

## **FLAMES Homeschool Sports and More** **Coaches Guide v1.1 (Approved June 26, 2023)**

### **Welcome**

Thank you for volunteering to be a coach. FLAMES has placed trust in your spiritual leadership, commitment to students, and your skills of teaching and coaching in your sport/activity. You will have a dramatic, lasting impact on the lives of the young athletes you coach. Coaching will likely be more involved than it appeared on the surface, as the many things that need to be looked after as a leader will constantly vie for your time. Organization and planning are your great allies. You are not alone. Remember that the leadership of FLAMES wants to enable your efforts and to support you. Homeschooling requires great patience and passion, and your knowledge of homeschooling will help the families that we serve.

### **Mission of FLAMES**

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

We want homeschooling parents to have an option to continue to homeschool their children through high school graduation. We serve homeschool parents with well coached, disciplined teams in an environment that is pleasing to God. We are unashamed of Christ, and we will seek to minister to all we come in contact with through our words, our actions, and our behaviors on and off the field. If you are a head coach, you are responsible to build a spiritually rich environment that supports the faith of the families we serve. If you are an assistant coach, you are to assist the head coach in that endeavor and honor your head coach's leadership.

### **Coaching as a Servant**

A FLAMES coach is a servant of Christ and a servant of the homeschooling families that participate in our programs. As a coach, your deeds will count far more than your words, and your walk with Christ is on display for all to see. Sports are passionate events involving great force of will. For you as a coach, your Christian character will be tested as the players and families you lead get to see how you react to officials and game situations and player behavior, how you teach, how you speak to all around you, and how well you walk the walk.

**You are here as a minister first.** Your team is your ministry field. Coaches and others need ministry, but your focus is on the players of your team. Their spiritual growth through sports is what you are all about. All adults interacting with athletes in a

leadership role are to be Christian role models who have been formally vetted by the FLAMES.

Others who know you have informed the FLAMES board of your reputation as a man or woman of Godly character. They have placed the reputation of FLAMES in your hands.

### **Homeschooling Support**

FLAMES serves homeschooling parents. We support busy, sometimes cash-strapped homeschooling families who often must travel some distance to practice. We teach student athletes that they do not have to leave their faith behind to succeed in sports. All students are on the team voluntarily. A coach can lose his or her team in short order by alienating parents. They simply will stop coming. FLAMES will cease to exist when it stops serving homeschooling parents in a way that they find acceptable.

Some things to remember:

1. Pray for your team, the FLAMES, and your opponents. Treat your opportunity with all the respect and desire of the wonderful mission opportunity that it is. You will rarely get an opportunity like this one! God has placed you in a position of leadership, and the Board fully believes that. Let us honor God in all that we do in FLAMES.
2. You are not alone! The FLAMES Athletic Director and Board are here to actively participate in supporting your needs as a coach, shielding you from interpersonal conflict, interceding with other programs and teams when necessary, giving you financial support, providing you with concussion training and other necessary support programs, providing counsel, lending an ear, and helping with issues with players and/or parents. You should not be in a conflict by yourself, and in many cases issues should resolve without your involvement. The AD and Board will do everything we can to enable you to focus your time on coaching and your responsibilities.
3. Maintain an environment of dignity and respect. Build up the confidence and self-esteem of your players and coaches. Don't beat them down.
4. If you are here to coach, then coaching means you are here. You must be able to come to practice without fail. You should not be late or arriving at the last minute. On time is early and early is on time. If your work schedule changes and makes it hard to properly engage as a coach, then you must discuss this with the Athletic Director and the Board. Many coaches have jobs, and some assistant coaches may be a few minutes late from time to time due to work. But a head coach must be there on time and every time. Head coach absences should be rare.

5. Be positive. Be energetic and encouraging. Find good things to say about your players and praise them for doing a good job. Minimize negativity to important issues. Avoid group punishment as it only discourages those who were doing the right thing. Prescribing a lap for a generally lazy practice is acceptable, but avoid consistent use of negative group events. Remember, a player who has done things well and is disciplined anyway has learned a negative lesson.
6. You must constantly improve your knowledge of both your sport and how to coach. You must become good at linking drills to desired individual and team behaviors. You must teach and lead in a way that inspires your players to try harder. Attend clinics and observe and talk to other coaches. Discover ministry programs and approaches from Christian coaches online and from known ministry sources. Never stop learning.
7. You are a legitimate coach. All that we do must support the concept and reality that we are a true elementary, middle, and high school sports organization. Student athletes must be eligible according to the rules of their sport, FLAMES eligibility rules, and their conference if applicable. Students are not homeschoolers if they are not actively homeschooling. A graduation ceremony means that the student has completed high school studies and is now not eligible for varsity sports. Pay strict attention to FLAMES, conference, and tournament eligibility rules.
8. You are not here simply to be a coach as a hobby without all the extra demands of running a team and building a program. You are required to participate in the responsibilities of coaching to include logistical preparations, recruiting, fund raising (as applicable), and off season workouts and events. You have several enabling assistants, but it is your long hours of effort that will make the difference for this mission field. This is a hard job, without pay, without praise, and often without thanks, and sometimes with difficult personal situations. Welcome to the ministry!
9. Develop some thick skin and accept correction. (All leaders and board members are corrected regularly - it's part of leadership).
10. Coaching your own child is difficult. Learn to be fair and do not worry about being accused of favoritism. Do not live your dreams through your son or daughter. Put wind in their sails by coaching them the same way you coach all other players with the same zeal and energy. Get help coaching your son or daughter if you know that you struggle in this area. In the end, you must realize that your son or daughter will very likely not be a professional athlete. They are a homeschooled kid like the rest of the players on the team. It is very special to have your dad or

