well on you, our program, or our school. Please encourage **ALL** of our athletes. **We need as much positive energy on our side as possible!!!**
* **Players ---**
	+ **You are required to stay AT ALL MEETS until the completion of the meet. All players will be involved in field clean up, etc. and must ride the bus back to Banks.**

Exceptions must be approved **in advance** (the day before the event at the latest) through your team’s coach with an athlete travel request form.

**Banks Cross Country**

**Academic Policies**

Being on the Cross-Country team is a *privilege*, not a right. Academics come first, and the Cross-Country program will provide academic monitoring and assist in student/parent/coach communication concerning academic progress. Athletes must succeed academically in order to provide a foundation for their future success as members of society; to provide them with the opportunity to continue participating in athletics.

In accordance with UIL policy, no athlete will be permitted to play if he/she is failing a class at the time of an eligibility check.

In addition to the rules set by UIL, the Banks coaching staff has implemented a set of rules that all athletes will adhere to:

* If a player is ineligible at any point throughout the season, he/she will still be expected to attend and participate in all practices. He/She will not be permitted to compete in any cross country meets or travel with the team to any competitions.
* An ineligible player who is absent (excused or unexcused) from practice will still be subject to the consequences outlined earlier in this packet.
* Being ineligible for any portion of the season can affect meet participation once eligibility is regained.
* All athletes will be subject to adhere to a weekly progress report by his/her coach. Three consecutive failures will place an athlete on probation from participating in any events until grades are improved.
* Tutorials are encouraged for any athletes who may be experiencing academic difficulty. However, it is strongly encouraged that these tutorials take place during or after school, so they do not interfere with practice time before school.

*In order to excel, you must be completely dedicated to your chosen sport.*

 *You must also be prepared to work hard and be willing to accept constructive criticism*

*Without a total 100 percent dedication, you won't be able to do this.*

 ~ Willie Mays

**Banks Cross Country**

**Academic Expectations and Consequences**

All athletes are expected to be model students in all their classes and represent our program in a very positive manner at all times in the classroom. In the event that a player has an unacceptable progress or report card, or a discipline referral, there will be consequences.

All students are expected to keep A’s and B’s in their classes, each progress report and report card will be evaluated and the consequences for anything less than a B are:

**C** – (75-79%) Warning, tutorials recommended

**C** – (70-74%) 30 Burpees, mandatory tutorials in that class

**F** – (<70%) 30 Burpees, ineligible to compete in contests, mandatory tutorials in that class

Discipline Referral #1 – 50 Burpees

Discipline Referral #2 –10-minute halo run, meet with coach, discipline at coach's discretion

Discipline Referral #3 – Meet with coaches/parents/admin. Discipline at coach’s discretion

Coaches will address situations and deal with them in the way they think is best for the team.

Please keep in mind that some situations will occur that have not been stated above and the repercussions will be dealt with accordingly.

\**Coaches will perform random grade checks to review for zeroes as well. Any athlete with a zero in the grade book will face consequences after practices. Zeroes lead to low grades and can be easily avoided.*

**Policies on Travel/Club Teams**

Participation on sports teams and/or private instruction outside of school is allowed according to UIL and LCISD policy.

As a coaching staff, we encourage student-athletes to participate in training/playing year-round in order to further their athletic development.

*During the Junior High school season*, athletes are not allowed to practice with their club team until our season is over. **ALL** Jr. High school practices/meets should take priority over travel/club/private instruction events.

The coaching staff feels that the above guidelines are very fair to the student-athletes, our program, and the travel/club teams. Please keep in mind that at the Jr. high level, our focus is on district placing. We have a very short season and we have a goal that we are working towards and it takes all of us working to reach that. If any member of the team is injured (whether due to a specific event or overuse of body part) or absent, the team will be affected as well as our ability to reach our goals. If you have a question or concern about our position or policy, please contact the coaching staff.

As a parent, we understand your enthusiasm towards the development of your son/daughter as an athlete. We ask, however, that you keep in mind that during the season your son/daughter is attending school 5 days a week for 7 hours per day, with 1.5 to 2 hours of practice, or attending competitions that consume 2-4 hours on average of their day. The guys/girls are involved in something school-related on average over 50 hours not including study time. Please keep in mind that they are young – rest and leisure time are important as well (as they should be with everyone).

**BANKS Cross Country**

##  Rules for Athletes

1. No **WHINING**
2. **NO** excuses
3. No saying, “I can’t”
4. No foul language
5. **POSITIVE** = Support & Encouragement to everyone at **ALL** times
6. Player-coach communication
7. Separate friendship & team
8. **R-E-S-P-E-C-T**
9. Responsibility

-Punctual

-Preparation

1. Be a role model
2. Be accountable
3. Be consistent

## Rules for Parents

1. No bickering or gossip.
2. 24-hour rule
3. **POSITIVE** = Support & Encouragement to Everyone at **ALL** times
4. Player-coach communication 1st and then parent-coach communication if needed.
5. Let the Coach, coach!
6. Event warmup…. allow the athletes to focus without distractions
7. Competition Time: No criticism

