

**FLAMES HOMESCHOOL SPORTS AND MORE**

**OPERATIONS MANUAL v1.31**

**Last Updated August 20, 2023**

## **Contents**

FLAMES Purpose and Vision.....	4
Leadership Statement of Faith.....	5
Eligibility.....	6
Registration, Fee Payment, Non-Refundability of Fees.....	7
FLAMES Leadership.....	7
Leadership Guidelines for the Board of Directors.....	7
Officer Duties and Responsibilities.....	9
Master Scheduler, Team Manager, Coaches Duties and Responsibilities.....	11
Equipment Manager and Fundraising Manager Duties and Responsibilities.....	12
Procedures for Handling Complaints/Conflict Resolution Guidelines.....	13
Modesty Policy.....	13
Team and Player Policies.....	14
Guidelines for Two Sport Participation.....	15
Social Media Policy.....	16
Disciplinary Procedures.....	16

Financial Policies and Procedures.....	17
Finance Operations.....	17
Budgeting.....	18
Purchasing / Expenditures / Reimbursements.....	18
Handling of Cash, Checks, and Fees.....	18
Donations.....	19
Amendments.....	20
Parent Code of Conduct.....	21
Player Code of Conduct.....	23
Youth Protection Policy.....	24
Flames Board Email Voting Policy.....	27
Flames Board Member Attendance Policy.....	29

Flames Homeschool Sports (FHS) DBA Flames Homeschool Sports and More (FLAMES) is an all-volunteer legally incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. FLAMES provides the organizational, financial, legal, logistical, and administrative support needed for the operation of numerous elementary, middle school, and high school homeschool sports teams, non-athletic teams, as well as numerous special events and advancement opportunities.

FLAMES's daily operations, policies, and procedures are overseen by a Board of Directors who ensure that the teams and all volunteers abide by the FLAMES Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, as well as the FLAMES Code of Conduct and Operations Manual. FLAMES' governing documents, code of conduct, and operations manual may be changed at any time as the Board of Directors deems necessary.

### **Purpose and Vision**

Flames Homeschool Sports and More is a Christian organization that supports homeschool families in the Northern Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and the surrounding areas. It was established to give homeschooled children the opportunity to participate in competitive athletics and extracurricular activities with their homeschooled peers. FHS strives to provide homeschooled children with excellent athletic and extracurricular instruction in a positive, Christ-centered environment that fosters friendships.

FHS members (athletes, coaches, board members, and parents) agree to conduct themselves in a manner that seeks to imitate Christ.

**Principles.** The following principles shall guide decisions made by board members, the Athletic Director, and coaches.

- **Does it honor Christ?** The Flames spirit is the spirit of Christ present when we gather in His name (Matthew 18:20). Publicly praising Him through prayer at FHS events is one way to honor Christ. So too is cheering for teammates; welcoming and supporting homeschool athletes of varying skill levels; working hard in and out of practice to improve individual skill sets; demonstrating respect and obedience to all adults; showing sportsmanship to opponents and referees; and refraining from negative comments or behaviors.
- **Does it foster friendships?** Many homeschool parents say fostering positive friendships for their children is one of the primary reasons they joined Flames. In addition to ensuring a positive, Christ-honoring atmosphere at all FHS events, it is important to provide opportunities for FHS athletes to socialize and bond. Bonfires, homecoming, team parties, parade participation, awards ceremonies, and other activities are

encouraged.

- **Does it minimize the burden on families?** Many homeschool families live on a single income, have multiple children, and/or wish for their children to play multiple sports, and participate in extracurricular activities. To serve those families, it is crucial to keep participation as affordable as possible. To that end, costs borne by families, such as registration fees, uniform fees, and the cost of attending tournaments, shall be kept as low as possible while still ensuring that FHS provides a quality athletic program.

Participation in the program will provide a format for life, teaching young men and women:

- To run hard after Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2)
- Competing to win without compromising their Christian values, (1 Corinthians 9:24)
- Achievement without an attitude of winning at all costs (1 Corinthians 9:25-27)
- Self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:7)
- Perseverance (Philippians 3:13-14)
- Teamwork (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)
- A high level of accountability (Colossians 3:22-24)

### **Flames Leadership Statement of Faith**

- **God:** We believe that God created the universe and all that is in it. (Genesis 1:1-27). We believe he exists in three parts, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). We believe he desires that all mankind repent and know the truth (II Peter 3:9). We believe that out of love for us, he sent us his son, Jesus, that we may repent and have eternal life. (I John 4:9).
- **Jesus:** We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that no one comes to the Father but through Him (I John 4:9). We believe Christ was killed, buried, and bodily resurrected (I Corinthians 15:20). We believe his death was an atoning sacrifice for our sins (I John 2:2), and that we will find salvation only if we repent and believe in him (Acts 16:31).
- **Holy Spirit:** We believe the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, sent from the Father, that dwells in us once we are born again in Christ (John 14:16-17). We believe the Holy Spirit guides to become more like Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18), gives us spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 12:4-11), convicts us of our sin (John 16:8), fills us with God's love (Romans 5:3-5), helps us

pray (Romans 8:26), and inspires us to witness to others (Acts 1:8), among his many blessings.

- Bible: We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God (II Timothy 3:16), written by men under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:20). We believe the Bible is the guide for all doctrine and conduct (Hebrews 4:12).

### **Eligibility**

FLAMES is a member of the Virginia Homeschool Athletic Association. Eligibility rules have been established for all players on all teams in FLAMES. Unless otherwise published by FLAMES or a specific sports league or association, if a student meets the below standards, they are eligible to play for FLAMES, in the playoffs, and in tournaments.

