

Track and Field Handbook

2027

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Our Mission

"...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." ~Hebrews 12:1

The goal of York County Trailblazers is to promote a lifelong love of running and instill an overall sense of health and wellness. We desire to grow each individual as a stronger, disciplined athlete who will honor God both in and out of competition. We want teammates who will do their best, encourage one another, have fun, and honor Christ.

We believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible, authoritative word of God. We believe Jesus is God's Son and He is the only way to have forgiveness for our sins. We believe that Christ should be glorified in all we do. This is the core belief system of the coaching staff, though we do not require runners to profess the same beliefs. Anyone is welcome on the team, provided they understand these Christian beliefs will be an overt and freely-shared part of our time together. We will include prayer and/or devotions at our practices and meets.

Our History

Our local cross country team was originally established as the York County Jaguars in 2011, and in 2014, the team name was changed to the York County Trailblazers.

The York County Trailblazers expanded in 2026 to offer Track and Field during the spring season.

Track and Field

Track & Field is a team sport including a variety of competitions running various distances from a short 100m sprint to a 3200m race on a track. In addition, there are relays, hurdles, throwing, and jumping events. The top 4-8 finishers in each event score points, with first place scoring the highest. Scores across both running and field events are totaled to determine the team with the most points. Our team is structured so that every athlete has a chance to participate in events that match their interests and skills.

Eligibility

I. Students grades 6-12 are eligible to be members of York County Trailblazers (YCTB) if:

A. They are educated per the South Carolina Code of Laws 59-65-40, 59-65-45, 59-65-46, or 59-65-47.
B. They are educated per the virtual charter school method under the South Carolina Code of Laws 59-40.

II. YCTB shall limit their student athletes to youth residing in York County and any North or South Carolina county that borders York County. Those residing in a neighboring North Carolina County must homeschool according to the laws of their state.

III. Parents or Guardians are responsible for ensuring that their student is making satisfactory academic progress by maintaining a 2.5 GPA in order to participate in interscholastic activities. YCTB shall require and maintain a signed statement from Parents or Guardians that their student is academically eligible to participate in interscholastic activities.

IV. A student is INELIGIBLE to participate in athletics if his/her 19th birthday is on or before July 1, prior to the upcoming school year.

V. Once an athlete reaches age 15 on or before July 1, he/she will have a maximum of four (4) consecutive years of high school eligibility given they do not age out as mentioned in IV.

VI. Students in grade 6 may not be eligible for all meets the team attends. When competing against SCISA teams, 6th graders shall adhere to the applicable grade level eligibility requirements. SCHSL teams do not allow 6th graders to participate.

VII. Athletes must have a physical on file to meet medical clearance requirements, a signed waiver and release (signed by a parent or guardian), and emergency contact and medical consent forms on file, and all fees must be paid before being allowed to participate in any activities. Only registered athletes may participate in practices, meets, or other team activities, including trial or visiting runners.

VIII. We seek to be guided by orthodox Christian principles, so each athlete is only permitted to compete according to his or her biological gender as recognized at birth.

CODE OF CONDUCT

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in Your sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.” ~ Psalm 19:14

Coach Requirements

Coaches are vital in helping youth build confidence, leadership skills, and a lifelong appreciation for physical activity and teamwork. Coaches are responsible for promoting individual growth in athletic skills, teamwork, discipline, respect, and good sportsmanship through varied instructional techniques tailored to athletes’ skill levels. Core duties include designing and implementing training programs, organizing and leading practices, scheduling meets, and coaching teams during competitions.

Coaches play a critical role in youth development by serving as mentors, role models, and advocates. They build trust and create supportive environments where young athletes feel valued and heard, often providing guidance that extends beyond sports into life challenges. They emphasize skills such as resilience, fair play, and sportsmanship, and encourage positive behavior from both players and parents. Coaches are expected to set realistic expectations, and always maintain proper team behavior.

Administrative and organizational responsibilities include having full knowledge of the rules and regulations governing any association that the team is participating in, coordinating schedules with other staff, managing equipment and supplies, maintaining records, and ensuring compliance with safety, nondiscriminatory & code of conduct policies. They must also handle emergency procedures, such as responding to injuries, and representing the Corporation professionally. Coaches are required to attend staff development meetings, complete mandatory training in CPR, First Aid, concussion management, and child abuse prevention, and undergo criminal background checks at the cost of the Corporation before working with athletes, renewed at least every two years.