mom coach you if it is done properly. They will remember and thank you for it for the rest of their lives.

11. Do not use or allow profanity. There will be none from you, your players, your coaches, or your family members. It is simply unacceptable. Contact the Board if necessary to help address this.
12. Ensure your team is properly equipped. Pay attention to expiration dates, look for bargains, plan in advance, and get what you need through the Board and budgeting process.
13. Build great teams but do not worry more about winning than ministry. The wins will come. When you do build a winning program, a new set of parents and players will start arriving and you will have a new ministry challenge. Revel in the moments of a loss and teach players to be thankful for God's blessings in the hard times. It is easier to teach character development in a loss than in a win.
14. You live in a Christian fish bowl. Your players are watching all that you do and are listening to all that you say. They have a very good idea of your spiritual maturity and how you behave when things go wrong. They learn how adults deal with Christian issues by watching you. They listen to what you and the assistant coaches say and do in off time moments. Your ministry is on the clock at all times.
15. Avoid conflict with parents and players. Be open to speak to any parent, but do not feel pressured to do things differently for one individual. If you have a difficult player or parent, seek guidance and support from the AD. If you are thinking of dismissing a player, see the AD immediately. Let the AD interact with the difficult parent or a difficult situation. You go back to coaching and let the AD handle the conflict. You will give recommendations to the AD, and they will remove the player if necessary. That process allows a consistent behavioral guide for students. With that advice in mind, don't allow things to exist on your team that should not exist.
16. Pick up the phone without hesitation. Coaching at FLAMES is supposed to be a positive experience. If you are upset, concerned, or feel negatively in any way about anything, call the FLAMES Athletic Director or President without hesitation. If you aren't enjoying the ministry, then we need to get it fixed.
17. Coaching is addictive. Your mind and heart can be consumed by your sport. It will be one of the most rewarding and fun things you ever do. Remember that the players are your mission field. Your players should be spiritually, physically, and mentally stronger when they leave your influence.

18. Write letters of recommendation. You will be asked for many letters of recommendation. Do a good job on all of them and tell the truth. You really have an influence in student acceptance to universities, work opportunities, and further ministry through your recommendation.
19. Game playing time. The head coach will determine playing time for athletes and should base it on many factors such as, but not limited to, a player's skill, experience, maturity, attendance, active participation, size, age, attitude, etc. It is a privilege to play on a team and no player is guaranteed playing time.
20. Investigations: If at any time during your tenure as a leader with FLAMES, you are under investigation for any reason, you must notify the FLAMES Board immediately, and will be required to step down from FLAMES leadership until the issue/matter is resolved.

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

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

1. 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.
2. FLAMES Representative/POC/coordinator to conferences such as VHSAA
3. Determines player eligibility
4. Works with Team Managers to ensure scheduling of officials
5. Coordinates leasing/renting facilities with Team Managers
6. 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.
7. Assist with parent/player issues and concerns.
8. Works with FLAMES President and Board to ensure team support in all areas.

### **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
- 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.

### **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
- Schedule coaches meetings at his/her discretion
- Senior leader of all assistant coaches
- Submits a game schedule for the sports season to the Board by the start of the team's season
- Preparation of his or her team and will determine game playing time based on many factors such as, but not limited to, a player's skill, experience, maturity, attendance, active participation, size, age, attitude, etc.
- Ensure 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
- Communicate with the coaches from other teams in your sport. Get to know them and work with them. Treat them well. Do not build hatred for rival teams. Players must grow to learn that the other homeschool kids are just like them, and that they are all Christ's children. Sometimes it can get difficult to determine a secular high school team from a Christian homeschool team. If you can no longer tell the difference, then something is wrong and we need to fix it.
- Keep your word with parents. If you schedule an event, then have it unless there are extreme reasons not to follow through. Once you cancel a couple of events, parents will start scheduling other events in their lives and will wonder if you are going to have the event. You will lose momentum.
- You should not argue with parents nor ignore their concerns. You don't have to play someone just because their parent is persistent, but you must use the weight of a group of people to help you solve difficulties that sometimes arise. If a parent is unhappy with a coach, they should take their concerns to the Athletic Director or the Board. The coach should have a chance to respond to the matter. If a coach is not leading or behaving in an appropriate manner, the Board will look into the matter. The Board supports coaches, but remember, that FLAMES is designed so that even if its founders step outside the lines, they will be corrected via group accountability.
- Do not be alone with individual players. You are an adult and deeply involved with student ministry. However, you must protect yourself and your organization from accusation. You are not to be in a car or building alone with a student. You should have another adult with you. This will get awkward as sometimes students need rides. Prevent an unfair accusation against you by having others around and observing your interactions.
- Keep your word with other teams, particularly in scheduling and trading games. Keep them in the loop. Do not build negative relationships with other coaches. If there are rubbing points, then simply avoid the other team until personnel matters improve. If there is a conference team that has serious issues, then the Board should get involved.
- Maintain a roster. In contact sports, insist that other coaches provide you with a roster demonstrating eligibility. A roster is extremely necessary as you must ensure that overage or otherwise ineligible players are not participating from the other team. You must not use an ineligible player for any reason. Ineligible players in any conference simply do not participate. Parents will come to you asking to place a public school student on your team because your environment is better, or they will get a better chance for playing time, or for other reasons. You will have to say no. Encourage them to homeschool their children if the environment at school is unacceptable. Protect your mission field. God is alive and working in public and private schools as well.