1. FLAMES athletes must normally be homeschooled to participate. A child is homeschooled if he or she is actively homeschooled in compliance with state law. Generally, this requires a family to have filed a Notice of Intent to homeschool or to have claimed a religious exemption. Dual enrollment—taking classes at an institution of higher education while being homeschooled—is permitted. Proof of homeschooling may be required. Questions about eligibility will be resolved by the Board.
2. A private school student may be allowed to play for Flames sports if the private school does not offer that sport for the particular age group, there's a need for the player, and the ADs from both organizations have a conversation to approve the participation.
  - a. VHSAA waivers will be submitted at the beginning of the season for sports that participate in VHSAA events. VHSAA has the ability to approve or decline the waiver.
  - b. Homeschooled students would have precedence in sports where a cap is present.
3. A player who has received a high school diploma is not eligible.
4. Children will be assigned to the team to which their ages correspond on August 1 of that year: middle school (11-14), junior varsity (15-16), varsity (17-18). Any request by a coach to allow a child to play on a team that does not correspond to his or her age group must be approved by the Athletic Director, who will consult with the Board of Directors.
5. Players must have played less than four varsity seasons in the high school sport for which they are participating (that includes private or public schools in the past). Middle school and JV do not count.

- Athletes may not simultaneously play a sport for the FLAMES and the same sport for any other program with which FLAMES may compete. This includes games or tournaments. Athletes who violate this section are subject to removal from the program by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE TO PARENTS:** Age, more than academic grade, should dictate the competitive sports level for an athlete. Homeschool parents often confuse the two when selecting the competitive team level for their athlete. Generally, an athlete should compete with other athletes who are at the same physical development. Grades listed on registration will determine the number of years an athlete can participate in FLAMES. There is a rare occasion where an outstanding athlete needs to compete at higher levels. That would be addressed on a case-by-case basis and is not usually the athletic level of most athletes.

### **Registration.**

Registration and Insurance. For each sport or activity in which a homeschooled child wishes to participate, that child may not participate in any practices or games until (1) a registration form for that child has been received and approved by the registrar, and (2) the child has been added to the FLAMES insurance policy for that sport or activity. The registrar shall work with the Treasurer to ensure the FHS insurance policy is updated to reflect new participants as soon as possible.

### **Fee Payment.**

Any participant in Team sporting events must be current with any and all relevant fees prior to participation. Only the Board of Directors may waive any of these requirements and they will be considered on a case-by-case basis. **Note on Fees:** Because the FLAMES are a non-profit, self-funded organization, all operating costs are covered by the team, or when available donations or sponsorships. Fees cover the expenses of running a competitive sports program which include, but are not limited to the following costs: insurance, medical supplies, uniforms, equipment, field leasing, lights, game preparation, officials, Awards Ceremony, team building activities, etc.

### **Non-Refundability of Fees**

FLAMES is a non-profit organization and must raise all operational funds. The team incurs significant expenses in preparing for the inclusion of each registered participant. These expenses include logistics, equipment, and facilities. These costs do not significantly diminish upon withdrawal of a player. Consequently, all

registration and other fees are non-refundable, unless determined otherwise by the FLAMES Board.

## **FLAMES Leadership**

### **Leadership Guidelines for the Board of Directors**

All individuals in a leadership position are required to fill out a volunteer application, affirm the FLAMES Statement of Faith, be interviewed, and undergo a background and references check which will then be reviewed by the Board for confirmation. That includes all members of the Board of Directors and coaches (as determined by the Board of Directors.)

The government of the Board of Directors shall be focused on seeking and maintaining the Lordship and direction of Jesus Christ. Board members will continually seek His will, through His Spirit and the Word of God in all actions and decisions. Board members will be in complete agreement with the FLAMES Purpose and Vision and Statement of Faith.

The Board of Directors will have the authority to make decisions for the program. A quorum shall consist of a majority of active directors. Decisions brought before the Board shall be approved when the majority of directors vote in favor of an item introduced at a meeting where a quorum is present. Directors may participate in meetings via telephone or virtually. Action may be taken without a meeting, provided that all directors consent in writing to do so. See the Flames Board Email Voting Policy (page 27).

The Board of Directors will conduct, manage, and control the affairs and business of the program, and make rules and regulations consistent with the law, FLAMES Bylaws, and this operations manual.

A Board of Director position will be filled with a person who is a believer in Jesus Christ. The Board shall consist of an odd number of directors, with a minimum of five and a maximum of eleven, with voting privileges. The Board shall solicit nominees from current Flames families. The Board shall approve directors (both initial appointments and reappointments) by a majority vote. Directors may not be related by blood or marriage. Terms of office shall be two years, with the opportunity for reappointment to two additional one year terms. Acting board members can be appointed by current board members until board positions can be advertised publicly and filled.

A Board of Director or coaching vacancy will be filled by the Board of Directors upon much prayer, seeking the Lord, and majority decision.

Any director, officer, coach, or Athletic Director may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Board, whenever it is determined to be in the best interest of the organization. Resignations are effective upon receipt by the Board of written



notification. Upon resignation or removal all property, accounts, social media administration access, and other digital and tangible property will be immediately relinquished and returned to the Board.

### **Officer Duties and Responsibilities**

#### **President Duties and Responsibilities**

**(president@flameshomeschoolsports.com)**

- Oversees the FLAMES program, to include monitoring and ensuring the implementation of all policies and procedures, Equipment, Finances, Logistics, Administration, and Publicity.
- Cooperates with the other Board of Directors in maintaining everyday operations of the program.
- Has authority to bind the program in purchase orders, game or school contracts, and any other legal documents regarding the program. If such items are over \$500.00 the President will obtain the Board of Directors decision in moving forward.
- Has authority to spend any amount that is on the Board of Directors approved budget for the year.
- Oversees all communication to/from the team Board of Directors, to/from the FLAMES, and to/from all media outlets.

#### **Vice President Duties and Responsibilities**

**(vp@flameshomeschoolsports.com)**

- Chair the Board of Directors meetings and will call meetings.
- Provide spiritual guidance and support at all meetings of the Board of Directors and will open each meeting with a devotional word and with prayer.
- Stand in for the President when necessary
- Work with the Treasurer to oversee FLAMES financial reporting and health
- Helps oversee FLAMES programs, to include monitoring and ensuring the implementation of all policies and procedures, administration, equipment, logistics, finances, operations, and communications of a FLAMES.

