

# Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Panther Basketball Program Handbook

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[www.aggielandhomeschool.com](http://www.aggielandhomeschool.com)

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# **Statement of Faith**

(Approved September 9, 2013)

We believe in:

- The only true eternal God, the almighty Creator of all things, existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – full of love and glory.
- The unique divine inspiration, entire trustworthiness and authority of the Bible.
- The value and dignity of all people: created in God’s image to live in love and holiness, but alienated from God and each other because of our sin and guilt, and justly subject to God’s wrath.
- Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine, born of a virgin, who lived as a perfect example, who assumed the judgment due sinners by dying in our place, and who was bodily raised from the dead and ascended as Savior and Lord.
- Faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.
- The victorious reign and future personal return of Jesus Christ, who will judge all people with justice and mercy, giving over the unrepentant to eternal condemnation but receiving the redeemed into eternal life.

# **Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball Program Philosophy**

## **Overview**

The philosophy of the Panther basketball program can best be summarized in three main ideas:

- **Competitive.** We seek to challenge our youth in stimulating competition that drives them to work hard and give their best.
- **Skill Development.** We seek to develop athletic skills, physical fitness, and conditioning that will serve them their entire life.
- **Character Development.** We seek to teach the Christian values of teamwork, honesty, integrity, humility, love, and respect.

Members in this program vary on their theological understandings. The responsibility for the spiritual development of each student athlete in our program falls upon their own parents. Coaches, players, and parents should encourage and model the Christian values mentioned above as we practice and compete together.

## **Why competitive and not recreational? A few reasons...**

Competitive sports teach teamwork, discipline, goal-setting, leading through example, sportsmanship, and overcoming adversity.

1. There are other options for recreational sports for homeschooled youth (little league, soccer, etc.), but few opportunities for competitive sports.
2. The other teams we are facing are developing players and playing to win. To not do the same can be discouraging to all involved.
3. Recreational sports work best when you can form a league of like-minded teams.
4. Competitive sports provide opportunity for those gifted athletically.

## **What this means for players and parents:**

1. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach. He or she will factor in skill level, attitude, coachability, and work ethic. While some playing time is the desire for each player, there are no guarantees that a player will play every game or how much time will be played in each game.

2. Players are expected to be coachable and adjust as they are coached.
3. Players should be practicing at home on their own. This should include conditioning and practice, as well as reading books and studying the game.
4. Players are expected to work hard in practice and respect their coaches.
5. Players will be expected to receive instruction about character and behavior issues.
6. Players will not view spiritual and character instruction as unnecessary.

### **What this means for coaches:**

1. Coaches must give each player the opportunity to improve and gain more playing time.
2. Coaches must teach fundamental skills at all levels. More time will be spent on this with younger players.
3. Coaches will communicate to the officers important parent and player issues that may arise.
4. Coaches must educate themselves and improve as coaches.
5. Coaches should develop all players and not focus only on the starters.
6. Play the games to win, but give all players a chance to play and develop when possible.
7. Be flexible with rosters for different age / divisional games.
8. An individual team is part of the entire basketball program; therefore, a coach does not have sole autonomy over their team, but will adhere to the overall player and coaches conduct statements and offensive and defensive philosophy of the program.
9. They will coach players for their overall wellbeing and development and set a good example of Christian character.
10. They will *not* try to win games “at any cost.” Winning games is always a goal but is always tempered by the broader program goals.

# **Membership, Voting Meetings, Officers, Elections, Roles and Responsibilities, and Coach Selection**

The Basketball Program is a member led organization with a set of officers that are annually elected by the membership.

## **Membership**

We are a Christian organization whose voting members are made up of Christian parents, players, and coaches who desire to live by the Word of God with the help of the Holy Spirit.

A voting member is defined by the bylaws of the Aggieland Homeschool Athletics.

## **Membership Voting Rights**

During all official meetings of the basketball program when a motion is presented for a vote each voting member present at the meeting has an equal vote. Unless otherwise stated in this handbook, motions must pass by a 51% majority in order to be approved. It is the goal of the chair of the meeting to seek consensus when making decisions; however, if a vote is taken (at the determination of the chair) then all basketball program voting-members present at the meeting shall have an opportunity to vote on the motion. The manner in which the basketball program conducts its business such as electing officers, selecting coaches, and appointing non-elected officers are ultimately at the discretion of the voting members of the Basketball Program and not a function of Aggieland Homeschool Athletics. Voting on official business may be conducted by email. Unless otherwise specified in an affirmative motion at an official basketball program meeting, it will be the responsibility of the secretary to count these votes and the responsibility of the chair to report the results of the voting to the membership.