Additionally, coaches are expected to communicate effectively with parents and guardians, often holding initial meetings to outline expectations and establish clear lines of communication. They may also encourage parental involvement in volunteer roles such as fundraising, transportation, and facility maintenance. Coaches will work within a broader organizational structure, collaborating with the Executive Director, board members, and program administrators to align with the Corporation’s mission and strategic goals.

For all future head coach vacancies, applicants must submit an application to the Executive Director for approval and consent to a criminal background check. All head coaches shall be responsible for selecting their coaching staff, subject to prior approval by the Executive Director and the successful completion of criminal background checks. Coaches shall also be accountable for the conduct of their coaching staff and the parents of players on their team during all organized team events and functions.

Parent Responsibilities

1. Model good sportsmanship and encourage positive behavior at all practices and meets.
2. Ensure your child arrives on time for practices and meets.
3. Make sure your child commits to attending at least three practices a week, one of which will be Saturday morning on the track.
4. Communicate absences to the coaches.
5. Respect the decisions of all coaches and officials.
6. Prioritize the physical and emotional well-being of all athletes above any personal desire to win.
7. In the case of injury, if your child needs to see a doctor for an injury, a doctor's note is required to return to practice.
8. Maintain a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free environment during all Trailblazer events.
9. Address any concerns with the coach privately and respectfully.
10. Adhere to a 24-hour "cooling off" period before discussing any meet-related concerns with a coach. This means refraining from confronting coaches within 24 hours of a meet.
11. Direct unresolved concerns to the Board.

Athlete Responsibilities

1. Arrive on time for practices and meets ready to listen, learn, and do your best.
2. Follow the instructions given by the coaches during all practices and meets.
3. Be respectful of coaches, officials, teammates, and competitors from other teams. Be mindful of including others and avoiding cliques.
4. Use words that build up and encourage, not ones that tear down. See Ephesians 4:29.
    a. Refrain from speaking poorly about any teammate, parent, or official both in front of others or behind their back. Cliques are hurtful and will be discouraged.
    b. Use appropriate language. Profanity will not be tolerated. If in doubt with a word, please refrain from using it. See Psalm 19:14
5. Use your best behavior at all times. We are guests of the locations we practice and race and poor behavior will reflect poorly on our team, our coaches, and homeschooling.
6. Adhere to the dress guidelines in this handbook.
7. Be prepared for both practices and meets.
8. Practice expectations:
    a. Commit to attending practice at least three times per week, one of which will be Saturday mornings on the track.
    b. Arrive on time or early.
    c. Plan to stay for the entire practice unless you have notified the coach in advance. Athletes needing to leave practices for dual credit classes may do so after first contacting the coach. All other athletes are expected to stay at practice until dismissed by a coach.
    d. Have the necessary equipment needed including appropriate footwear, towel/yoga mat, and plenty of water.
    e. In winter months and cold days, it is mandatory to wear long sleeves and long pants. Athletes may take long sleeves and long pants off at some point during practice if they get hot.

f. Athletes who fail to attend practice regularly and/or do not participate in the assigned workouts will not participate in meets.

9. Meet expectations:
    a. Meets can be very chaotic; stay with the team or teammates during meets.
    b. Please encourage and support your teammates. This means being around the track cheering for your teammates. We ask that you remain at meets until all team members have finished.
    c. All athletes should cool down after races.
    d. Plan to participate in as many meets as possible. When runners do not come, they let their teammates down. Those who practice and race consistently will see the most improvement in times and overall fitness. We are selective in choosing our meets--ones that will enable our athletes to have fun and feel successful against good competition. There is a place for all abilities on our team. Everyone is important!
    e. Please note that some meets have qualifying standards or limit entries and only athletes meeting those standards will be able to participate. As coaches, we will make sure that all athletes have opportunities to participate in as many meets as possible.

Misconduct Actions

Conduct which is not in compliance with the Code of Conduct and/or is detrimental to the team by athletes or parents may result in the athlete's dismissal from the program. Fees will not be refunded in the event of dismissal.

1. Verbal warning. Coaches will issue a verbal warning followed by a written email.
2. Report to the Board. The head coach will report any player misconduct to the Board within twenty-four (24) hours of the offense. The head coach is authorized to take immediate interim action, including suspension or temporary revocation of a player's privileges to participate in Corporation activities, pending final determination by the Board.

Suspension

Upon receiving notice of misconduct by any coach, player, parent, guardian, or guest affiliated with the Corporation, the Board shall promptly review the report and determine the appropriate action, which may include a warning, suspension, or removal, and shall notify the head coach of the affected team of its decision within twenty-four (24) hours. Where the conduct poses a risk to the safety of any athlete, the Board or the head coach may suspend the offender(s) immediately, pending the Board's review. All disciplinary decisions shall be made in accordance with the rules and policies established by the Corporation and, when applicable, the regulations of the association with which the Corporation is affiliated.

