

# HCAA CROSS COUNTRY COACH HANDBOOK 2021-2022

*(revised Sept. 6, 2021)*

## **Disclaimer:**

*This Handbook is not intended to be complete or all-encompassing. Please refer to policy and procedures (SHSAA, HCAA, Board/Band) or seek assistance from your school administration, school Athletic Director, or Brian Grest (Horizon SD ASA) if clarification is needed.*

*An attempt has been made to make this Handbook as accurate as possible, but mistakes will likely occur. In the event of conflicting information between the information in this Handbook and SHSAA/HCAA/Board/Band policy and procedures, the latter would take precedent.*

## **Quick Tips:**

- Check e-mails daily or many times daily.
- When uncertain, look it up or ask someone. Do not assume.
- **Horizon SD coaches:** Read through your **funding guide(s)** and form(s) BEFORE the season begins so you understand what is funded and at what level. Budget accordingly.

## **FAQs:**

Q: How are invitational meets related to HCAA (pre-district/district) and SHSAA (provincial) championship meets?

A: They are unrelated. You do not have to take part in one to take part in the other.

Q: If I have questions, who do I ask?

A: Start with your school's Athletic Director or try Brian Grest at [brian.grest@horizonsd.ca](mailto:brian.grest@horizonsd.ca), 306-231-8284 (mobile or text), or 306-682-1016 (office).

Q: **Horizon SD coaches:** Where are the funding guides and forms?

A: Go to the Horizon School Division website. Choose the "HCAA" link across the top. Choose the "Horizon SD Activities Funding Forms" (2<sup>nd</sup> link down the right side).

**COVID-19 NOTE:** *The HCAA will be following the Horizon SD COVID-19 protocols. These protocols are not contained within this document; any and all COVID-19 protocol information will be e-mailed directly to the coaches.*

# Contents:

## 1. Coaches and Qualifications

- a) Who can coach?
- b) Qualifications

## 2. Age Groups, Distances, & Student-Athlete Eligibility

- a) Age Groups & Distances
- b) Junior vs. Senior (SHSAA Team Entry Form)
- c) Eligibility

## 3. Resources and References for Coaches

- a) SHSAA Handbook
- b) SHSAA Website and Office
- c) HCAA – Website, Bylaws and Policy
- d) ASA (Horizon School Division’s Administrator of Student Activities)

## 4. Registering Teams (Beginning of the Season)

- a) Senior
- b) Junior

## 5. Start Date for Practices (all cross country programs)

## 6. Maximum Number of Meets (Intermediate/Junior/Senior)

## 7. Championship Playoffs

- a) HCAA Pre-Districts & Districts/SHSAA Provincials
- b) Championship Playoff Dates
- c) Bids to Host
- d) Booking of Accommodations (Provincials)

## 8. Invitational Meets

## 9. Funding – Horizon SD schools (*non-Horizon SD schools shall consult their own Board/Band policy*)

- a) Finding the Funding Guides and Forms (Horizon SD schools)
- b) Cross Country “Program” Defined (Horizon SD schools)
- c) Funding Overview (Horizon SD schools)
- d) Out-of-Pocket Expenses (Horizon SD schools)
- e) Funding Detail (Horizon SD schools)

## 10. Team Fees and Fundraising

## 11. Communication with Student-Athletes & Parents/Guardians

## 12. Extra-Curricular Hours

## 13. Travel

- a) Booking and Reimbursement (Horizon SD)
- b) Travel Forms (Horizon SD)
- c) Weather and Road Conditions

## 14. Medical Considerations

- a) First Aid Kit
- b) Medical Forms
- c) Concussion Protocol

## 15. Coach Contact Lists

## Appendix A – Required Courses for Coaches

# 1. Coaches and Qualifications

## a) Who can coach?

A **current teacher** (teacher currently under a teaching contract with the school's Board or Band) is approved to coach any team in that school (notwithstanding the qualifications referenced below).