Non-voting members of the Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball Program are encouraged to attend all official meetings, provide suggestions, and volunteer to assist in the work of the program.

## **Meetings**

A minimum of 3 official meetings must be held between May 1st and the following May 1st of the next calendar year. The chair may call meetings as often as is needed to conduct the business of the basketball program. In order for official business to be conducted, a meeting notice must be distributed to the membership at least seven days before the meeting. It is the responsibility of the officers to prepare an agenda for each meeting, incorporating input from Basketball Program members and other volunteers (ex. coaches). The agenda must be distributed to Basketball Program members at least three days before the meeting. Basketball Program voting members in attendance at the official meeting may present a motion to make additions to the agenda. This motion is debatable and requires a simple majority to pass.

## **Changes to the Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball Policy/Operations Handbook**

Changes to this handbook and subsequent changes to operational policies may be proposed at the May and at the September official meetings. These potential changes must be presented to the chair in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting and include a written rationale and must be co-signed by a minimum of five voting members. Proposed changes must be presented in writing to the membership of the Basketball program at least one week prior to the May or September meetings. Changes to policies may be proposed by either the officers or by voting members.

### **Quorum**

In order for official business to be conducted at a Basketball Program meeting, a minimum of 4 of the elected officers must be present. All members of the Basketball Program are invited and encouraged to attend all program meetings.

### **Elected Officers**

The voting membership will elect officers who will be responsible for leading the management of the Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball Program. The methods of selecting elected officers, coaches, and non-elected officers are solely at the discretion of the members of the Basketball Program.

- Only one elected officer position is allowed per member family.
- The elected officer positions include Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, High School Athletic Director, and Junior High/Elementary Athletic Director.
- There are no restrictions as to how many times a person may run for a position.
- The roles and responsibilities of these elected officers are determined by the voting membership.
- At the September and May official Basketball Program meetings, the voting membership may vote to change, add to, or remove responsibilities from any of these elected offices.

The following is a list of the offices and the role and responsibility of each:

- Chair - Oversees meetings, regularly communicates with volunteers and subcommittees to ensure that the business of the program is progressing. Works with the other officers and volunteers to develop meeting agendas and pre-meeting preparations. Oversees maintenance of basketball webpage.
- Vice Chair - Assists the chair and serves in the chair role when the chair is absent. Shows appreciation to churches who loan us their gyms for practices.
- Treasurer - Maintains accurate financial records for the program, oversees paying the expenses of the program; manages the checking account; reports to the membership the financial status of the program at official meetings, invoices and collects player fees, pays gym rental fees, pays referees, and pays insurance.
- Secretary - Maintains the written and electronic records of the Basketball Program in the Aggieland Basketball Google Drive, maintains an accurate list of contact information for parents, players and coaches, sends program-wide email announcements, collects liability waivers, runs background checks on coaches, and prints game programs containing team rosters and list of sponsors.

- High School Athletic Director - Oversees the operation of the 18U/16U Boys and Girls teams. Works with Assistant Athletic Director and other volunteers to establish practice days and times for each team, schedules games and posts complete details on website, reserves gyms, schedules referees, registers teams for tournaments, creates a budget for the program, identifies Team Parents, co-leads Coaches Selection Committee, maintains communication with Coaches and Team Parents, ensures coaches are acting in accordance with the Coach's Pledge, and ensures there is an onsite administrator at all home games available to answer questions regarding the clock and scorebook.
- Junior High/Elementary Athletic Director - Oversees the operation of the 14U/12U/10U Boys and Girls teams. Works with High School Athletic Director and other volunteers to establish practice days and times for each team, schedules games and posts complete details on website, reserves gyms, schedules referees, registers teams for tournaments, creates a budget for the program, identifies Team Parents, co-leads Coaches Selection Committee, maintains communication with Coaches and Team Parents, ensures coaches are acting in accordance with the Coach's Pledge, and ensures there is an onsite administrator at all home games available to answer questions regarding the clock and scorebook.

Other officer positions maybe added by a majority vote of the basketball Program voting members at an official meeting. An election will be held for that position and the successful candidate will serve in that position through the May Basketball Program meeting following the season.

