

Congratulation!

**The Jefferson West
High School
Parents Guide to
Cross Country**

2008

**Coach John Riley
Coach Rod Smith**

JWHS Cross Country

Your son/daughter has just joined Cross Country, arguably the best school sport available. It is the best introduction to a lifetime of fitness and health benefits of all the school sports. Cross Country is the least expensive of all the sports, the easiest to learn (everyone already knows how) and can be done by everyone either with others or alone. It is the best fall fitness program for athletes getting ready for winter sports. Cross Country is unique in that it is held over various terrains and situations. The race of 4 kilometers for girls and 5 kilometers for boys are the longest continuous endurance based events in school sports. This means natural ability is desirable but it is not the most important factor in deciding the top runners, even at the state level. Training, given enough time, will beat talent if mixed with determination, mental toughness and a positive attitude. Athletes with leg speed from other sports, such as soccer, basketball, and track do very well in cross country if they have the desire and courage to do so. Athletes who don't seem to have enough leg speed for the traditional team sports often do extremely well in cross country. Cross Country teams are often made up of runners who were previously cut or dropped out of the other sports. We don't cut like the other sports, there is no bench, and the athletes themselves decide who runs varsity and who runs junior varsity by their personal work ethic! This is what makes Cross Country such a great learning model for the real world!! Extra effort is the key to success!!!!

We hope you will support your athlete's and the cross country team as we strive to continue and improve upon our past winning traditions. Your support will enable your athlete's to get the most out of their season and to enjoy the experience. We wish your son/daughter the very best at Jeff West High School and beyond.

John Riley and Rod Smith - JWHS Cross Country Coaches

**Parents Guide to JW
Cross Country**

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One

Things to be aware of before the 1st Meet

As your son/daughter is entering his/her first weeks of training there are a number of areas that may be of concern to you as a parent. How can you assist them? What should you expect? How should a student athlete prepare and deal with training and competition in terms of eating habits, sleep and mental attitude?

As a rule, do not make major changes to any aspect of the normal daily routine. Everything should remain the same in terms of home responsibilities, appropriate eating, sleeping (8 to 10 hours) and social habits.

Parents should be aware that a common result of initial training may be muscle soreness. Any athlete in intensive training could be subject to injury. All concerns should be directed to the coach, athletic trainer or physician.

A well balanced diet is an asset for any individual and especially an athlete. Any nutritional changes should occur gradually. On a meet day, high fat, fried foods, eggs, and carbonated and acidic beverages should be avoided. Take advantage of easily digestible foods in low quantities. Water intake should not be limited. Generally, the last intake of food should be 3-4 hours prior to the start of the race. If a larger meal or one with more fat or oil content is consumed, 5 to 6 hours prior may be required. Recognize that each individual has somewhat different nutritional need. Send them into a race a bit hungry! The opposite can be very detrimental.

All athletes are required to have a doctor's physical before they can participate.

TWO

The First meet

Pre Race

Get acquainted with the race course and strategic spectator points (i.e. the start and finish lines). It is also helpful to identify your school's team uniforms.

Be aware that numerous races will be run during the course of the meet. A cross country meet may last anywhere from two hours to half a day. Races may be organized by the size of schools entered, the age of the runners, or divisions. Find out what time your child is running and in which particular race.

Do not expect the attention of your child once they have joined their team at the race site. They need time to mentally and physically prepare for the race with the coach and the rest of the team.

During the Race

Cross country is not a sport observed from a stationary point (i.e. bleachers). There are many ways for the spectator to enjoy watching a race. One exciting aspect is to watch the start. After the start, you may wish to move to another point along the course to cheer on and watch runners as they pass by. Your positive encouragement is appreciated. As the race develops, you may want to move to the finish area as the runners complete the race.

Post Race

After a runner comes through the finish chute and receives a place card, it is his/her responsibility to report directly to the coach to turn in the place card.

Understand that runners have certain responsibilities after they finish a race. The runners may be required to warm down as a team after their race and support teammates who are still running or have yet to race.