A **non-faculty coach** – a person who is **NOT** a current teacher (they are not a teacher, or not a teacher currently under a contract with the school's Board or Band) – may coach a team in that school (notwithstanding the qualifications referenced below) if one of these two conditions are met:

1. They are formally **approved as a non-faculty coach** in the current school year by their Board/Band. *Horizon SD SCHOOLS: current Horizon SD procedure requires ALL non-faculty coaches to be formally approved by the Horizon SD Board unless an exception is granted in writing by Deputy Director of Education Randolph MacLEAN. Other schools please consult your Board/Band policy.*

Approval allows that coach to work with the student-athletes **without a teacher-supervisor present**.

The non-faculty coach approval process involves each of the following:

- a. SHSAA Form E-14 must be completed and submitted.  
*Horizon SD SCHOOLS – For first-time applicants, please use the new online process. Have your principal initiate it at <https://www.horizonsd.ca/Services/APsandForms/Pages/AP496.aspx>.  
– For renewals, please use the simplified Word document method. Have your principal access it [HERE](#) (scroll about 10 lines from the top).*
- b. The person seeking approval has been out of high school for at least four years. *Horizon SD SCHOOLS – this is waived for those coaching ONLY GRADE 8 AND YOUNGER students. Other schools please consult your Board/Band policy.*
- c. The person seeking approval has provided references attesting to suitability and qualifications as outlined in their Board's/Band's policy. *Horizon SD SCHOOLS – this is currently only required at the principal's or superintendent's request. Other schools please consult your Board/Band policy.*
- d. The person seeking approval has completed the SHSAA-mandated coaching courses ("Respect in Sport" and "Making Head Way in Sport"). *Horizon SD SCHOOLS must attach a copy of the completion certificate (RIS) and coach.ca transcript (MHIS) with the E-14 application. Other schools please consult your Board/Band policy.*
- e. If the person seeking approval has not ever been previously approved as a non-faculty coach by the SHSAA or their Board/Band, they must complete the SHSAA-mandated coaching course for non-faculty coaches ("Coaching School Sport: Redefining Winning"). *Horizon SD SCHOOLS must submit a copy of the completion certificate with the E-14 application. Other schools please consult your Board/Band policy.*
- f. *Horizon SD SCHOOLS - the person seeking approval must submit (or if a Horizon SD employee, have on file with HR) a valid and current Vulnerable Sector Check. Other schools please consult your Board/Band policy.*

**OR**

2. A current teacher is assigned as the teacher-supervisor **AND** is present at all times when the non-faculty coach is working with the student-athletes **AND** the school's principal has approved the non-faculty coach **AND** the non-faculty coach has completed the SHSAA-mandated coaching

courses (“Respect in Sport” and “Making Head Way in Sport”). *Horizon SD SCHOOLS – this is allowed only as an EXCEPTION granted in writing by Supervisor of Deputy Director of Education Randolph MacLEAN. A valid and current Vulnerable Sector Check must be submitted.*

## b) Qualifications

- i) **MANDATORY** – Every junior or senior head coach, assistant coach, or teacher-supervisor in **every HCAA school** MUST complete (or have previously completed) the “**Respect in Sport**” online course (or recognized equivalent), and have done so theoretically prior to the beginning of the season. It takes about three hours and is free. Click [HERE](#) for further details.
- ii) **MANDATORY** – Every junior or senior head coach, assistant coach, or teacher-supervisor in **every HCAA school** MUST complete (or have previously completed) the “**Making Head Way in Sport**” online course (or recognized equivalent), and have done so theoretically prior to the beginning of the season. It takes about thirty minutes and is free. Click [HERE](#) for further details.
- iii) **NON-FACULTY COACHES** – A person applying for **first time approval** as a non-faculty coach MUST complete (or have previously completed) the “Coaching School Sport: Redefining Winning” online course. “Approved non-faculty coach” status cannot be awarded until this course is completed. Click [HERE](#) for further details.

As of 2021, the “Coaching School Sport: Redefining Winning” course costs \$53.95. *Horizon SD SCHOOLS may submit a copy of the invoice to the ASA (Brian Grest) for full reimbursement.*

**FURTHER REQUIREMENTS** of non-faculty coaches (E-14 form, out of school four years, references, Vulnerable Sector Check) are outlined on the previous page.

## 2. Age Groups, Distances, & Student-Athlete Eligibility

### a) Age Groups & Distances

Cross Country is the only HCAA activity where **grade 5 students** are eligible to compete (grade 6 is the youngest grade for every other activity).

