



**Welcome:**

Greetings!

I am excited to share the joy of running with your little one this fall! The focus of this season is to expose the littles to the sport of cross country while cultivating confidence as runners and as people through positive age appropriate experiences.

My background in running includes collegiate running, marathon running, and coaching cross country and/or track for elementary, middle school, and high school athletes. I have also been a secondary history teacher with the Chelsea School District since 2001.

I look forward to meeting you and your child!

Gina Watson

**The Vision:**

The goal: Have fun, exercise, get fresh air, grow confidence, and learn the sport of cross country.

The plan is to create a cross country sport experience for elementary students that follow existing youth sports models. The schedule has one practice and one competition per week. The practice work outs and race distances have been scaled down to more age appropriate distances. For example: High school runners race 3.1 miles. Middle school athletes race 1.5/2 miles. Our races will be no longer than 1 mile. Also, like other youth sports, parents wishing to help are welcome and essential for a smooth race experience.

Please contact me @ 517-605-8898 or [gwatson@chelsea.k12.mi.us](mailto:gwatson@chelsea.k12.mi.us) if you are interested in herding children at practices, setting up and taking down for races, handing out place cards, recording times, or organizing healthy post-race snacks.



**Schedule:**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Thursday – 9/12	3:30-4:30	Emerson Practice
Saturday – 9/14*	9:00-9:45*	Chelsea Race*
Thursday– 9/19	3:30-4:30	Emerson Practice
Saturday – 9/21	9:00-9:30	Chelsea Race
Thursday – 9/26	3:30-4:30	Emerson Practice
Saturday – 9/28	9:00-9:45	Emerson Race
Thursday – 10/3	3:30-4:30	Emerson Practice
Saturday – 10/5	9:00-9:30	Emerson Race

\* Directions to come shortly.

We will have a quick parent meeting before the race.



### **Things To Know:**

#### ***Sleep & Nutrition***

*Send a labeled water bottle and healthy snack:*

If your kids are like mine, they never eat their lunch at school. A healthy snack for before or after practice may stave off a hangry drive home. We will have water bottles at practice, but again runners will want something to drink on the ride home.

Sleep, sleep, sleep is so important for school, athletics, and overall behavior. Get those kids to bed at reasonable times!

#### ***Attire***

*Lace up tennis shoes and weather appropriate gear:*

Your little runner should be prepared to run outside **every day**. Thunder, lightning, and tornadoes are the only things that will keep us inside. Running in rain, mud, and snow flurries are half of the fun. For these reasons and the unpredictable nature of Michigan weather, send clothes for ALL types of weather. As a runner, I always have gloves, t-shirt, shorts, long sleeve T-shirt, running tights/long underwear or sweat pants and a hat with me. Rain, water bottles, or sprinklers result in wet kids at the end of many practices. Send a change of clothes so your kiddos are not wet & cold riding home in your car. Kids will be fine running in the rain, it is after the run, without a change of clothes, that they can become chilled.

Tip: Stuff wet tennis shoes with paper towels to dry them out.

Tip: Do not get mad at your runner if they are muddy. I probably encouraged puddle jumping!

#### ***What is cross country?***

Cross country running is a sport in which teams and individuals run on open-air courses over natural terrain. Distances vary by age level. Cross country courses can be found anywhere, around schools, golf courses, on trails, fields, through woods...anywhere. When you become a runner, you join a world community of amazing people.

#### ***Behavior***

To foster a positive fun environment, negative comments or behavior will not be tolerated. Ethical and respectable behavior will be expected at all times.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call me @ 517-605-8898 or [gwatson@chelsea.k12.mi.us](mailto:gwatson@chelsea.k12.mi.us) I am very excited about coaching your child and look forward to meeting you soon!

Gina Watson

*Adults call it "working out." Kids call it "playing."*

*Kids have the best running style. It's not smooth. Not graceful. But there is a classification for their kind of gait. IT'S CALLED HAPPY!*



Please fill out the following information and have your child bring it to practice.

Name of Runner: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information (email & phone)

\_\_\_\_\_

Can I share your email with the group if necessary? Yes or No

Any additional information I should know about your child? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