It is important to note that after a race, a runner may possibly be more physically spent than you would anticipate. Symptoms may include rubbery knees, general weakness, and an appearance of fainting, glassy eyes, nausea and salivating. These symptoms usually pass quickly. Coaches and the athletic trainer are aware of these physical reactions and have the responsibility and ability to treat them. Runners who are in shape but don't recover quickly, or those who get slower despite obvious major effort, may have a more serious problem. The advice of your family physician may be required.

Three

How to Score a Meet

You can compare team scoring in cross country to the game of golf: low score wins.

Each individual finishing a race is issued a card in the chute with the finish place written on it. For example, the first runner gets #1; the second runner gets #2 and so on. The places of the first 5 runners finishing the race from each team are added to compute the team score. 15 is a perfect score ($1+2+3+4+5=15$).

Seven runners constitute a complete team. While not actually figuring in the team score, the sixth and seventh runners may serve to "push back" opposing runners by finishing ahead of them. This would increase the opponent's team score. In the example below, Team B wins by the 6th and 7th runners finishing before Team A's 5th runner.

<u>Runner</u>	<u>Team A</u>	<u>Team B</u>
1	2	1
2	3	4
3	5	6
4	7	8
<u>5</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>
Team Score	29	28
6	13	10
7	14	11

The next example shows two teams tied with their first 5 runners. The 6th runner for both teams breaks the tie.

<u>Runner</u>	<u>Team A</u>	<u>Team B</u>
1	2	1
2	3	4
3	5	6
4	7	8
<u>5</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>9</u>
Team Score	28	28
6	13	10
7	14	11

Runners that are not part of a team do not receive a place card when they finish a race. The place cards are only for those runners that are part of a scoring team (5 or more runners). Your son/daughter may have a card with a 10 on it but may have been the 12th individual to finish the race. The 10 on the card is for the 10th runner to finish the race that is a member of scoring team. Individual medals are determined by overall place finish. In the example above the team score for the runner is 10 and he/she would have received the 12th place medal.

Invitational Meets

Invitational meets can have 6 to 35 teams entered. Bunching the runners up in a pack is important in the bigger meets. The position of the team's 5th runner is more important than the 1st runner's position. Teams have taken the first few positions in the state meet and still lost the meet. In some bigger meets teams can win the meet and have no one in the top 15 or 20 positions. An example is a team with runners in 1,2,3,4,85 for a score of 95. If another team has 12,13,14,15 and 31 for a score of 88 they beat the first team.

Results

The race results take time to compile. In the larger meets they are often computerized to speed up the process. The official results are normally mailed to the coaches the next day. They will also be posted on our web site.

Awards

Medals are given out to the individual runners in all meets. The number of individual medals will vary depending on the numbers of runners in that race. Normally from 15-30 medals are usually given. Junior varsity and freshman medals are given at most meets. The number of JV/Freshman medals given is usually between 5 and 15. Team trophies or plaques and/or team medals are also presented. Varsity letters and other awards are given at the fall athletic banquet at the end of the season.

Four

Goal Setting

Setting realistic but challenging daily performance based goals (time, pace, and effort) that the runner has control over is absolutely essential to the runner's development. The goals must be written down and read daily with deadlines set to meet the goals. Some goals might include:

PR - personal record - race or practice best time

Training Goals - daily performance (time/improvement/effort) goals

Team Time - Top 5 or 7 team average time - often part of the team goals. It is the best predictor of meet place.

Team Split - Difference between 1st and 5th runners race times - part of the team pack goals - often the deciding factor in big meets.

Maximum Effort - improved times are more important than winning races and slow times - attitude is crucial!

Race Pace - maintaining a particular pace or race strategy

Place - Place of finish relative to the entire race field

Team Position - Place of finish relative to one's teammates

Beating a specific opposing runner

Ups

Finishing a course successfully and/or improving upon any of the goals mentioned above can be considered an "UP" for a runner. Runners complemented too often on their ability or meet place, instead of their effort, tend to avoid hard races.

Complement them more on their effort and improvement.

Downs

Expect the possibility of disappointment after a race by the athlete. Although one goal set by the individual may have been achieved, a runner may have fallen short of others and not be satisfied with his/her total result. Runners should emphasize performance goals (effort, time) which they can control rather than outcome goals (meet place) which they often cannot control. Please help them remain positive because it will help them improve quicker. Athletes may need some emotional space after the race by both the coach and the parent.