#### **Secretary Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Act as secretary of all meetings of the Board of Directors of FLAMES.
- Keep and preserve the minutes of all Board meetings, seeing that all notices and information from the FLAMES are duly given and served, and will distribute a copy of the minutes to each Director after each Board meeting.
- Have custody of all deeds, leases, contracts, and other important team documents; shall have charge of the books, records, and papers of the

FLAMES relating to its organization and management; shall see that all reports, statements, and other documents required by law (except tax returns) are properly filed; shall have charge of and be responsible for maintaining a record of all donors and the amount of their contributions; shall be responsible for the written acknowledgment of all contributions; and shall in general perform all the duties incident to the office of secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Directors or the President.

- Work to ensure smooth administrative operations and communication of all team activities between the FLAMES leadership and the parents and players.

#### **Athletic Director Responsibilities (ad@flameshomeschoolsports.com)**

Primarily responsible for working with teams to support and ensure as needed, the following:

- The Athletic Director (AD), or someone expressly designated by the Athletic Director, shall be solely responsible for scheduling all practices, games, and meets,. The AD must approve games and meets scheduled by a designated scheduler. Any schedule changes must be approved by the AD. Proposals for new sports programs must be discussed with the AD prior to being presented to the Board. The AD shall make the initial presentation to the Board on new sports program proposals, and the Board may approve, reject, or ask for more information on the proposal by majority vote.
- The Athletic Director's first term is for two years and may be reappointed for additional one year terms.
- FLAMES Representative/POC/coordinator to conferences such as VHSAA
- Maintain all athlete records and forms or delegate maintenance to the Team Managers.
- Determines Player Eligibility
- Works with Team Managers to ensure scheduling of officials
- Coordinates leasing/renting facilities with Team Managers
- Assist FLAMES teams in following safety procedures/guidelines/bylaws for state, federal, FLAMES, VHSAA, as well as any other organization or event for which FLAMES is a member or participates.
- Assist with Parent/Player issues and concerns.
- Works with FLAMES President and Board to ensure team support in all areas.

#### **Treasurer Duties and Responsibilities:**

- The Treasurer shall have charge of and be responsible for all funds, securities, receipts, and disbursements of the FLAMES and shall deposit all monies and securities of the organization in such banks and depositories as shall be designated by the Board of Directors.
- The Treasurer shall be responsible for (i) maintaining adequate financial accounting records in accordance with generally accepted accounting

practices; (ii) preparing appropriate operating budget and financial statements; (iii) reporting on the financial status of the FLAMES; (iv) and performing all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time maybe assigned to him or her by the President or Vice President.

- The Treasurer may sign and execute in the name of the FLAMES deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments, except in cases where the signing and executioner of shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Directors or by these policies to some other officer or agent of the FLAMES or shall be required by law or otherwise to be signed or executed.
- The Treasurer will be under the direction of and report directly to the President and Vice President, who will then report to the FLAMES Board of Directors.
- Monthly financial reports will be completed and forwarded to the President and Vice President no later than the last day of the month, or as the Board requests.

#### **Master Scheduler Responsibilities:**

- Scheduling games/meets/matches/tournaments/refs/officials
- Diligent to work with coaches/team managers to avoid conflicts between sports and activity program calendars where possible

#### **Team Manager Responsibilities:**

- The Team Manager for a sport/activity acts as the Director for that sport/program, will work with the FLAMES Athletic Director, as well as the FLAMES President or Vice President as needed for guidance, final decisions, and support. The Team Manager would have oversight of and responsibility for the following (with authority to delegate):
  - communication between the program and FLAMES Athletic Director
  - communication with parents when needed
  - player and team eligibility
  - program continuity & focus
  - coaches (ensure there are enough) & their training
  - player camps/off-season training opportunities
  - practice & games scheduling
  - facilities
  - budget & finances, communicating what it needed
  - coaches training & certification

#### **All Coaches**

- Adults who wish to coach in Flames Homeschool Sports (FHS) may be asked to submit a letter of intent, accompanied with a volunteer application provided by the Board, and proof of ID for the designated sport (or program) only. The Letter of Intent, if requested, shall be a personal

letter, or email, addressed to the Board, stating the applicant's intent and reasoning to fill a coaching position for a designated team (e.g., middle school girls' basketball) or program (e.g., basketball as a whole). The application, if requested, will include a portion for references to be reviewed by the Board, who will screen the initial pool of applicants and approve nominations. A majority of the board must approve an applicant to a coaching position.

### **Parent Helper**

- The Parent Helper will assist the coach and provide valuable assistance to ensure the smooth operation of the team. This position requires completing a volunteer form and undergoing a background check before commencing the role. The Parent Helper will report directly to the coach and will be appointed by both the coach and the Athletic Director.

### **Head Coach Duties and Responsibilities:**

- The Head Coach is the primary responsible individual and directs and manages all aspects of coaching for the specific sports team. This includes the monitoring and ensuring the implementation of all policies and procedures, administration, equipment, logistics, finances, operations, and communications of a team. These duties can be delegated.
- Cooperates with the FLAMES Board of Directors in maintaining everyday operations of the program.
- Oversees all communication to/from the team, to/from the Board of Directors, to/from the FLAMES,
- Responsible for ensuring that the field and/or facilities are prepared for practices and games.
- Has authority to spend an amount that is on the team's approved budget for the year.
- The Head Coach will schedule coaches meetings at his/her discretion.
- The Head Coach will be the senior leader of all assistant coaches. A prospective assistant coach must fill out a FLAMES Volunteer Application and be approved by the Board of Directors
- The removal of an assistant coach will be by majority vote of the Board of Directors.
- If there is a disagreement among the coaches, they are to follow the Procedures for Handling Complaints section of the Operations Manual.
- Submits a game schedule for the sports season to the Master Schedulers by the start of the team's season.
- The head coach is responsible for the preparation of his or her team and will determine game playing time on many factors such as, but not limited to, a player's skill, experience, maturity, attendance, active participation, size, age, attitude, etc.
- Responsible for ensuring Youth Protection Policy is enforced.
- Notify an athlete's parents and the Athletic Director as soon as possible of an injury which occurred at practice or a game.

- Read and be familiar with FLAMES Coaches Guide.