Eligible grade 5 to 12 students compete in six male and six female age categories:

<b>Atom (2 km)</b>	Born in Sept-Dec 2009, any month 2010, any month 2011, or any month 2012 <u>AND</u> are in <b>grade five or higher</b>
<b>Pee Wee (3 km)</b>	Born in Sept-Dec 2008 or Jan-Aug 2009
<b>Bantam (3 km)</b>	Born in Sept-Dec 2007 or Jan-Aug 2008
<b>Intermediate (3 km)</b>	Born in Sept-Dec 2006 or Jan-Aug 2007
<b>Junior (4 km)</b>	Born in Sept-Dec 2005 or Jan-Aug 2006
<b>Senior (4 km–F)</b>	Born in Jan-Aug 2005, any month 2004, any month 2003, or Sept-Dec 2002
<b>(5 km– M)</b>	<u>AND</u> started grade ten in 2019, 2020, or 2021

NOTE: A Intermediate (or younger) aged athlete not yet in grade nine is NOT eligible to compete at the SHSAA Provincial Championships.

### **b) Junior vs. Senior (SHSAA Team Entry Form)**

When registering your SENIOR cross country team on the SHSAA Team Entry form in September, you or your school Athletic Director should have checked off “Cross Country” if:

- you have at least one Intermediate (or older category) athlete competing and
- at least one of these is in grade nine or higher

A JUNIOR team (not checked off on the SHSAA website as it is dealt with by the HCAA) is thus when you have at least one Atom, Pee Wee, or Bantam (or Intermediate, if the Intermediate is in grade 8 or lower) competing.

### **c) Eligibility**

Students are **NOT eligible** to compete in HCAA cross country if:

- they are not yet in grade five or higher
- they have used up their years of eligibility as per SHSAA Bylaws (e.g. started grade ten in the 2018-2019 school year or earlier)
- they are too old (e.g. were born in Jan-Aug 2002 or earlier)

The SHSAA Provincial Championship is for grade 9 - 12 Intermediates, Juniors, and Seniors only. Thus:

- if a grade eight student is Intermediate aged, they are NOT eligible to compete at Provincials but are eligible to compete at Pre-Districts and Districts.
- if a grade eight student is Junior or Senior aged, please contact Brian Grest for further clarification

Please contact Brian Grest if you need clarification on eligibility.

## **3. Resources and References for Coaches**

### **a) SHSAA Handbook**

The SHSAA governs the **Intermediate**, **Junior**, and **Senior** categories, but it does not hurt for the coaches of younger categories to have a copy. Your school’s Athletic Director should have a copy for you. Extra copies can be ordered free of charge from the SHSAA office, and the SHSAA Handbook is also online at [www.shsaa.ca](http://www.shsaa.ca).

For coaches, the most relevant sections of the Handbook are:

- Activity-specific policy (found in the white pages)
- A Code of Ethics for coaches, players, and officials (found in the white pages). Each coach should familiarize themselves with these and possibly copy and post them.
- A Saskatchewan high schools directory with contact and other pertinent information (yellow pages)
- SHSAA playoff calendar (green pages)
- SHSAA playoff host projections (green pages)
- A forms section (white pages). Some of the more pertinent forms are:
  - o E-9 – Official’s Report Special Report Form – for reporting any matter concerning athlete or coach behavior or incidents that merit the immediate attention of the SHSAA office.
  - o E-14 – Declaration for Non-Faculty Coach – **Horizon SD schools: please use the Horizon SD-specific forms outlined on page 3 of this handbook.**
  - o E-17 – Student Transfer Form – For students transferring schools any time AFTER the beginning of their grade ten year. Contact the SHSAA office (306-721-2151) or Brian Grest for clarification.
  - o E-18 – Home-Schooled/Distance Learning student registration – in case such a student is intending to compete on your school’s team.