Five

Clubs for Parents

Parents Clubs

A parents group can be a real boost to any athletic program. The boys and girls cross country parents can do more to promote the program than any other group at the school. The moral, promotional, publicity and possible financial support will make everyone seem a part of a very big family. It is hoped that they will work in conjunction with the coaching staff, athletic director and school to develop one of the best programs in the school.

The following are some areas the coaching staff would greatly appreciate help with:

- 1) Please join the Jeff West Booster Club
- 2) Help with the Tiger 5K meet.
- 3) Help with our invitational meet in early September.
- 4) Decorate the buses before the major meets.
- 5) Help with pasta meals for the team at the regional and state meet.

Summer Running

100 Mile Club

The 100 Mile Club was started in 1994 as an encouragement for Cross Country and other fall sport athletes to continue the training process over the summer months. This has now been expanded to include all miles run, in season and out of season. Shirts are now awarded at 100, 250, 750, 1000, 1500, 2000, 3000, 4000 ect. Money raised from the Tiger 5K is used to purchase T-shirts as a reward for this achievement. Any student at Jeff West is eligible to obtain this coveted T-shirt.

Summer Camp

Summer camp is the last week of July each year. This is when we start to get serious about the new season. This is a week of running and playing where our athletes begin to develop goals for the upcoming year. We run and then play some sort of game that involves more running. It's a great time for the runners to meet friends from last year and start the season off on the right foot.

Tiger 5K

The Tiger 5K, also started in 1994, is the only fund raiser we do. Money from this event is used to purchase food for the athletes after each meet, extra equipment that is not required but can help improve the overall program, and the 100 Mile T-shirts.

Picking Running Shoes and other Gear

Shoes should be picked because they fit properly, match your athletes running style, and are quality shoes. Regardless of the price the shoes will need to be replaced each season depending on the number of miles run in them, their quality, and the running surfaces they are being used on. Better runners will go through 2-4 pairs of shoes per year. Price does not guarantee quality. Research shows that a medium priced shoe out lasts and prevents injuries better than the cheap shoes and the expensive shoes. Go for substance rather than style. It is also a great idea to buy your second pair before the first wear out completely. This will allow the runner to rotate shoes each day and this has been shown to greatly reduce the number of injuries. The reason is that the shoe soles do not have enough time to completely spring back to their original height if they are worn every day. The soles compact from the daily impact if they only have one day to recover. And this means they lose their ability to properly absorb foot plant impact sooner than when they are rotated every other day. Some things to check when buying shoes are:

- 1) Are the heel counters vertical - place them on a counter top and take a couple of steps back and check?
- 2) Push your thumb into the soles - they should be medium in density (neither real soft nor real hard).
- 3) Hold one shoe with one hand and try to depress the back of the heel counter with the thumb. It should be hard to bend.
- 4) Buy a shoe with a relatively low sole thickness under the heel. This does not imply to buy a light weight training shoe. The reason is, if the heel area is too high the runner will have calf problems when they race in spikes or racing flats since their calf muscles will have shortened from wearing the high heeled training shoes. The back of the leg will protest by aching or cramping up when forced to stretch in the racing shoes with a much lower heel. Asics are the best in this area. Most Adidas

are also good, as are New Balance (these also have width sizing). Nike shoes tend to have the highest heels and the most variation in quality. We do not recommend training in air shoes or cross trainers by any company because of lack of stability and support.

- 5) One last thing to check is the flexibility of the soles through the balls of the feet.

Runners should not wear the shoes they are going to practice or compete in during the day. Doing so will compress the foam in the shoe and take away from the cushioning properties of the shoe.

Apparel

Specific running clothes (other than socks) are not required but the runner will need several pairs of loose fitting shorts and T-shirts for practice. During the heat portion of the season they should wear light colored clothes. They will need a clean pair of dry socks for running each day of the week. Good running socks tend to prevent blisters since they do not bunch up nearly as much as standard athletic socks. The runners will also be provided a set of practice sweats for inclement weather. Other running apparel such as hats, light gloves, rain gear, etc. will not be provided by the school. The more experienced runners will eventually want additional running apparel and equipment, such as racing spikes or flats (shoes) for meets. We also recommend that each runner have an inexpensive stop watch or chronograph. Each runner is timed in each run and this will help him/her keep track of their pace.