#### **Equipment Manager Duties and Responsibilities:**

- The Equipment Manager will work closely with the President and Head Coach in purchasing, maintaining, and storing of all equipment used by the specific FLAMES sports team which includes, but is not limited to, field equipment, training equipment, and storage equipment.
- The Equipment Manager will be responsible for the issue and return of all player equipment.
- The Equipment Manager will be under the direction of the President.

#### **Fundraising Manager Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Raise funds in an ethical, responsible, dignified, effective, and Christ-honoring manner. All monies are counted and verified by the fundraiser leader.
- Report all activities to the Treasurer and President.
- The Board approves where funds are allocated.
- Ensure that all transactions with private and public entities are properly governed under the tax status of the FLAMES.
- Work with the President and Treasurer to help ensure that FLAMES financial needs are met well in advance.
- Gain approval of all major fundraising efforts from the President.

#### **Procedures for Handling Complaints/Conflict Resolution Guidelines:**

Complaints by any member of FLAMES, which includes coaches, staff, players, and parents, concerning FLAMES or team operations, behavior, or concerns in general should be handled in a Christian manner in the following way:

- Take the matter to the person in question directly. Discuss the matter in a way that would role model firm but compassionate discourse.
- If that is not satisfactory, then take the matter to the Athletic Director, Team Manager or Coach.
- If that is not satisfactory, email the Quality Assurance officer at [qa@flameshomeschoolsports.com](mailto:qa@flameshomeschoolsports.com), The QA officer will investigate the situation and notify the board, if necessary. The end result will be communicated directly to the individual that placed the complaint or the concern.
- If that is not satisfactory, then take the matter directly to the Board of Directors.
- Removal of a coach would be by majority vote of the Board of Directors.
- Any athlete, family member, or other adult or child who violates the Flames bylaws or the Code of Conduct is subject to removal from all FHS teams and activities by majority vote of the Board. Adults or children who display negative behavior at Flames practices, games, and activities, are subject to disciplinary action by a majority Board vote. Examples of such behavior include criticizing players or coaches from the stands, being disrespectful to coaches, and spreading divisiveness with words or deeds,

including on social media or online. Disciplinary measures include, in no order, being warned; being barred from practices, games, or activities; removal from Flames online or social media presence; or removal from the program.

### **Modesty Policy**

As representatives of FLAMES, dress for practice and events should always reflect modesty. An athlete's appearance should not cause distraction or disruption. The goal of FLAMES is to glorify the Lord in all we do. (I Corinthians 10:31)

- If you bend over, you shouldn't see anything revealed at the top or exposed at the bottom.
- If shorts are shorter than a 4" inseam (girls) or 5" inseam (guys), or are wide-legged, then compression-type biker shorts or capri leggings should be worn underneath.
- Girls must wear sports bras with proper support. No sports bras worn alone as a "top" are allowed.
- Boys must wear a shirt at all times.

### **FLAMES Team and Player Policies**

#### **Player Policy:**

It is the policy of FLAMES to maximize the number of athletes participating in a sport and encourages, but does not limit, athletes to one sport per season, unless otherwise noted in the FLAMES Policies and Procedures such as a team with a Player Cap.

FLAMES athletes are expected to attend all practices and games. Missed practices create less prepared individuals and teams and increase injury possibilities for both the player and their team-mates, especially in regards to contact sports.

In order to support the team for which they register, it is the athlete's responsibility to look at their personal, academic, and family schedule and make certain there are no conflicts with the team's schedule.

It is the player's responsibility to notify Coaches of all absences from practices or games. Players and families can document absences when registering for a team. Illness, injury, religious obligations, and family emergencies are excusable reasons for an absence.

It is a privilege to play on a team and no player is guaranteed a playing time. The head coach of any FLAMES sport will determine playing time for athletes. This will be based on many factors such as, but not limited to, a player's skill, experience, maturity, attendance, active participation, size, age, attitude, etc. At the coach's discretion, both excused and unexcused absences by athletes may result in significantly less playing time.

Each team will determine the best approach and method of accountability for team attendance.

If an athlete wants to participate in two sports in one season, they must present their case in writing to the head coaches of the teams involved who will then discuss and present the written request to the AD for review and approval or denial.

Athletes can participate in off-season sports while on an in-season sports team. However, if there is a schedule conflict, the in-season sport receives priority in regards to attendance and participation.

**Player Team Cap:**

A team can have a player cap only if necessary due to limitations of coaching staff and facilities.

If a team sets a Player Cap, that is a signal to the FLAMES Board to pursue establishing another team (of the same sport) to meet the demand. FLAMES would also consider at that time whether a new team would be a competitive or recreational team due to the abilities of the players.

Competitive teams with a cap may have try-outs to determine who makes the team based on the individual skill of the players.

Players who are selected to be on the team with a Player Cap will not be allowed to play on a second in-season FLAMES team unless approved by AD and/or the Board President.

**FLAMES Guidelines for Two Sport participation**

Two Sport participation by an athlete is possible, but not encouraged. There is concern for an athlete's safety and well-being, as well team training and scheduling conflicts which will arise. FLAMES encourages athletes to concentrate on one sport per season, but is willing to consider a two team sport participation on a case-by-case basis and following the procedures set out below. Athletes can participate in off-season sports training at the same time as participating in a Seasonal sport. However, the in-season sport has priority with any scheduling conflicts.

Following are the General Procedures for an Athlete to Request Two Sport Participation:

1. Player talks with **and** sends email to coaches of both teams involved with his/her request and reasons to play on two primary sports teams in one season.
2. Each Coach discusses with the athlete, and if necessary the parents, the request.
3. The two team coaches involved communicate with each other in regards to the request and discuss impact of athlete playing on two primary sports teams in one season. After discussing, coaches communicate by email their decision and reasons to either approve or disapprove the request to each other and the AD for final decision.
4. AD's action will be based on coaches' decisions:
  - Action One: Both coaches approve request: If both coaches determine the request is acceptable, then a joint email is sent to the coaches and player and their parents by the AD approving the decision.
  - Action Two: If one or both Coaches disapprove request: If one coach does not find this request acceptable, then after reviewing all information, the AD will make a final determination. A joint email would be sent to the coaches and player and their parents by the AD of the decision.