## **Election Process for Elected-Officers**

### **Election of Officers**

- The election process will begin in April and conclude before the May Basketball Program meeting.
- At an official basketball program meeting, two members will be selected by the membership to serve as an election committee. This committee will conduct the election. The members of the election committee may not run for an officer position.
- When voting for officers, the successful candidate must receive 51% of the vote or greater. Therefore, a second election may need to occur with the top two candidates for an office having a run-off.
- When only one candidate is on the ballot for a position, a vote of affirmation is taken of the voting membership for that candidate.
- All positions will be elected annually.
- There are no restrictions as to how many times a person may run for this position.
- Call for nominations (one-week time period)
- Allow voting by email (one-week time period)
- One vote per basketball program voting member

### **Removal of an Elected Officer**

- First, the Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball Conflict Resolution Policy must have been followed as presented in the handbook.
- If those efforts result in the need to remove an officer of the basketball program, then either the Chair, or if the removal pertains to the Chair then the Vice-Chair, must call a special membership meeting. The only item of business that will be conducted at this

meeting will be with regard to the removal of an officer. As with all official meetings, a minimum of seven days' notice must be given to the membership before the meeting is held.

- At this meeting, a motion will be entertained to remove the officer. This motion must be seconded, is debatable, and a vote taken. A simple majority determines the disposition of the motion. This motion may be tabled to a specified day and time if needed. All basketball program voting-members attending the meeting may vote.

### **Vacant Positions**

- If a position becomes vacant before January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season, then the officers will call a special election for that position and follow the election process stated previously. If necessary, the chair may select an interim officer for the vacant position until an election can be completed.
- If a position becomes vacant after January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season, then the officers may fill the vacant position at their discretion, either by an appointment or by election.
- The elected or appointed person as appropriate will serve in that capacity until the next election cycle begins.

### **Selecting Coaches**

A coaches committee will be assembled in May of each year for the purpose of identifying, vetting, conducting background checks and presenting coach candidates for the teams. Because identifying coaches often occurs over an extended period of time, when the Coaches Selection Committee has a group of coaching candidates to present for consideration then the following process will be conducted (as additional coaching candidates are identified then they will be grouped and proceed through the process specified below). The High School Athletic Director and Junior High/Elementary Athletic Director shall co-lead the coach selection process.

The coaches committee shall consist of the Athletic Directors and four other at-large members. These at large members will be nominated and elected by the voting membership at an official Basketball Program meeting. Email voting may be used as an alternative voting process for the at-large members of the Coaches Selection Committee. At least two of these at-large members must have 18U/16U athletes playing in the program and at least two of the at large members must have 14U/12U/10U athletes playing in the program.

Potential coach candidates will be requested from both parent and nonparent sources. The Coaches Selection Committee will review the information that is obtained, interview potential candidates as necessary and make a recommendation for team-by-team coaching assignments to the membership.

Parents would be allowed 7 days to comment to the Coaches Selection Committee slate that was presented. These comments will be distributed to all members of the Coaches Selection Committee. All comments must be presented in writing and a member's name attached to the comment or presented orally to the entire committee in person. Oral comments to individual committee members will not be considered.

The Coaches Selection Committee will review those comments and make adjustments as appropriate and if the Coaches Selection Committee deems it necessary, they will offer an amended slate for additional comments from members. Parents will be allowed a minimum of 3 days to provide comments on the amended slate of coaches.

At an official Basketball Program meeting, the slate of coaches proposed by the Coaches Selection Committee will be voted on by the voting members of the basketball program that have a player participating on a team in that particular age group. In other words, a member that has a high school athlete playing for a 18U/16U basketball team will vote for the high school slate of coaches and a member that has a junior high or elementary athlete playing for a 14U/12U/10U basketball team will vote the junior high/elementary slate of coaches.

The slates of coaches will be presented for a yes or no vote and the slate requires a two-thirds majority of the ballots cast to pass.

Because it is a two-thirds majority, a written ballot or roll call vote must be taken. Because it is a voting membership vote if a written ballot election is held, the voter must sign the ballot.

It will be the responsibility of the secretary to certify the ballots are from voting members and the responsibility of the chair to certify and announce the result of the vote. These responsibilities may be given to others at the discretion of the chair.

If the vote of affirmation does not pass with at least a two-thirds majority, the dissenting members will be asked to provide a reason. After appropriate adjustments are made to the slate, the process is repeated.

Voting may be done by email if the voting membership chooses this method of voting.

## **Aggieland Homeschool Player Eligibility Guidelines**

The Aggieland Homeschool Athletics (AHA) Basketball program uses the guidelines set forth by the National Christian Homeschool Basketball Championships (NCHBC) for eligibility considerations. The AHA Basketball Program will update the website ([www.aggielandhomeschool.com](http://www.aggielandhomeschool.com)) as appropriate to reflect changes made by the NCHBC. The most up-to-date version of eligibility guidelines can be found at [nchclive.com/guidelines](http://nchclive.com/guidelines).