Uniform

Uniform and warm-ups will be provided for all runners. The uniform is the responsibility of the athlete and will be turned in clean and in good repair. They are responsible for the uniform they were check out not the one they end up with at the end of the season. Your uniform and practice gear are to be worn only

during meets and practices not at school (except meet days). A new rule started in 2000 states that while athletes are in the field of play@ they are to be wearing the school issued uniform.

Eight

Athletes Training Rules

Below are listed the training rules as they were given to the athletes. They are listed here so that you will be aware of the requirements of the athletes.

Jeff West Cross Country

2008 Season

Welcome to the 2008 Jeff West Cross Country season. We are very glad that you have chosen this program to participate in. Our goal is to have each runner compete at their highest level possible. We want you to establish some very lofty goals for this season. Setting high goals and working toward those goals is what separates the average from the great. A goal is what makes you work hard in practice each and every day. As coaches we look forward to helping you reach those goals.

Training Rules

- 1) You are attending Jefferson West High School for an education first and running Cross Country second. Your grades are very important and I will check them periodically.
- 2) Practices will begin at 3:30 each day unless otherwise announced. I expect you to be ready to warm-up then. If you are late you will be awarded bonus running or push ups. If you miss a practice you will be awarded bonus running. The reason for your absence is irrelevant.
- 3) The use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and drugs are prohibited by the state and will not be tolerated by anyone on this

team.

- 4) Athletes must ride the bus to and from all meets. All other arrangements must be made before the meet day and must be approved by the principal and myself. The school and your legal guardians are the only ones that can take you home. If you are going home with your parents or guardian have them find Mr. Smith or myself and sign you out.
- 5) You must be at school by the start of 4th hour (11:00) and be here for the remainder of the day for you to be eligible to practice or to compete in a meet. All exceptions to this rule must be cleared by the principal. Medical appointments and school sponsored activities do not count.

Any violation of the above rules will result in extra running, loss of privilege to compete in meets, suspension or dismissal from the team.

Lettering Information

Lettering requirements are the same as last year. The intent is to give all runners a chance to letter, even if not part of the varsity team. These guidelines are not to make it easy to letter but to push the team to higher standards.

- 1) Any runner that competes in three varsity meets may earn a varsity letter.
- 2) Any senior that has contributed positively to the team for four years may earn a varsity letter.
- 3) Any runner meeting a minimum time requirement may earn a varsity letter. For the boys this will be 20:00 and for the girls this will be 19:30. This must be run on a course that is known to be of the proper distance. All courses we run this year meet this requirement.
- 4) Any runner meeting a minimum distance standard may also earn a varsity letter. The minimum distance for the boys is 300 miles and the minimum for the girls is 235 miles.
- 5) Any runner that runs every day of the season may also earn a

varsity letter. This means from the first day of practice to the last day of the season (the Saturday of the State Meet, 77 days).

- 6) The coach may letter other runners that do not meet any of the requirements listed above.
- 7) All runners must end the season in good standing to receive a varsity letter.

Other Information

- 1) We will have a practice runs each week to determine the varsity teams for the first meet. After the first meet the varsity team will be determined by your performance in the previous meet.
- 2) If you want to wear a t-shirt or compression shorts under your uniform then you must follow the following rules:
 - a) T-shirts must be of a solid color (we will wear white) with no markings.
 - b) Compressions shorts must be of a solid color (we will wear black) and the logo cannot be larger than 1 ½ inches square.
- 3) Athletes are put into practice groups to accommodate the wide range of abilities. These groups are determined by the age, sex, and the conditioning level of the runner. The group that you run in has nothing to do with you being on the varsity squad. Athletes will change groups from time to time as the year progresses.
- 4) Report any and all injuries that you develop during the cross country season. An injury treated early will heal much faster. The athletic trainer will be here on Tuesdays during the lunch period.
- 5) Wearing a watch while you compete is legal. You may not wear any other jewelry. You must also have any visible tattoo that is objectionable covered.
- 6) Parents meeting will be on August 13th at 7:00 p.m.
- 7) We will also continue our voluntary Saturday practice. This is for athletes that want to further benefit from extra miles and don't want to run alone. Again this is completely voluntary.