Right to Appeal

Any athlete, parent, guardian, coach, or volunteer whose participation has been suspended or revoked may appeal the decision to the Board. Appeals must be submitted in writing by email to the Board Secretary within fourteen (14) days of written notice of the suspension or removal. An appeal by an athlete under 18 must be submitted or co-signed by a parent or guardian. Any interim suspension

remains in effect while an appeal is pending. The Board, or a panel of three (3) disinterested directors appointed by the Chair, will review the appeal at a regular meeting or at a special meeting called with at least forty-eight (48) hours' notice as required by the Bylaws, and will issue a written decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the appeal. Appeals follow Step 3 of the Parent and Participant Grievance Policy (GP-1.30). The decision of the Board shall be final.

TEAM POLICIES

Uniform and Dress Guidelines

For meets, athletes are expected to wear a team singlet, black shorts with a 5" inseam, and running shoes. A solid black compression shirt or black compression shorts may be worn under the uniform. Athletes not in uniform will not be permitted to race.

For practices, please invest in appropriate footwear. Running shoes are an athlete's number one piece of equipment. Investing in appropriate footwear will be the best prevention for injuries. Shoes will last 300-500 miles, so runners can get a full season out of them. Spikes may be worn for races; spike lengths should be no longer than 1/4 inch for track. Not all runners are ready for racing spikes; please see a coach before making a purchase.

Shirts will be worn at all times.
Shirts may not contain offensive writing.
Shirts must completely cover the midriff even when arms are raised or when reaching.
For girls, sports bras should be covered by the runner's shirt.
Shorts should be modest and not revealing.
Pants and shorts must be worn at the natural waist and undergarments should not be visible.
Compression pants or shorts may be worn under shorts, but not by themselves.
Minimum short length for all team events is 5".

Communication

Once registered for the season, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining the team on the SportsYou app. With the exception of a few emails, SportsYou will be used for all communication. Once you join our team, please choose to receive notifications to stay up to the minute with weekly newsletters, calendar information, and last minute updates.

The calendar on SportsYou will be kept current and will show meets, practices, and any other team events. Each week the coaches will post a weekly newsletter with pertinent information for that week on SportsYou. There will be a notification posted to the Team Feed and the file will be in the Files section. Please use this platform to indicate your attendance, as this will help with planning and meet entries.

We usually run in most weather, with the exception of thunderstorms and icy conditions. Weather cancellations and any other last-minute updates will be posted to the Team Feed.

*If your child will need to miss a practice/meet unexpectedly, please text the head coach, so they can make the appropriate adjustments. This is extremely important for meets and relays.

Varsity Letter Award

Please read the guidelines set forth below. Final awarding of varsity letters remains the ultimate discretion of the coaching staff. Varsity letters are meant to be earned through hard work and discipline over time and may take multiple years of growth to earn. Varsity letters will be awarded separately to both athletes on the Middle School and High School teams.

Athletes are eligible to receive varsity letters if they meet ALL of the following criteria:

1. Participate in 80% of the meets. Exceptions may be made in the event a runner ends up injured at some point during the season. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the amount of season missed.
2. Attend at least 80% of scheduled practices. Again, injuries will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and injured runners should make a plan with the coaches for practice attendance. One week grace will be given in the event of illness or vacation. In the event of vacation, runners should discuss with coaches an individual plan to run on their own.
3. Are top 3 in their event on the team OR score 8 or more points in meets during the course of the season.
4. Display leadership character--a hard-working, positive attitude and spirit of encouragement towards teammates.

*Seniors who have fully participated in track all four years of high school will be awarded a varsity letter.

Volunteer Positions

The more volunteers we have, the better able we will be to meet the individual needs of our runners. Running experience is not necessary! Coaches will communicate needs as they come up. Here are some ways parents may be able to help:

1. Help with timing intervals at practice.
2. Help putting out and/or picking up equipment at practice.
3. Beginning of year kickoff party planning.
4. Help lead party planning.
5. Team photographer. This person would be responsible for taking our team photo and also race photos and sending them out to the team.
6. Provide snacks, drinks, or cool washcloths at meets.
7. Organize fun activities outside of team practices and meets.

Appendix A

YOUTH PROTECTION & SAFETY

Code of Conduct

All adults and youth participants must:

- Treat all youth with respect and dignity.
- Refrain from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or harassment.
- Avoid unsupervised one-on-one contact with youth.
- Follow all organizational safety rules.