**In-Season Sports Teams (as of Spring, 2023 - new sports/activities may be added as needed/approved):**

- Spring: Track and Field, Girls Soccer, Theater, Drama
- Fall: Volleyball, Cross Country, Theater, Drama, Chess, Rocketry, Lacrosse, Boys Soccer
- Winter: Basketball, Archery

### **Social Media Policy**

This policy concerns activities not sponsored, supervised or organized by FLAMES:

God's hand has graciously blessed the Flames Homeschool Sports and More organization (FLAMES), and we have experienced an explosion in our growth and development. As we grow, the members of the Board and the staff of each team realize we have limitations. One limitation is the 24/7 control of all aspects of the athletes' (and their extended families') daily lives. Though it is the goal of FLAMES to support the parents and legal guardians as they mentor their children and encourage them in their walk with Christ, FLAMES also recognizes that God placed the parents of our athletes in ultimate control of their children. As such, it is the intent of the Board to limit discipline and control of athletes solely to the



events sponsored, supervised and/or organized by FLAMES. FLAMES Leaders will continue to mentor and lead by example, and will support the athletes in their pursuit of Christ. FLAMES Leaders will make themselves available at a time of their own choosing to support any mentoring opportunities as needed/desired.

FLAMES utilizes Social Media to communicate/coordinate FLAMES activities. Use of Social Media in this manner is, in our opinion, one major key to the continued communication to, and recruitment of, our athletes and their families. Nevertheless, FLAMES recognizes Social Media can be misused. Social Media generated by athletes/participant/leaders in FLAMES, but not on an official FLAMES social media site, is not in the control of FLAMES leaders. FLAMES will continue to promote any form of communication that is positive and promotes the qualities and attributes of Christ. Discouraging, negative, sarcastic, degrading posts, bullying on any form of social media, or other related forms of communication, are not condoned by FLAMES or its leaders.

It is our expectation that, as the God-appointed leaders of their children, parents will continue to monitor their children's daily activities and will guide them to a deeper walk with God. FLAMES does not believe it is our responsibility to control activities outside of FLAMES-sponsored, supervised or organized events.

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

By enrolling in Flames each season, all athletes and parents will be exposed to the code of conduct expected of Flames participants and families. Coaches are responsible for ensuring the code of conduct is followed. Any violation of the code of conduct must be reported to the Board.

A player may be suspended for up to one week for egregious or repeated violations of the code of conduct. The coach shall communicate the reason for a suspension to the Athletic Director. At the Board's request, the Athletic Director shall meet with Board to determine what further action, if any, should be taken. The Athletic Director may extend the suspension until the Board convenes to discuss the situation. The Board shall determine further action by majority vote.

### **Financial Policies and Procedures**

The proper administration of FLAMES funds requires a complete and thorough budget, asset, and expense control system. This control system is used to assure that funds are distributed according to priorities established by the Board of Directors in its annual budget, that financial assets are actively managed and monitored, and that expenditures are limited to the income received by the organization.

Sound judgment should be exercised in the planning and management of those funds which the Lord, through His servants, has made available to the

organization. Any funds received by the organization are intended for the furtherance of our mission and purpose and are handled accordingly.

Flames Homeschool Sports and More is organized as a nonprofit organization under federal and state laws, and its funds are used only within the framework permissible under those laws.

Day-by-day fiscal operations are administered by the Treasurer under oversight of the Board. The Treasurer will be approved by the Board each year. The Treasurer is responsible for open, accurate, and transparent execution of budget activities, remittances, and financial health of the organization. The Board provides spiritual guidance, leadership, strategic planning, and goals that are balanced and prudent in furthering our mission and purposes. Official requisitions may be paid only by the Treasurer or a designated alternate check-signer.

All items of equipment and supplies are owned by Flames Homeschool Sports and More, as compared to ownership by an individual group, team, or activity. Donations of material objects will be received by the organization with the understanding that donors relinquish all restrictions on such objects. In this way, an item is available equally according to need. If a program or activity needs equipment or other facilities, they may be requested by notifying the Team Manager or Coach in charge of the activity involved. All requests will be considered on a priority-need basis as determined by the Board. FLAMES' objective will be to secure the greatest dollar value in every expenditure made for the organization. Adequate planning for all expenditures will be encouraged through the preparation of the annual budget.

### **Finance Operations**

The Board and the Treasurer are responsible for financial oversight, transparency of the financial operations, and budgeting. Budgeting activities also include development and submission of proposed budgets from Coaches and Leaders, a process which normally begins in June.

The Board will receive regular reports, prepared by the Treasurer, that communicate (a) budget amounts and expenditures by line item reflecting amounts by previous months and year-to-date, (b) status of cash - designated and undesignated.

The budget will be the guide for all spending. All spending outside of the budget must be authorized by the Board.

For requests presented by Coaches and Leaders, the Board may request additional information as needed to make an informed decision.

In no case will blank checks be signed.

All unbudgeted requests will be presented to the Board in writing by the AD, team managers, or club managers. They will be acted on within 60 days of receipt.

### **Budgeting**

The organization's fiscal year is January 1 through December 31. Budgets will be prepared based on previous program costs. The Board and Treasurer will work together to assemble the budget.

### **Purchasing / Expenditures / Reimbursements**

Payments for expenses should be made in the same period incurred. Check requests are required to be submitted at least 7 days in advance of the due date. Purchases from expended line items and delay of payment until funds become available are prohibited.

All receipts for charges will be submitted to the Treasurer.

The Athletic Director, coaches, and activity leaders are authorized to spend monies that have been allocated to their budgets each year. Requests from leaders on expenditures exceeding \$500 in a season requires authorization from the Board. The Treasurer will have authority to write a check only when that authority is granted through the annual budget or by the Board.

Checks will normally be written once per week. All check requests, reimbursement requests, etc., will be submitted to the Treasurer. Those requests will be acted on within 2 weeks. Emergency checks are prepared only if approved by the Treasurer or his designate. However, emergency checks will not take on the nature of reimbursements due to the requestor's procrastination.