## **b) SHSAA Website and Office**

The SHSAA governs the **Intermediate, Junior, and Senior** categories. The SHSAA website can be found at [www.shsaa.ca](http://www.shsaa.ca) and is a wealth of information. You can also contact the SHSAA office directly if you have questions or need clarification:

- Dave Sandomirsky, Executive Director – 306-721-2151; [d.sandomirsky@shsaa.ca](mailto:d.sandomirsky@shsaa.ca)
- Jeff Kitts, Assistant Executive Director – 306-721-2151; [jeff@shsaa.ca](mailto:jeff@shsaa.ca)

## **c) HCAA – Website, Bylaws and Policy**

The HCAA governs the **Atom, Pee Wee, and Bantam** categories, but some of the Bylaws and Policies also apply to the senior categories.

The **HCAA website** can be found at <https://www.horizonsd.ca/HCAA/Pages/default.aspx> and is a wealth of information. The following is only a partial list of what can be found on the HCAA website:

- HCAA Bylaws and Policy
- News and events
- Athletics calendar and host sites
- Champions lists
- Meeting minutes

For coaches, the most relevant Bylaws are:

- Bylaw IX – Eligibility
- Bylaw X – Advancement to District Championships
- Bylaw XI – Activity Playdown Direction
- Bylaw XII – Protests and Appeals
- Bylaw XIII – Complaints Against Individuals or Teams
- Bylaw XIV – Conduct of Players, Coaches, Teams, or Spectators

For coaches, the most relevant Policies are:

- **Policy XIV – Cross country Playdown**
- Policy XXVI – Disqualification and Suspension of Athletes

#### **d) ASA (Horizon School Division’s Administrator of Student Activities)**

Horizon SD employs a full-time District Athletic Director (ASA) whose mandate includes assisting in the operation of the entire HCAA District and assisting all schools and programs within the HCAA.

The current ASA is Brian Grest. If you have any questions or concerns or need any clarification, contact him at any time as it is a large part of his job to act as a resource to the coaches. His office is currently in Humboldt Collegiate. He can be reached at:

306-231-8284 (cell – preferred number)

306-682-1016 (office)

[brian.grest@horizonsd.ca](mailto:brian.grest@horizonsd.ca)

## **4. Registering Teams (Beginning of the Season)**

### **a) Senior**

The SHSAA recognizes senior cross country as the Intermediate, Junior, and Senior competitors from grades 9-12.

The deadline for declaring (“Team Entry Form”) and registering (“E-5 Eligibility Form”) your senior cross country program on the SHSAA website (minimum 1 runner checked off) is **Wed. Sept. 15**. If you (or your school’s Athletic Director – see next paragraphs) fail to properly do so by this date yet still had or intended to have at least one student-athlete in your program compete against other school’s runners, a \$50 late fee will be levied by the SHSAA. Brian Grest will also do a follow-up via e-mail.

Most schools have one person, typically the Athletic Director, do their “Team Entry” form and their “E-5 Eligibility” form on the SHSAA website. Speak to your school Athletic Director to determine if your team is properly registered. You can also contact the SHSAA office (306-721-2151) or Brian Grest (306-231-8284 or 306-682-1016) if you need assistance.

## **b) Junior**

Brian Grest will solicit information from all schools to ascertain which schools have a “junior” program (all runners are younger than Intermediate, Junior, or Senior).

Junior programs are not required to fill an “E-5 Eligibility form”.

## **5. Start Date for Practices (all cross country programs)**

SHSAA and HCAA Policy states that the first cross country practice could have started as early as **June 7, 2021**. Teams conducting practices prior to this date could face sanctions, including possible exclusion from HCAA or SHSAA playdowns. Please contact Brian Grest if you need clarification.

## **6. Maximum Number of Meets (Intermediate/Junior/Senior)**

SHSAA Policy states that Intermediate, Junior, and Senior athletes in grades 9-12 may compete in a maximum of 6 school meets prior to HCAA Pre-Districts. Athletes exceeding this number of meets prior to HCAA Pre-Districts will face sanctions, including likely exclusion from HCAA/SHSAA playdowns.

## **7. Championship Playoffs**

### **a) HCAA Pre-Districts/Districts & SHSAA Provincials**

A cross country “program” consists of a minimum of one individual. There is no maximum number of athletes that can be involved in a cross country program, and no maximum number of athletes that can be entered into one category at Pre-Districts.

Please refer to HCAA Cross Country Policy XIV for further details and parameters.

Brian Grest will facilitate the solicitation of your entries into Pre-Districts via e-mail.