Ultimately, "homeschooling" is defined to mean that a student's education is parent-directed. Each year parents must indicate that their child's education is parent-directed. High School student athletes who transfer to the AHA Basketball program after being at a public or private school must meet with the AHA Basketball Academic Advisor and submit a plan for the student's coursework for the year to the Academic Advisor before they can play games on one of our teams. We will follow the NCHBC transfer policies as stated on their website ([nchclive.com/guidelines](http://nchclive.com/guidelines)).

Exceptions to the guidelines will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the membership. These exceptions will be considered on an annual basis. These exceptions must be presented at any official

meeting and require a majority vote of those voting members present for the exception to be adopted. Exceptions will expire at the close of the National Christian Homeschool Basketball Championship Tournament and must be reconsidered by the voting membership for the next season. When making exceptions the following should be considered:

- 1) How will this decision impact the child and their family?
- 2) How will this decision impact the team and the rest of the team members?
- 3) How will this decision impact other programs or schools?
- 4) How will this decision impact our participation in the state and national tournament?

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

We recognize it is possible for conflicts to arise between parents, coaches, or officers. We resolve to handle these issues in the spirit of Scripture and according to Matthew 18:15-17. This policy is designed to make you and your child's experience as enjoyable as possible, minimizing the effects of dissension. Please consider these relevant Scriptural passages: Matthew 22:36-40; Romans 12:9-18; Ephesians 4:29-32.

### Conflicts with a Parent, Coach, or Officer

Questions or concerns should be handled using the following steps:

1. Ask the person for a time where he or she can meet with you to discuss a question or concern you have. (Do not question or express your concerns with the person right before or after a game or at practice unless you have a prearranged agreement with that person. Emotions may be high so please allow 24 hours for everyone to cool down before making an appointment to discuss the issue.)
2. Pray before the meeting and go with an attitude of wanting to gain understanding.
3. If resolution is not obtained in the face-to-face meeting, either party may choose to submit the concern in writing to the Athletic Director. (If the issue is with the Athletic Director, the written statement should be submitted to the Chair.) Do not escalate the issue to the Athletic Director or Officers if the face-to-face meeting with conflicting parties has not taken place first.
4. The Athletic Director will discuss the written statement of the issue with the one whom it is concerning, the issue will be documented, and a course of action will be established. A written response will then be sent to the individual(s) who reported the issue.
5. If the Athletic Director determines that a meeting would be beneficial between the individuals in conflict, he/she will be present to facilitate the meeting and to document the progress.
6. If the conflict is with the Athletic Director or another Officer, he/she will recuse themselves from making a decision on the matter. The remaining Officers will provide oversight and judgment regarding the reported issue. The Officers may appoint an additional mediator or independent review board if they find it necessary.
7. The decision of the Officers of the program is final and cannot be appealed to any other body.

Keep several ideas in mind when expressing your concerns:

- Guided by Christians principles, we need to seek to treat each other with real love and compassion. This includes not gossiping about or slandering other parents, players or coaches. If differences arise, please address directly the person with whom you have issue.
- When addressing your concerns, please do so without anger but with real humility and compassion, i.e., do not get "in the other person's face", be it a coach, parent, or officer.

## **Program Values**

As a member of the Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball Program, you are part of another “family,” the family of AHA Basketball. As such, you represent the values of this Basketball Program. Your actions reflect the homeschooling community. You are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that, both on and off the court, reflects the values the program strives to promote.

Those values are:

- To promote Christian moral values throughout our activities and in our relationships with one another. We expect our players, coaches and parents to respect the Christian moral values the program strives to promote. Players or coaches may be suspended or dismissed from the program at the discretion of the AHA Basketball officers.
- To respect the unique qualities, gifts, and talents each person possesses. We acknowledge that every person, regardless of race, color or religion is uniquely created in God’s image.

The player, coach, and parent pledges that follow reflect these values.

## AHA Basketball Player's Pledge

*I will:*

1. Conduct myself as an honorable member of an Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball program team, whether on the court or off.
2. Strive to develop my God-given gifts in character, academics, and athletic skill.
3. Honor those in authority; including coaches and referees, by accepting at all times their decisions without argument, grumbling, or gesturing of any kind.
4. Honor my teammates by submitting to the greater good of the team at the expense of my own ambitions, by giving them encouragement, and by trying to develop an attitude that places others' needs before my own.
5. Honor my opponents by playing my best and yet not engaging in taunting, baiting, or ridiculing of any kind.
6. Honor the Christian values of the program with my speech by not using obscene language and not gossiping or talking maliciously about any players, coaches, parents, or fans in person or on social media. I will treat others as I would want others to treat me.
7. Be at all practices and games unless extenuating circumstances occur, at which time I will notify the coach as soon as possible. I understand that missing a game or practice without notice is a serious offense and will be grounds for discipline.
8. Dress in a manner consistent with the values of the program. When in doubt, I will choose modesty. I will change clothes in a non-public location in the facility. Offensive tattoos will be covered at all AHA events. I understand my Coach and Athletic Director (or other Officer if Coach and AD are the same person) have the final say in what is acceptable attire and grooming.
9. Not use or possess illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco during any AHA Basketball event. I will submit to random drug tests at any time during the season. I understand my use or possession of an illegal substance may be grounds for suspension or dismissal from the program at the discretion of the AHA Basketball officers.