The Board will annually appoint a minimum of two (2) unrelated check signers including the Treasurer. Alternate check signers are required to operate in accordance with the organization's Financial Policies.

### **Handling of Cash, Checks, and Fees**

- Cash Receipts - All cash must be secured with the Treasurer as soon as possible.
- Checks - Any checks received for payment of fees, sale of t-shirts, materials, or other items will be submitted to the Treasurer as soon as possible.
- Fees - Fees charged for program-related activities and materials are allowed. However, it is normally prohibited to use cash collected as petty cash or payment for the event or materials. Deposits will normally be made and checks issued for expenses related to the event.
- Deposits - The Treasurer collects cash, checks and fees, and is responsible for preparing a deposit of money received.

### **Donations**

Donations may include funds, properties, or any other items of durable and substantial financial value. An undesignated donation is donated to the organization without any stipulations about its use. A designated donation is donated to the organization with the stipulation that it be used for particular purposes.

Flames will comply with all federal and state laws to protect the donor as well as the organization. Further, Flames is not in a position to suggest or give tax advice concerning contributions and gifts.

Undesignated cash gifts are normally applied to the general operating budget of the organization and used in the manner deemed most appropriate by the Board. Flames does not accept any receipts for items bought by individuals for the use by the organization (e.g., refreshments, supplies, etc.) as contributions. Individuals making purchases on behalf of the organization may submit those receipts to the Treasurer for reimbursement consideration.

The gifts of stock, land, furniture, books, art, etc., will be acknowledged by letter (if the donor is identified) from the organization at the time of the gift, indicating the date received and a brief description (a legal description where appropriate) of the gift.

Flames cannot assume responsibility for substantiating deductibility for tax purposes of such gifts; the giver should seek such information from tax counsel if tax deductibility is sought.

No credit can be recorded on a giver's record of contributions for time and/or services contributed to Flames.

Designated cash gifts may be accepted by the organization for specific activities in the organization's programs and applied to that activity.

Upon approval by the Board in consultation with the Treasurer, the organization may establish special designated funds to further and achieve the organization's purposes. The organization may accept donor contributions to Board approved designated funds so long as no additional stipulations are made by the donor about the use of this contribution. The organization may, with advance approval by the Board in consultation with the Treasurer, accept donor-designated contributions for other (not already approved) special funds, purposes, or uses by the organization. The organization is under no obligation to accept any donor contribution and reserves all rights to refuse or return contributions to donors with or without cause.

For designated contributions to be tax deductible by the donor, the organization must retain full and exclusive control of these gifts. The organization will reserve all right, title, and interest in and to the control of such contributions as well as full

discretion as to the ultimate expenditure or distribution thereof in connection with any special fund, purpose, or use.

When the organization is unable to honor a designation, the organization may, consistent with its religious purposes and applicable laws, (1) contact the donor to request approval to change his or her designation to an approved use, (2) return the contribution to the donor, which is in the sole discretion of the organization, or (3) when options (1) and (2) are not feasible, use these funds for any other special purpose or general use of the organization.

All designated contributions must be determined to fit within the organization's tax exempt purposes. If this is not the case, the organization cannot accept the contribution.

Gifts to the organization designated for the use of a specific individual (s) are not tax deductible and the donor will be informed of such.

In no case can the organization accept a designated donation whose intent is to directly or indirectly benefit the donor or the donor's family.

In the event that contributions are designated to a program or activity of the organization which also has a budget that is approved by the Board, the designated funds may be used first to avoid the effect of improperly amending the budget.

### **Amendments**

This Operations Manual may be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

**Flames Homeschool Sports and More**  
**Parent Code of Conduct**

I am a representative of the Flames Homeschool Sports and More organization (FLAMES) and all that I do in public can bring credit or discredit to my child's team. I will endeavor to uphold the high standards, ethics, and esprit de corps of the FLAMES, and realize that the ministry of Christ can be affected by what I say and do. While supporting FLAMES events, I will ensure that the reputation of the FLAMES is upheld and kept clean. Negative attitudes towards teammates, coaches, and parent volunteers are unacceptable. All Flames are expected to be supportive and positive of each other. Flames shall exemplify Christian love in all interactions at Flames events and activities in accordance with 1 Cor. 13.

I will encourage my child to play clean and fair. I will not punish my child by removing him/her from practice or games due to misbehavior at home, but will find other methods to discipline him/her. I will ensure that my child comes to all practices and games, understanding that practices are mandatory. Developing skills, bonding with teammates, and winning games require consistent practice. I commit to arranging my schedule to get my children to all practices and games, on time. Missing practices and games may result in less playing time.

I understand that modest attire and appropriate behavior are required at all Flames events and activities (1 Thess. 4:1-8); that proper respect for all personal property and public facilities shall be shown; that all Flames events and activities are non-smoking, non-alcoholic, and drug-free; and that no profanity or coarse jesting is allowed at Flames events and activities.

I realize that removing my child from a game for reasons other than extreme family distress will likely cause him/her to sit out the following game to discourage absenteeism at games. I also realize that the likelihood of injury to other players increases when players are suddenly absent for games and must replace positions without sufficient practice. I realize that if my child does not conform to the intent of the program, he/she can be recommended by the Head Coach to the Board of Directors for removal.

I understand that parents are responsible for their children's behavior at all Flames events and activities. Coaches are not able to monitor the behavior of every child, all the time. Parental attendance at games and events is strongly encouraged to show support and ensure all children are safe and behaving appropriately. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the program, or other disciplinary consequences, as determined by the Athletic Director and the Board of Directors.