If you or your parents have any questions throughout the year feel free to give me a call at the high school or at home. Let's have

a great year, set our goals high and work hard to reach them.
Good Luck this year.

Nine

Terms to Know

Accelerations	- Short (60-100meter) gradual accelerating sprints used to finish warming up for races or practices.
Course	- The route runners must take for their race.
False Start	- A runner leaves the starting line too soon. They will be recalled by the starter with another shot. This can also happen if runners fall during the first 100 meters of the race.
Finish Chute	- The funnel shaped area roped off for the finish. The runners must run hard until they enter the chute. They will receive a place card in the chute which must be given to their coach.
Focus	- Mental state of concentrating on the race or run.
Intervals	- Shorter runs done in practice at a quicker pace.
Invitational	- Larger meets.
Lane/Chute	- The Teams designated starting area at big meets.
Log Book	- A binder used to record daily training. All serious runners keep an accurate detailed log.
Long Kick	- Runner picks up the pace to pass people at the end and they start it farther out than other runners prefer. It is one of the most effective ways to win a race.
Pace	- The splits maintained over the race or training run.
Pack	- A group of runners near each other while running.
Personal Record- PR	- a new best racing or training time.
Pick Ups	- short sprints used to warm up.

PPM	- The fast, with oxygen, training runs (from the PAAVO system).
Racing Flats	- Light shoes used only for racing in dry conditions.
Race Shock	- Running the 1 st part of the race very fast. It is used to help the runner adapt to faster race paces.
R&R	- Medium paced training run.
Short Kick	- Very short acceleration at the finish - used by runners with sprinter speed or those not in shape.
Racing Spikes	- Racing shoes with changeable spikes for traction.
Strides	- Easy sprints that precede the faster accelerations.
Surge	- Increases in race pace to test or break opponents.
Training Shoe	- Heavier shoes designed to absorb training shock.
Visualization	- Making a very realistic mental movie or rehearsal of how the runner wants the race to be run.
Warm Down	- Used to speed lactic acid assimilation after racing.
Warm Up	- The jogging, striding, accelerations, drills, and stretching used to prepare the body for running fast.

Ten

Handy Phone Numbers:

High School	484-3331
District Office	484-3444
John Riley	cell (785)633-7120
Rod Smith	863-2326

School Web Site: <http://www.usd340.org>

Cross Country Web Site: <http://ps.usd340.org/dwcross>

Email:

john.riley@usd340.org

rod.smith@usd340.org

Twelve

Maps to Course

The school web site has lots of information about Jeff West runners since 1989. You can find meet, regional, state, Top Runner stats, schedules and a lot more at this site. Check it out.