The top ten finishers in all age categories at Pre-Districts will advance to the District Championship.

The top ten Intermediate, Junior, and Senior finishers at the District Championship will advance to Provincials.



To date, there is nothing prohibiting a cross country athlete from competing at one level even though they have no intent of continuing on at the next level should they place in a qualifying position. However, some coaches do not enter such cross country athletes into the HCAA/SHSAA playoff route as a matter of choice.

## **b) Championship Playoff Dates**

Pre-Districts	Wed. Sept. 29 @ Dixon (near Humboldt) and TBD
District Championship	Thur. Oct. 7 @ Dixon (near Humboldt)
Provincials	Sat. Oct. 16 @ Dixon (near Humboldt)

## **c) Bids to Host**

**Pre-Districts** and **Districts** host site bids were already solicited by Brian Grest via e-mail.

## **d) Booking of Accommodations (Provincials)**

Because of the proximity to the host site, it is being left up to each school to book their own accommodations if needed (Watson or Lanigan may be your best bet if coming from the east). If needing accommodations, please check with other schools and share accommodations where possible to save on costs.

*Horizon SD SCHOOLS – please refer to the Provincials funding guide and form for exact policy, procedure, and expectations (e.g. room sharing) pertaining to accommodations at Provincials.*

# **8. Invitational Meets**

Schools may choose to attend invitational school meets.

## **9. Funding – Horizon SD schools** (non-Horizon SD schools shall consult their own Board/Band policy)

### **a) Finding the Funding Guides and Forms (Horizon SD schools)**

*All funding guides and forms can be found by going to the Horizon School Division website. Choose the “HCAA” link across the top. Choose the “Horizon SD Activities Funding Forms” (link found near the top right). They are kept here so that when you download your guide(s) and form(s), they are always the most current version.*

Please take a moment to look and **read through everything on your program's guide(s) and form(s) carefully so that before the season begins**, you are clear on what financial assistance is available for your program.

### **b) Cross country "Program" Defined (Horizon SD schools)**

For the **purposes of funding**, a school may form and receive funding for one cross country program only, regardless of how many athletes or which age groups are represented.

### **c) Funding Overview (Horizon SD schools)**

Horizon SD provides funding to **assist** its schools in running their cross country programs. There are generally two parts to the funding:

- a) a "regular season grant" – includes **Pre-Districts** as it is an "all-comers" event.
- b) "playoff" funding – includes **Districts and Provincials**, as these are events which athletes advanced to by qualifying at a previous level.

The maximum amount of money a school can request for a "regular season grant" is **determined using a calculation** (as outlined on the funding guide and form) that takes into account the number of days the program competed on (to a maximum number of days) and the number of athletes competing on that day. "Competition" is defined as competing in sanctioned interschool competition (i.e. against athletes from other schools). **Refer to the funding form itself to determine the maximum grant possible for your program this season.**

It is very important to understand that the regular season grant is **NOT intended to cover all of your season's expenses**. It is an **assistance only**. For example, School A's "regular season" may have consisted of taking 2 athletes to Pre-Districts. Their maximum grant of \$30 may be enough to cover the season's expenses (if any). School B, however, took 18 athletes to two invitational meets prior to Pre-Districts, and then to Pre-Districts. They spent \$800 on transportation costs but their maximum grant will be \$255. It will be up to the team to figure out where they get the other \$545 from (Team/user fees? Fundraising?). **Knowing how the grant works before the season starts is imperative so you can budget/plan/fundraise accordingly.**

The "playoff" funding **IS** intended to cover actual mileage and accommodation (if necessary) expenses, notwithstanding some guidelines (read the funding guide and form for details).

### **d) Out-of-Pocket Expenses (Horizon SD schools)**

Horizon SD allows for reimbursement of actual meal costs (to a maximum amount) and accommodation costs (to a maximum amount) for **one approved cross country coach** when meals and accommodations are necessary and while in supervision of the student-athletes. **Refer to the specific guide, form, and explanation sheet for details.**

*Horizon SD schools may apply to Horizon SD for pre-approval of two coaches incurring these expenses at the same time if there is an acceptable and approved reason.*

### ***e) Funding Detail (Horizon SD schools)***

*The best source for learning and getting clarification on funding for Horizon SD programs and coach's out-of-pocket expenses is the **GUIDE that accompanies the form.***

## **10. Team Fees and Fundraising**

Every school and every community has its own distinct nuances and history. Communicate with your school principal and school Athletic Director about what is deemed acceptable in your school/community when it comes to team fees and fundraising.