After a minimum of 24 hours and prayerfully considering the incident or situation, I will inform the head coach or another coach when I am concerned about anything concerning my child's participation, health, safety, spiritual or emotional

well-being. I will confront players who violate their code of ethics and report them to the coaches for evaluation. I will inform the coaching staff of any of my concerns about the team.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Flames Homeschool Sports and More**  
**Player Code of Conduct**

I accept that I am a representative of the Flames Homeschool Sports and More organization (FLAMES) and all that I do in public can bring credit or discredit to my team. I will endeavor to uphold the high standards, ethics, and esprit de corps of the FLAMES, and realize that the ministry of Christ can be affected by what I say and do. While wearing the FLAMES uniform or anything with the FLAMES logo, or while participating in FLAMES events, I must ensure that the reputation of the organization is upheld and kept clean. Negative attitudes towards teammates, coaches, and parent volunteers are unacceptable. All Flames are expected to be supportive and positive of each other. Flames shall exemplify Christian love in all interactions at Flames events and activities in accordance with 1 Cor. 13.

I will do all I can to exemplify Christ in my behaviors toward others. I will play clean, hard, and fair. My use of social media, online messaging, pictures, videos, and my behavior in public will not embarrass or diminish the reputation of the FLAMES. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the program, or other disciplinary consequences, as determined by the Athletic Director and the Board of Directors.

I understand that modest attire and appropriate behavior are required at all Flames events and activities (1 Thess. 4:1-8); that proper respect for all personal property and public facilities shall be shown; that all Flames events and activities are non-smoking, non-alcoholic, and drug-free; and that no profanity or coarse jesting is allowed at Flames events and activities.

I realize the success of the team depends on attendance of all players. If I do not show up to practice or a game, I jeopardize the safety and strategy of the team. I understand that if I have an unexcused absence from a practice or do not show up, I may not play in the next game or meet.

I realize that profanity, fighting, disrespect to coaches or parents, unsportsmanlike conduct, or publicly representing the FLAMES in a negative light may result in my removal from the team without refund. I will respect my parents and inform them of any issues I have on the team. I will not hide a concussion or other injury, but will report them to the head coach.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Flames Homeschool Sports and More Youth Protection Policy

FLAMES has adopted the following policies for the safety and well-being of its members and athletes. These policies primarily protect youth members; however, they also serve to protect adult leaders. FLAMES Coaches/leaders in positions of youth leadership and supervision outside the program will find these policies help protect youth in those situations as well.

Two-deep leadership on all outings required. A minimum of two FLAMES Board Approved adult Coach/leaders, or one approved leader and a participating parent, or another adult is required for all trips and outings. One of these adults must be 21 years of age or older.

### Adult Supervision/Coed Activities:

Male and female adult leaders must be present for all overnight coed trips and outings, even those including parent and child. Both male and female adult leaders must be 21 years of age or older, and at least one must be a board approved coach/leader of the FLAMES.

One-on-one private contact or meetings between adults and youth members is prohibited. Any personal conference, such as a correction or spiritual needs conference, is to be conducted with the knowledge and in view of other adults and/or youth.

Two-deep leadership and no one-on-one contact between adults and youth members includes digital communication. Coaches/Leaders may not have one-on-one private online communications or engage one-on-one in other digital activities (games, social media, etc.) with youth members without the explicit permission of their parents. Leaders should copy a parent and another leader in digital and online communication, ensuring no one-on-one contact exists in text, social media, or other forms of online or digital communication.

### Hotels/Camps

Age-appropriate and separate accommodations for adults and Athletes are required.

No adult may share a room/suite with the opposite sex unless he or she is that adult's spouse, sibling or child.

### Shower Facilities

Whenever possible, separate shower and latrine facilities should be provided for male/female adults and male/female youth, if separate facilities are not available, separate shower times should be scheduled and posted.

### Buddy System

The buddy system should be used at all times. The buddy system is a safety measure for all athletes.

Privacy of youth is respected. Adult leaders and youth must respect each other's privacy, especially in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp. Adults may enter youth changing or showering areas only to the extent that health and safety requires. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.

### Electronic Devices

Inappropriate use of smartphones, cameras, imaging, or digital devices is prohibited. Although most people use cameras and other imaging devices responsibly, it is easy to unintentionally or inadvertently invade the privacy of other individuals with such devices.

No secret organizations. The FLAMES does not recognize any secret organizations as part of its program. All aspects of the athletic program are open to observation by parents and leaders.

Youth leadership is monitored by adult leaders. Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by youth leaders and ensure policies are followed.

Discipline must be constructive. Discipline used in coaching must be constructive and reflect Christian values. Corporal punishment is never permitted. Disciplinary activities involving isolation, humiliation, or ridicule are prohibited. Examples of positive affirmation include verbal praise and high fives.

Appropriate attire is required for all activities. Proper clothing for activities is required.

No hazing. Hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any FLAMES activity.

No bullying. Verbal, physical, and cyberbullying are prohibited. Bullying is defined as the repetitive intentional hurting, intimidation, or coercion of another individual.

### Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

All persons involved in FLAMES must report to local authorities any good-faith suspicion or belief that any child is or has been physically or sexually abused,

physically or emotionally neglected, exposed to any form of violence or threat, exposed to any form of sexual exploitation including the possession, manufacture, or distribution of child pornography, online solicitation, enticement, or showing of obscene material. This duty cannot be delegated to any other person.

Immediately notify the FLAMES Board of this report, or of any violation of FLAMES's Youth Protection policies, so he or she may take appropriate action for the safety of our Athletes, make appropriate notifications, and follow up with investigating agencies. State-by-state mandatory reporting information: [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov). For more training to better understand mandatory reporting, see <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/abuse/cps.cgi>

All adult leaders and youth members have responsibility. Everyone is responsible for acting in accordance with biblical principles, following Christ's examples. Physical violence, sexual activity, emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, unauthorized weapons, hazing, discrimination, harassment, initiation rites, bullying, cyberbullying, theft, verbal insults, drugs, alcohol, and pornography have no place in our program and may result in revocation of membership and in ability to play for or lead any team, or athletic event. Coaches and FLAMES leaders in our teams are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth members and other leaders and interceding when necessary. If youth members misbehave, their parents should be informed and asked for assistance.