## LET’S HAVE FUN!!!!

BANKS Cross Country

Commitment Contract

1. All practices are required. It is understood that circumstances will arise when you must miss a practice (Illness, death in family, etc.). When this happens, you are to inform the coach, preferably by phone or text, as far in advance as possible. **Communication is # 1 Priority!!**
2. **Please allow yourself to be coachable.** Some athletes feel they already know everything. This ties in heavily with attitude and how you **respect your coach**. Trust in your coach and allow your coach to coach you. It’s amazing how coaches and players build trust and how that correlates into playing and coaching hard for one another. Understand the coach’s coaching style and the different ways he/she passes on information, critiques and disciplines.
3. **Accountability &** **Responsibility is included in your attitude to be coached**
4. You are to treat your teammates, coaches, parents, fans, officials, and opposition with courtesy and respect at all times. Any behavior that hurts the development of a “team” attitude, questions the authority of the coach, or demonstrates a lack of self-control will not be tolerated.
5. You should understand that being part of a team would require sacrifices, adjustments, and extraordinary commitment. Each athlete, their families, and the coach will shoulder these responsibilities. Since we are working to build a successful team and program, all involved must expend extra effort. In return, players will have the opportunity to be a part of an experience that will affect their lives forever.
6. You will constantly be evaluated on your coachability, hustle, mental and physical toughness, loyalty, unselfishness, and desire to improve yourself and your team. The ultimate goal of these informal evaluations is to field a team of athletes that demand more of themselves than is demanded from the coaches. **COMMIT, TRUST, WORK – Our Motto!**
7. Our practices will be designed in a way that provide an equal opportunity for each player to improve their individual skills. In this way, practice is more important than the meets. You must understand that the opportunity to improve lies predominantly in practice.
8. In the meets, our primary goal will be to win. This should not be confused with the ultimate goal of competing on this team, which is to improve and have fun.
9. Remember this quote: **More Skill = More Fun……. Hard Work = More Skill!**
10. **Playing time will not be equal**. Your ability to accept your role on this team-whether it is running in a meet or not will almost single handedly determine the success of the team.
11. If there is a conflict of interest or opinion, the matter will be discussed in a civil manner at the discretion of the coach. The discussion shall not take place before, after or during a meet. We all understand the bias formulated when there are loved ones around. Please have an open mind and understand that decisions are made based on the team not individuals.
12. Finally, you will only be asked to do three things on this team: give a great Commitment to the team, which correlates to having fun, give your best effort each and every time you step out onto the course, and be humble. If this effort produces positive results, fine. If the results are negative, that is ok. What will not be tolerated is anything less than your best effort. While the coach will be able to determine your best effort, you are the only person that really knows whether or not you gave it your all.

BANKS Cross Country

Discipline System

# Minor Offenses

1. Being Tardy to practice, meet or any team meeting or function. Do not be late! **Communication is the key. Don’t catch the coaches off guard.**
2. Failure to communicate with the head coach regarding practice absences. **Communication is the key.**
3. Profanity, never
4. When practice or meets are going on the coaches need your full attention and not focused on the other teams or your friends or parents.

\*Each player must be accountable for all actions. Failure to comply with the above mentioned will result in 30 burpees after practice. If breaking these rules becomes a habit, the coaches will act in the best interest of the team.

## More Serious Offenses

1. Inappropriate behavior or unsportsmanlike behavior with the coaches.
2. Missing a practice without consent or communication.
3. Showing disrespect to coaches, officials or opposing teams.
4. Negative attitude toward teammates or coaches and failure to support your team.

\*Serious Offenses will also be dealt with accordingly from the coaches. Could result in sitting out a meet. If this incident happens more than once, it may be grounds for removal from the team at the coach’s discretion.

Grounds for Immediate Dismissal from the Team

1. Fighting

2. Unlawful behavior

3. Inability to follow parent’s guidelines and expectations can affect your participation on this team

Coaches will address situations and deal with them in the way they think is best for the team.

Please keep in mind that some situations will occur that have not been stated above and the repercussions will be dealt with accordingly.

All athletes must show respect by addressing coach as, Coach Driver, and must not disagree with coach in front of others. If a player has a concern, they may meet with the coach individually to express concerns. It is expected that all players show respect to each other.

**24-hour rule:** If any parent has a concern that they wish to express with the coaching staff they may schedule a meeting any time after 24 hours of the situation they are concerned with. We welcome any discussions dealing with your son/daughter, but not about the entire team or any other player.

**Banks Jr. High School**

**Contact Information**

Head Boys/Girls Coach: Robin Driver

 robin.driver@lcisd.org

Trainer: Cassiddi Roark
Cassiddi.Roark@memorialhermann.org

Campus Athletic Coordinator: Mathew Jenkins
 mathew.jenkins@lcisd.org

Athletic Coordinator: Kiah Johnson

 cejohnson@lcisd.org

Principal: Courtney Dickey

 courtney.dickey@lcisd.org

**BANKS Cross Country**

**Signature Page**

This packet contains valuable information about the rules and policies set forth by the coaching staff at Ella Banks Jr. High School. The staff understands that special circumstances may arise, and these may have to be dealt with in a manner that is not addressed in this packet. However, most scenarios have been covered in great detail, and all the rules, policies and consequences will be upheld and enforced.

By signing the signature form found here by Thursday, 10/09/25, I agree to adhere to all rules and guidelines set forth in this contract:

I, (**printed player’s name**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, have read this packet and understand the rules and policies set forth by the coaching staff at Ella Banks Jr. High School. I understand that I am responsible for the decisions that I make, and I will abide by the rules set forth by the coaching staff. I understand that this signature will be kept on file for the entire season and off-season, and I will be held accountable for all policies set forth in this packet, effective October 9th, 2025.

I, (**printed parent’s name**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, have read this packet and understand the rules and policies set forth by the coaching staff at Ella Banks Jr. High School. I understand that my son/daughter is responsible for the decisions that he/she makes, and he/she must abide by the rules set forth by the coaching staff. I understand that this signature will be kept on file for the entire season and off-season, and my son/daughter will be held accountable for all policies set forth in this packet, effective October 9th, 2025.