## **11. Communication with Student-Athletes & Parents/Guardians**

Consult with your school principal as to what are acceptable methods of communicating with your student-athletes and with your parents/guardians.

## ***12. Extra-Curricular Hours (Horizon SD)***

*Horizon SD policy allows the earning of EDOs for hours in direct supervising of students outside of school hours while taking part in extra-curricular activities. Refer to the Horizon SD LINC agreement for details.*

*Careful record must be kept of all such hours. Speak with your principal about obtaining the form to use to keep cross country.*

**NOTE:** *Unless prior special approval has been granted, only 1 cross country coach per program can earn EDO hours at any given time.*

*Please also refer to Horizon SD Procedure AP-262*

*(<https://www.horizonsd.ca/Services/APsandForms/Pages/AP262.aspx>) for further clarification, or speak to your school administration or school Athletic Director.*

### **13. Travel – Horizon SD schools** *(non-Horizon SD schools shall consult their own Board/Band policy)*

#### **a) Booking and Reimbursement (Horizon SD)**

*For competition at all levels, the school program is responsible for making their own travel arrangements.*

*For all competition prior to Districts, the school/school program is responsible for all costs.*

*For Districts and Provincials, Horizon SD will reimburse travel costs. Some parameters and restrictions apply; refer to your funding guides and forms for details.*

*Approved methods of travel include:*

- Private vehicles. All drivers must have a current approved driver's form on file at the school prior to travel.*
- 12 or 15 passenger vans (owned or rented) that meet the Board's criteria. Ensure this is cost efficient (cost of a 12 or 15 passenger van is typically less than paying mileage to two private vehicles).*
- School buses. For Pre-Districts, Districts, and Provincials, ensure this is cost efficient (overall cost to Horizon SD for a school bus is slightly more than paying mileage to four private vehicles)*
- Charter buses. For Pre-Districts, Districts, and Provincials, costs would be covered only up to the equivalent of private vehicles mileage or a school bus cost, whichever is less.*

#### **b) Travel Forms (Horizon SD)**

*When utilizing private vehicles, all drivers must have:*

- a current school year approved driver's form on file at the school prior to travel.*
- a current (as defined by Horizon SD procedure) Vulnerable Sector Check on file at the school prior to travel.*

*Any exceptions must be pre-approved (consult your principal).*

*When traveling, a travel roster must be submitted to your school's office prior to departure.*

*Please consult your school office if you have questions.*

#### **c) Weather and Road Conditions**

All travel involves some degree of risk. Student safety is of the utmost importance and must always be given careful consideration. When weather and road conditions are less than ideal, weigh the conditions with student safety carefully and consult school administration before traveling.

Some competitions will proceed even when some teams are not able to attend due to weather and road conditions (e.g. SHSAA playoffs). Although this can be heartbreaking, student safety must take priority over trying to win championships.

## **14. Medical Considerations**

### **a) First Aid Kit**

It is recommended teams carry their own first aid kit with them at all times.

### **b) Medical Forms**

The SHSAA and HCAA ask that all schools have their student-athletes complete form E-7 (SHSAA Handbook) annually. They also recommend coaches have a copy with them (confidentially) when traveling.

### **c) Concussion Protocol**

Along with the qualifications referred to in section 1. a) i) and ii), coaches are reminded they must be aware of current concussion protocol and must follow this protocol when a concussion is suspected. Rule of thumb – “when in doubt, sit them out”.

*The Horizon SD concussion protocol (Procedure AP-497) can be found at <https://www.horizonsd.ca/Services/APsandForms/Pages/AP497.aspx>*

## **15. Coach Contact Lists**

Once compiled, Brian Grest will distribute a list of cross country coaches to assist you with communication with other schools’ coaches should you have the need.

## **Appendix A – Required Courses for Coaches**

Click [HERE](#) to view the most current information.