Eleven

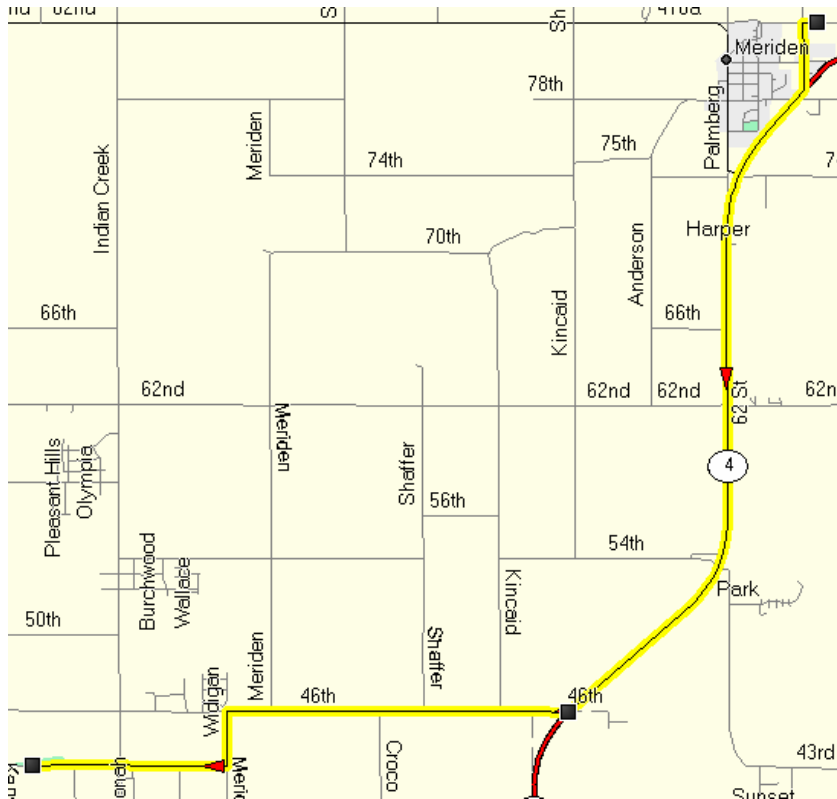
2008 HS Cross Country Schedule

Thursday	9/4	JW Invitational	Shawnee North	4:30pm
Thursday	9/13	Wamego Inv	Wamego	9:00am
Thursday	9/18	McLouth	McLouth	4:00pm
Thursday	9/23	Tonganoxie	Tonganoxie	4:00pm
Saturday	9/27	Rim Rock	Lawrence	AM
Thursday	10/2	Lansing	St Marys Coll.	4:00pm
Thursday	10/9	Sabetha	Sabetha	4:00pm
Thursday	10/16	Big 7 League	Nemaha Val.	4:00pm
Saturday	10/25	Regional	TBA	TBA
Saturday	11/1	State	Wamego	TBA

The Rim Rock Meet in Lawrence is a varsity meet and only a select group of runners will attend this meet. It is the largest meet in Kansas with competition from Kansas and surrounding states. It's a great meet to go and watch. It was the location of the NCAA and NAIA National Cross Country Championship in 1998.

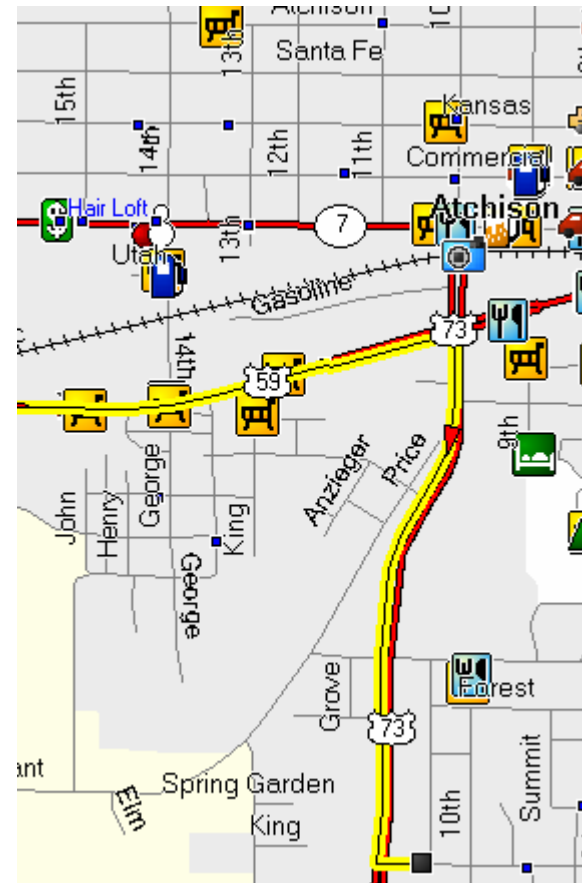
Jeff West Invitational Shawnee North Community Center

Directions
SR4 5 miles South
NE 46th 3 miles West
NE Indian Creek Rd .25 miles South
NE 43rd .5 Miles West



Maur Hill and League at the Campus

Directions
SR4 22 miles North
US59 16 miles North
US73/SR7 .5 miles South
Green Street .25 Miles East