#### Incidents requiring an immediate report to the FLAMES Board of Directors

The following must be reported to the board for immediate action, include:

- Any threat or use of a weapon
- Any negative behavior associated with race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability
- Any reports to authorities where the FLAMES's Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse policy or Virginia's mandatory reporting of child abuse laws apply
- Any abuse of a child that meets state reporting mandates for bullying or harassment or hazing.
- Any mention or threats of suicide
- If someone is at immediate risk of harm, call 911.
- If a Athlete is bullied because of race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability, and local help is not working to solve the problem, contact the FLAMES Board.

#### Your Responsibility

- Stop the policy violation or abuse.
- Protect the youth.
- Separate alleged victim from alleged perpetrator.

- Summon needed assistance (911, EMS, additional leaders, etc.).
- Notify parents.
- Notify the appropriate FLAMES Leader/Coach and the FLAMES Board.

For questions or concerns, contact the President at [president@flameshomeschoolsports.com](mailto:president@flameshomeschoolsports.com) or the board at [board@flameshomeschoolsports.com](mailto:board@flameshomeschoolsports.com).

### **Flames Board Email Voting Policy**

#### Policy Statement:

This policy allows for email voting by board members of Flames Homeschool Sports in situations where an in-person or physical meeting is not feasible or practical. Email voting provides an efficient and effective means for board members to participate in decision-making processes, ensuring timely responses and maintaining the organization's productivity.

#### 1. Eligibility for Email Voting:

- a. Only active board members in good standing are eligible to participate in email voting.
- b. Board members must have a functional email address on file with the organization.
- c. The decision to use email voting shall be made by the board chair or in cases of emergency or urgency, by the executive committee.

#### 2. Types of Matters Eligible for Email Voting:

- a. Matters that require a formal vote of the board but are not time-sensitive enough to convene an in-person or physical meeting.
- b. Matters that do not require extensive discussion or debate and can be adequately addressed through written communication. IE: Coaches, Asst Coaches etc.

#### 3. Initiating an Email Vote:

- a. The board chair or an authorized officer shall initiate an email vote by sending a clear and concise email to all eligible board members.
- b. The email should clearly state the subject matter, the proposed action or decision, and a specific deadline for board members to cast their votes.

c. Relevant background information, supporting documents, and any additional clarifications should be attached or provided via links in the email.

4. Discussion and Voting Period:

a. Board members shall have a reasonable period, typically not less than 48 hours, to review the information, seek clarifications if necessary, and cast their vote.

b. During the discussion and voting period, board members may engage in email-based discussions, ask questions, or seek further information related to the matter being voted upon.

c. All communication related to the email vote should be conducted through the designated board email distribution list or other secure and accessible means specified by the organization.

5. Voting Process:

a. Board members shall cast their vote by replying to the email vote message or by using an online voting platform if one is utilized by the organization.

b. Votes should be cast by clearly indicating "yes," "no," or "abstain" in the email subject line or body.

c. In the event of a tie vote, the matter shall be referred for further discussion and decision-making at the next physical or in-person board meeting.

6. Vote Tabulation and Notification:

a. The board chair or an authorized officer shall collect and tabulate the votes promptly after the voting deadline.

b. The results of the email vote shall be communicated to all board members via email within a reasonable timeframe.

c. The outcome of the email vote shall be recorded in the official minutes of the next physical or in-person board meeting.

7. Confidentiality and Security:

a. Board members shall exercise due diligence to maintain the confidentiality of any sensitive or proprietary information shared during the email voting process.

b. The organization shall take appropriate measures to ensure the security and integrity of the email voting system, including but not limited to the use of secure email protocols and password protection.

8. Compliance with Bylaws and Applicable Laws:

a. Email voting shall be conducted in accordance with the organization's bylaws and any applicable state laws or regulations governing nonprofit organizations.

b. In case of any conflicts between this policy and the organization's bylaws or applicable laws, the bylaws and laws shall prevail.

This email voting policy shall be reviewed periodically by the board and may be amended or updated as deemed necessary.

### **FLAMES Board Member Attendance Policy**

**Policy Statement:** This policy was established to ensure regular attendance and active participation of board members in all meetings of the organization. Board members have a fundamental responsibility to contribute to the effective governance and decision-making of the organization, and their consistent attendance is crucial to fulfilling this responsibility.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to set clear expectations for board member attendance at meetings, outline consequences for unexcused absences, and provide a framework for holding board members accountable for their commitment to the organization's mission and governance.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all board members of the organization, regardless of their position or tenure.

#### **Policy Guidelines:**

1. **Meeting Schedule:**

a. The organization shall establish a regular meeting schedule well in advance, with consideration for the convenience of board members' availability.

b. Meetings shall be held at a consistent time and location, either in-person or through virtual means, as determined by the board's preferences and circumstances.

2. **Attendance Expectations:**

a. Board members are expected to attend all scheduled board meetings unless prevented by unavoidable and extenuating circumstances.

b. If a board member is unable to attend a meeting, they must notify the board chair or secretary as soon as possible before the meeting and provide a reason for their absence.

**3. Excused and Unexcused Absences:**

a. An absence will be considered "excused" if the board member provides a valid reason for not attending the meeting in advance.

b. Absences without prior notification or without a valid reason will be considered "unexcused."

**4. Consequences for Unexcused Absences:**

a. After 2 consecutive unexcused absences or a maximum of four unexcused monthly meetings out of twelve, the board chair shall meet with the board member to discuss their attendance record.

b. If unexcused absences persist, the board may take disciplinary action, including a formal warning or, in extreme cases, removal of the board member from their position.

**5. Review and Appeals:**

a. Board members have the right to appeal any decisions related to their attendance record through a designated appeals process.

b. Appeals shall be considered by an impartial committee or a mediator, not involved in the original decision.

**6. Transparency and Reporting:**

a. The board chair or secretary shall maintain accurate records of board members' attendance at meetings.

b. Attendance records may be shared with board members periodically to ensure transparency and accountability.

**Amendments and Revisions:** This policy may be amended or revised by a majority vote of the board, following a proper notice and discussion period.

**Communication:** This policy shall be communicated to all board members upon joining the organization and periodically thereafter to ensure ongoing awareness.

By adhering to this policy, the organization seeks to uphold a culture of commitment, accountability, and effective governance among its board members.