



SHCA Track and Field Program

The SHCA track and field program aims to improve the physical ability and skills of the student athletes and promote an environment of sportsmanship and teamwork while supplying a fun and rewarding activity to all the participants.

The track and field program runs from early March to late May. There are four level - Little Runners, Developmental, Junior Varsity and Varsity. Little Runners have sessions 1 day a week, while the other teams all practice together 2-3 times a week. Starting in mid-April, all the teams except the Little Runners take part in approximately four Diocesan meets plus the Diocesan Championships. All meets and Championships are normally held on Saturdays. The meets are scored in three tiers: Developmental, Junior Varsity, and Varsity. The Diocesan Championship for Developmental is held separately from the Diocesan Championships for Junior Varsity and Varsity.

Each Track and Field team **must** have the following to take part in the program:

1. A volunteer **Head Coach** with the proper clearances to coordinate practices and run the team at meets. The Head Coach is appointed by the Athletic Director and approved by the school principal.
2. At least one volunteer **Assistant Coach** with the proper clearances to help with practices and meets and to take control of the team in the absence of the Head Coach. Assistant Coaches may be proposed by the Head Coach and are approved by the Athletic Director.
3. A volunteer **Team Parent** to coordinate any activities for the team throughout the season. This includes scheduling the required volunteers to serve at meets.

Progression of Skills

Below is the progression of skills that coaches will aid athletes in mastering during their time competing in track and field at SHCA.

Little Runners Level - Grades Pre to 2

The Little Runners is an intramural program that runs from early September to late October in the Fall and from early April to late May in the Spring. There is one session per week at approximately one hour per session. There are no formal meets.

Little Runners focuses on the most fundamental skills and fitness, such as:

- Proper running form
- Proper technique for dynamic stretches
- An introduction to relays

At this level, we want to supply a positive and enjoyable environment where the athletes engage in running games and other fun running activities. We also begin teaching the need for listening to the coach, respecting teammates, sharing and fair play.

Developmental - Grades 3 to 4

The Developmental Track and Field program is focused on introducing students to the sport. Coaches will emphasize:

- Proper running form
- Proper technique for dynamic stretches and plyometrics



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- Endurance for longer races
- An introduction to hand-offs
- An introduction to long jump and javelin
- The importance of listening to coaches, respecting teammates, and conducting oneself with good sportsmanship

Junior Varsity - Grades 5 to 6

This intermediate level builds on prior skills and adds an introduction to shot put and starting blocks. Coaches will emphasize:

- Continued improvement in running form
- Continued improvement in technique for dynamic stretches and plyometrics
- Endurance and strategy for longer races
- Continued improvement in hand-off technique
- Improvement in form for long jump and javelin
- An introduction to shot put
- An introduction to starting blocks for sprinters
- The importance of listening to coaches, respecting teammates, and conducting oneself with good sportsmanship
- The importance of acting as a role model for younger athletes

Varsity Grades 7-8

This final level builds on prior skills, adds an introduction to discus, and prepares students for the rigors of a high school track and field program. Coaches will emphasize:

- Continued improvement in running form
- Continued improvement in technique for dynamic stretches and plyometrics
- Endurance and strategy for longer races
- Continued improvement in hand-off technique
- Continued improvement in form for long jump, javelin, and shot put
- Continued improvement in starting block technique
- An introduction to discus
- The importance of listening to coaches, respecting teammates, and conducting oneself with good sportsmanship
- Team leadership skills

Coaching Approach

The Track and Field program encompasses many age levels and many events. The coaches will work together to ensure that the athletes are performing to the best of their ability, learning how to be part of a team, and developing a love of the sport. To carry out these goals:

- The Head Coach will handle the overall team management and oversee all events. When slotting athletes into events, the Head Coach will consider athlete interests, the likelihood of scoring in the relevant tiers, the timing of events, the strength of each athlete, and the meet rules that govern entries. The Head Coach will also keep a record



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of personal records (PRs) and conduct a debriefing after each meet to highlight successes and motivate the athletes. Organizational skills are paramount to making sure each athlete is a valued member of the team.

- An Assistant Coach (or the Head Coach) should be appointed as the Sprint Coach. The Sprint Coach should be well-versed in the sprinter events (50m to 400m), sprinter running technique, hand-offs, and starting blocks.
- An Assistant Coach (or the Head Coach) should be appointed as the Mid-Distance Coach. The Mid-Distance Coach should be well-versed in mid-distance and distance events (800m to 3200m), running technique and strategy, and hand-offs.
- One of the Assistant Coaches (or the Head Coach) should be appointed as the Throwing Coach. The Throwing Coach should be well-versed in throwing technique.
- One of the Assistant Coaches (or the Head Coach) should be appointed as the Jumping Coach. The Jumping Coach should be well-versed in jumping technique.
- All coaches should teach students to conduct themselves with good sportsmanship, respect teammates, and listen to the coaches.
- Coaches should cultivate a positive atmosphere. ***Athletes should enjoy and take pride in being part of the team. The goal is to develop a love of the sport.***