Background Checks

- Required for all staff, coaches, and Board members who interact with youth.
- Checks include criminal and sex offender registry reviews and are updated at least every two years.
- Checks must be completed and cleared before a person's first practice, meet, or team event.
- The Executive Director keeps a screening log and confirms all checks are current before each season.
- A person whose check has lapsed may not work with youth until it is renewed.

Supervision

- Youth shall always be supervised by at least two (2) adults.
- Private, one-on-one, interactions without visibility or parental consent are prohibited.
- Electronic communication between coaches and athletes shall take place through SportsYou or with a parent or guardian included. Private one-on-one messaging is prohibited.

Mandatory Reporting

Any suspected abuse or unsafe conditions must be reported immediately to local authorities and the Corporation's leadership, in accordance with South Carolina law.

Training

All staff, coaches, and Board members who interact with youth must complete annual training in:

- Child abuse prevention
- Recognizing abuse or neglect
- Safe sports practices

Training records shall be maintained by the Corporation.

Transportation and Travel

- Adults transporting youth must be licensed and insured.
- Two (2) adults must accompany youth during travel arranged by the Corporation for practices or competitions. This does not apply to parents or guardians driving their own children or to carpools arranged among families.
- Youth shall not be left unsupervised in vehicles or lodging.

Health and Safety

- Emergency contact and medical consent forms are required for all participants.
- First aid kits and emergency procedures must be available at all activities.
- The Corporation's AED shall be on site at all practices and meets.

Enforcement

Violation of this policy may result in immediate suspension or removal from participation, employment, or volunteer service. The Board may take additional disciplinary or legal action as necessary.

Appendix B

TEAM RECORDS

HIGH SCHOOL TEAM RECORDS

GIRLS

Event	*Mark*	*Athlete*	*Year*
100m	14.48	Quinn Hines	2026
200m	30.35	Quinn Hines	2026
400m	01:13.43	Hannah Horton	2026
800m	02:55.72	Anna Pauling	2026
1600m	06:21.39	Anna Pauling	2026
3200m	14:07.77	Anna Pauling	2026
4x100m Relay	01:00.03	S Jerdon, A Horton, H Horton, Q Hines	2026
4x800m Relay	12:29.99	I Shaw, M Dumas, K Gorman, A Pauling	2026
Discus	27.19m	Anne Ward	2026
Javelin	18.00m	Kara Gorman	2026

Boys

Event	*Mark*	*Athlete*	*Year*
100m	11.67	Jackson Dawson	2026
200m	24.09	Jackson Dawson	2026
400m	53.71	Michael Jugan	2026
800m	02:16.86	Kyle Elhardt	2026
1600m	04:57.00	Luke Mendenhall	2026
3200m	10:53.93	Luke Mendenhall	2026
4x100m Relay	00:46.66	C Wallace, J Dawson, J McCaughlin, M Jugan	2026
4x400m Relay	03:57.36	C Wallace, K Elhardt, D Cauthen, M Jugan	2026
4x800m Relay	09:27.32	E Smith, J Andersen, K Johnson, L Mendenhall	2026
Discus	26.27m	Blaise Keen	2026
Shot Put	8.30m	Blaise Keen	2026
Javelin	30.30m	Blaise Keen	2026

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM RECORDS

GIRLS

Event	*Mark*	*Athlete*	*Year*
100m	14.53	Clara Dawson	2026
200m	30.99	Malize Wallace	2026
400m	01:17.26	Kaylin Grimshaw	2026
800m	03:19.94	Kaylin Grimshaw	2026
1600m	06:53.75	RoseMarie Keen	2026
4x100m Relay	01:01.61	V Gentry, S Dawson, M Wallace, C Dawson	2026
4x400m Relay	05:32.32	C Dawson, R Keen, S Dawson, K Grimshaw	2026
Discus	15.16m	RoseMarie Keen	2026

BOYS

Event	*Mark*	*Athlete*	*Year*
100m	13.80	Jeremiah Mendenhall	2026
200m	28.56	Jeremiah Mendenhall	2026
400m	01:09.90	Chase McCowen	2026
800m	02:33.32	Joshua Grimshaw	2026
1600m	05:40.69	Joshua Grimshaw	2026
3200m	12:17.02	Joshua Grimshaw	2026
4x200m Relay	02:03.34	A Matta, T Keen, M Duncan, J Mendenhall	2026
4x400m Relay	04:33.56	J Mendenhall, Z Duncan, J Grimshaw, M Duncan	2026
4x800m Relay	11:21.50	M Duncan, Z Duncan, J Tyndale, J Grimshaw	2026
Discus	27.81m	Dezi Burney	2026