

# Bylaws of Flames Homeschool Sports

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## Article I Name

**Section 1.1 Name.** The name of this organization is Flames Homeschool Sports (FHS).

## Article II Purpose and Principles

**Section 2.1 Purpose.** FHS is a Christian organization that supports homeschool families in Warren County, VA, 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.

**Section 2.2 Principles.** The following principles shall guide decisions made by board members, the Athletic Director, and coaches.

**2.21 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.

**2.22 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.

**2.23 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.

## Article III Participation

**Section 3.1 Player Eligibility.** FHS 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. Private school students may be allowed to participate in Flames sports under certain conditions (see operations manual Eligibility sections 1 and 2 for more information.)

**Section 3.2 Registration and Insurance.** For each sport a homeschooled child wishes to play, 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 FHS insurance policy for that sport. The registrar shall work with the Treasurer to ensure the FHS insurance policy is updated to reflect new participants as soon as possible.

**Section 3.3 Code of Conduct.** All Flames athletes and parents must agree to the FHS code of conduct (Appendix 2). The Board may amend the code of conduct by majority vote. All amendments must be in line with the Flames statement of faith (Appendix 1) and be designed to promote a positive environment that honors Christ.

**Section 3.4 Team Placement.** 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.

**Section 3.5 No Simultaneous Participation.** Athletes may not simultaneously play a sport for the Flames and the same sport for any other program with which FHS 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.

**Section 3.6 Voluntarily Leaving the Flames.** If a family chooses to participate with another program, Flames leadership will accept that decision with grace. FHS asks that families communicate their reasons for leaving to the Board or Quality Assurance Director as soon as the decision is made so that their concerns may be understood and so the program has time to plan for the loss of players.

**Section 3.7 Consequences for Violating the Bylaws or Code of Conduct.** 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.

## Article IV Directors and Officers

**Section 4.1 Authority of the Board.** The Board of Directors is the FHS policymaking and oversight body and may exercise all the powers and authority granted to it by law.

**Section 4.2 Christian Faith.** Directors and officers must sign the Flames statement of faith in order to be part of the Flames leadership.

**Section 4.3 Appointment of Directors.** 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. Directors are subject to the removal and resignation policies established in Section 4.6

**Section 4.4 Appointment of Officers.** The officers of the organization must include President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, although other positions may be established. Officers may also be directors, with the exception of the Treasurer. Terms of office shall be two years, with the opportunity for reappointment to two additional one year terms. Officers are subject to the appointment procedure established in Section 4.3, and to the removal and resignation policies established in Section 4.6.

**Section 4.5 Duties of Officers.** The Officers shall perform all duties attendant to their positions. All revenue generated by any Flames program, event, activity, or other action, including cash donations and sponsorships, must be reported to the Board and Treasurer and deposited in the Flames bank account in order to comply with IRS requirements for calculating gross receipts. Only someone with express written permission appointed by the Board, may enter contracts on behalf of the Flames or issue payments from the Flames bank account.

**Section 4.6 Removal and Resignation.** 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 admin access, and other digital and tangible property will be immediately relinquished and returned to the Board.

**Section 4.7 Compensation.** Directors shall not be compensated for their service, with the exception that expenses incurred in the furtherance of the Board's business may be reimbursed with proper documentation and unanimous board approval.

**Section 4.8 Background Checks.** Background checks shall be performed on all Flames leaders (directors, officers, Athletic Directors, coaches, and volunteers) every three years. If an applicant has been convicted of any crime involving children or violent behavior, the applicant is disqualified and cannot serve as a leader. Protecting the children and adults in the Flames remains the highest priority.

**Section 4.9 Meetings.** The Board shall hold at least four regular meetings per calendar year. The Board may also hold special meetings at the request of any two directors. Directors should be given at least 48 hours' notice before a meeting is held unless the nature of the meeting is an emergency.

**Section 4.10 Action.** A quorum shall consist of a majority of active directors. All organizational policy decisions 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. The Board may delegate operational decisions to individuals or teams as needed.

**Section 4.11 Committees.** The Board may adopt resolutions, by majority vote, which establish committees. The resolutions shall specify the purpose off each committee (such as to identify prospective directors, recruit coaches, or raise funds), the composition of the committee, length of time each committee shall stand, and who shall serve as committee chair.

## Article V

### Athletic Director and Coaches

**Section 5.1 Christian Faith.** The Athletic Director and coaches must sign the Flames statement of faith to serve in the Flames leadership.