- Communicate your dreams to the board! You never know what might happen. Dare to build something that truly serves homeschool families and their children.

### **Assistant Coach Responsibilities**

- Assistant coaches are here to help coach and support the plans and directives of the head coach. You are a minister and assisting in the development of Christian athletes. The head coach has accepted the primary responsibilities and therefore has the authority to make final decisions. If you don't agree with the head coach and it is not a safety, faith, or moral turpitude problem, then the head coach makes the final call. The assistant coach internalizes and carries out the directive as if it was his or her own idea.
- Assistant coaches must come to practice just like the head coach. If you cannot come to practice regularly then you are not helping build the ministry to the athletes. Volunteer to help in another way and help the coach find someone that can come regularly and do a good job.
- Assistant coaches do not create dissension for the head coach. Assistant coaches do not undermine a head coach, they do not speak negatively about other coaches or adults in the presence of athletes, nor do they fail to carry out a head coach's directives. If there is an issue with the head coach that is persisting, then address the matter to the President in confidence. The board will intercede rather than have an internal issue between coaches on a team. You are to provide a unified front to the athletes.
- Being an assistant coach carries no favor for your children on the team. There can be no special treatment of your son or daughter because you are giving extra time to the team. You are a formally vetted minister and coach, and your son or daughter is an athlete in the mission field.
- Do not be alone with individual players. You are an adult and deeply involved with student ministry. However, you must protect yourself and your organization from accusation. You are not to be in a car or building alone with a student. You should have another adult with you. Prevent an unfair accusation against you by having others around and observing your interactions. See FLAMES Youth Protection Policy.

### **Parent Helper Responsibilites:**

FLAMES Homeschool Sports (FHS) is always seeking dedicated and enthusiastic volunteer parent helpers to assist with various tasks during our homeschool sports programs. As a parent helper, you will play an important role in providing support and guidance to our student-athletes.

Key Responsibilities:

- Assist coaches with setup and cleanup of equipment before and after practices/games.



- Help facilitate team communication between coaches, parents, and athletes.
- Supervise student-athletes during practices/games, ensuring their safety and well-being.
- Provide encouragement and support to student-athletes during practices/games.
- Parent Helpers must have a background check.
- Parent Helpers are not a coach and are not authorized to lead practices or activities except under the direct supervision and guidance of the coach.
- Maintain a positive attitude and be a role model for good sportsmanship.

### **Procedures for Handling Complaints/Conflicts:**

- 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, 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. (1 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.

## **Team Captains**

- Qualities to look for when selecting a Captain: commitment, reliability, integrity, Godly character
- Various ways to select a captain: Player's vote, coaches vote, head coach selects, Grade/Seniority
- Expectations, duties, and responsibilities will vary by team. Head Coach can determine.

## **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 FLAMES Board 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.

**Thank you for being a wonderful coach and a point of ministry to homeschooled families!**

**FLAMES Homeschool Sports and More**  
**Leader 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 FLAMES. I will endeavor to uphold the high standards, ethics, and esprit de corps of 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 understand that leadership in FLAMES requires a commitment and dependability for the success of the team, and safety of the players, and I will work hard to attend all practices, games, and team related events. I also understand and will support the Head Coach on any decisions made regarding the team and will inform the Head Coach of any concerns I have.

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 if I do not conform to the intent of the program, I can be recommended by the Head Coach or Athletic Director to the Board of Directors for removal.

When I am concerned about anything concerning my participation, health, safety, spiritual or emotional well-being and after a minimum of 24 hours and prayerful consideration of any incident or situation, I will inform the head coach, another coach, or the Athletic Director.

I will encourage the athletes to play clean and fair. Using Christian principles and with at least one other coach or adult present, I will confront players who violate their code of conduct and report them to the Head Coach for evaluation.

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

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

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

## **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.

I understand that in the case of conflict, I will seek guidance and support from the AD. After 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 smart phones, 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.

#### 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)

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).