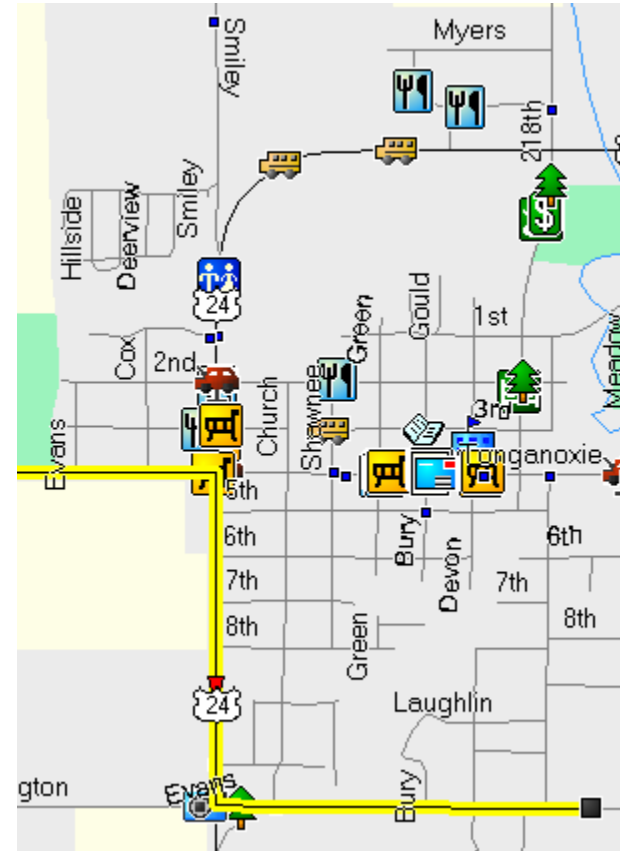
McLouth – Football Field

Directions
SR4 4 miles North
SR92 13 miles East
US59 1 miles South
SR16/SR92 5 miles East
West View Street .5 miles North



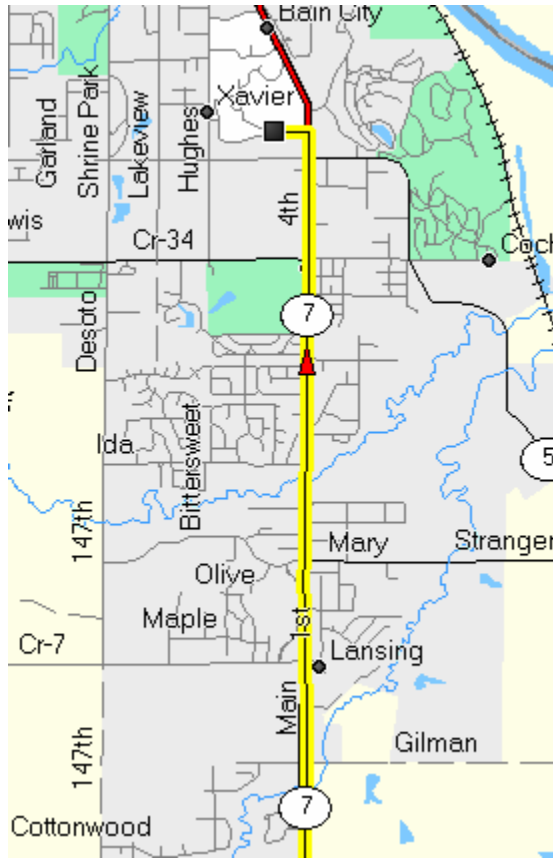
Tonganoxie

Directions
SR4 4 miles North
SR92 13 miles East
US59 1 miles South
SR16/US92 16 miles East
US24/US40 .5 miles South
Washington Street .5 miles East



Lansing – St Mary’s College

Directions
SR4 4 miles North
SR92 13 miles East
US59 1 mile South
SR16/US92 16 miles East



Rim Rock – Bob Timmons Farm

Directions
SR4 4 miles North
SR92 13 miles East
US59 1 mile South
SR16/US92 4 miles East
Wellman Road 9 miles South
Local Rock Road 1 mile North/West



Sabetha – Sabetha Country Club and Golf

Directions

NE 82nd Street 8 miles West

Topeka Ave/NW Central Ave .5 miles North

94th Street 3 miles West

US75 52 miles North

Local Road (first left after Railroad Tracks) 1 mile West

Fourteenth Street .5 miles North



State – Wamego – Golf Course

Directions

SR4 6 miles South

NE46th 7 miles West

US75 3 miles South

US24 35 miles West