**Section 5.2 Athletic Director.** The Board of Directors shall appoint the Athletic Director by majority vote. The Athletic Director's first term is for two years and may be reappointed for additional one year terms.

**Section 5.3 Duties of Athletic Director.** 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.

**Section 5.4 Appointment of 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.

**5.4.1 Nomination of Approved Candidates.** Each candidate will be considered based on the below criteria:

1. (a) Commitment to the mission of the Flames, particularly about creating a Christ-centered environment.
2. (b) Coaching experience.
3. (c) Willingness and ability to meet any standards and expectations established by the Board.

Candidates may be asked to sit for an interview with the Board of Directors. The interview shall be open for observation to parents of registered athletes for the designated sport only. Candidates confirmed by the Board of Directors will be contacted by the FHS A.D. for notification and further instruction as needed.

## Article VI Disciplinary Procedures

**Section 6.1 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 coach may suspend a player for up to one week for egregious or repeated violations of the code of conduct. The coach shall immediately communicate the reason for a suspension to the child's parents and the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director shall immediately notify the Board of the action. 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.

## Article VII Administration

**Section 7.1 Prohibitions.** No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article Third hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue

Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

**Section 7.2 Dissolution.** Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. which are organized and operated exclusively for such purpose.

**Section 7.3 Conflict of Interest.** For purposes of this provision, the term "interest" shall include personal interest, interest as director, officer, coach, parent, manager, trustee, or beneficiary of any concern and having an immediate family member who holds such an interest in any concern. The term "concern" shall mean any corporation, association, non-profit, trust, partnership, limited liability entity, firm, person, or other entity other than the organization. No transaction of the organization shall be voidable by reason of the fact that any director or officer of the organization has an interest in the concern with which such transaction is entered into, provided: (1) The interest of such officer or director is fully disclosed to the board of directors; (2) such transaction is duly approved by the board of directors not so interested or connected as being in the best interests of the organization; and (3) payments to the interested officer or director are reasonable and do not exceed fair market value. No interested officer or director may vote or lobby on the matter or be counted in determining the existence of a quorum at the meeting at which such transaction may be authorized. The minutes of meetings at which such votes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention, and rationale for approval.

## Article VIII Insurance and Budget

**Section 8.1 Insurance.** FHS maintains a minimum \$1,000,000 general liability insurance policy to protect the organizations from claims resulting in the operations of those sports under the authority of the organizations. FHS also maintains a Directors and Officers policy with a minimum limit of \$1,000,000 to protect Directors Officers and others that are covered in the definition found in the policy.

**Section 8.2 Budget.** The annual budget shall be developed in a manner that minimizes the burden on families while ensuring the program provides a quality product. The budget shall identify costs by category and by sport and may include the cost of participating in Virginia Home School Athletic Association tournaments. No other tournament fees shall be included in the budget. Participation in other tournaments must be approved by the Board, who shall consult with parents when making the decision.

**Section 8.3 Transparency.** The Treasurer shall ensure that for each year, an Annual Report is posted on the Flames Facebook page that includes a summary of revenue and expenditures. In addition, the Treasurer shall create a file containing a comprehensive list of transactions, bank statements, and receipts for each year, and make it available to any Flames family that wishes to view it.

## Article IX

## Amendment of Bylaws

**Section 9.1 Amendment Process.** These Bylaws may be amended by a three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) majority vote of the Board of Directors, provided prior notice is given of the proposed amendment in the notice of the meeting at which such action is taken, or provided all members of the Board waive such notice.

## **Appendix 1**

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

#### **God**

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

We believe that God created the universe and all that is in it. (Genesis 1:1-27). We believe in one God: 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).

## **Appendix 2**

### **Flames Homeschool Sports Code of Conduct**

1. 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.
2. Negative attitudes towards teammates, coaches, and parent volunteers are unacceptable. All Flames are expected to be supportive and positive of each other.
3. 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.
4. Practices are mandatory. Developing skills, bonding with teammates, and winning games requires consistent practice. Please arrange your schedule to get your children to all practices and games, on time. Missing practices and games may result in less playing time.
5. Flames shall exemplify Christian love in all interactions at Flames events and activities in accordance with 1 Cor. 13.
6. Modest attire and appropriate behavior are required at all Flames events and activities. See 1 Thess. 4:1-8.
7. Proper respect for all personal property and public facilities shall be shown.
8. All Flames events and activities are non-smoking, non-alcoholic, and drug-free.
9. No profanity or coarse jesting is allowed at Flames events and activities.