*As a member of the Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball program, I will support this player's pledge by doing my best to adhere to it. I may fail and will accept correction as appropriate and strive to make adjustments as warranted. I understand that the failure to comply with this pledge could result in disciplinary action, reduced playing time, suspension from basketball activities, and even expulsion from the basketball program.*

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

## AHA Basketball Coach's Pledge

*I will:*

1. Conduct myself as an honorable member of Aggieland Homeschool Athletics Basketball program, whether on the court or off.
2. Strive to develop each child's God-given gifts in character, academics, and athletic skill.
3. Honor those in authority including umpires or referees by accepting their decisions without sarcasm, grumbling, or inappropriate gesturing. When I disagree with a call I will exemplify a Christ-like attitude and manner in my questioning and conversations with the referees.
4. Not use the conduct of referees, other team coaches, and players as an excuse for losing the game.
5. Not verbally demoralize players in games or in practices. I will not speak negatively or use social media to disparage players, coaches, or fans from Aggieland or other teams.
6. Honor the Christian values of the program with my speech by not using obscene language and not gossiping or talking maliciously about any players, coaches, parents, or fans in person or on social media. I will treat others as I would want others to treat me.
7. Support the basketball program values by encouraging my players and their parents to follow their respective pledges. I will verbally address parents and players who fail to adhere to what they agreed to follow.
8. Give equal opportunity to every player to learn and develop basketball skills. It is up to the player to take advantage of that opportunity.
9. Do my best to provide playing time for every player when possible. When this is not possible, I will state my expectations and reasoning to the player and parents, preferably prior to the start of the basketball game. At the beginning of the season and periodically through the season, I will state clearly playing time expectation to the player and with parents when appropriate.
10. Direct parents to the written Conflict Resolution Policy when a parent or player has a concern about either the program as a whole or myself as a coach.
11. Understand that the team that I am coaching is part of a larger program, and I will adhere to the direction of the officers and the basketball philosophies of that program.

*I will support this coach's pledge by doing my best to adhere to it. I understand that I may fail and will accept correction as appropriate and strive to make adjustments as warranted. I understand that the failure to comply with this pledge could result in the suspension of my coaching duties.*

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

## AHA Basketball Parent's Pledge

*With a desire to foster a positive, joyful, harmonious environment for my child and others, and in an effort to demonstrate Christ-like character and give glory to God, I will:*

1. Honor the team that my child plays on by submitting to the greater good of the team at the expense of my own and my child's ambitions. I will place others' needs before my own.
2. Honor those in authority including coaches and referees by accepting their decisions without argument, grumbling, or inappropriate gesturing.
3. Not verbally address a basketball referee in a negative manner.
4. Honor our opponents' players and fans by not engaging in taunting, baiting, or ridiculing them.
5. Not criticize or coach my child from the stands during games and practices. I will verbalize encouraging comments during the game and at practices.
6. Honor the Christian values of the program with my speech by not using obscene language.
7. Not talk in a negative way about the coach to my child or other players and their families. I will not gossip or talk in a negative, disparaging manner about any players, coaches, parents, or fans in person or on social media, nor will I give an ear to someone who does. I will treat others as I would want others to treat me.
8. Follow the Conflict Resolution Policy and use the Matthew 18 principle when dealing with any conflict or concerns. If my high school athlete has a question or concern, I will encourage he/she to address the coach first. If the issue is not resolved between the player and coach, I may request a meeting with the coach to discuss the issue.
9. Support the team rules for travel, dress, and behavior and help my child follow the Player's Pledge. I will assist in paying the transportation costs if my child and I are traveling with someone else.
10. Notify the coach before the practice or game if my child will not be present or will be late.
11. Properly supervise all of my children. For the safety of these children and to set a Christ-like example in respecting the facilities and equipment of the gyms where we play, I will keep my child with me at all times, and we will clean up after ourselves.

*I will support this Parent's Pledge by doing my best to adhere to it. I understand that I may fail and will accept correction as appropriate and strive to make adjustments as warranted.*

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

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