





## 2018 Handbook

*Welcome to the IGNITE Athletic Program*

*Ignite is a Christian organization offering  
competitive team sports to homeschooled  
students.*



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# Ignite Handbook

**Mission Statement:- Ignite Homeschool Sports is a Christian organization offering competitive team sports to homeschooled students.**

Introduction: First and foremost, as Christian Athletes, we represent Christ in all we do, at all times! All involved in IGNITE activities should look at these programs as an opportunity to bring the love of Christ to other families in our community through the venue of competitive sports.

## **Objectives:**

The objectives of the IGNITE sports program include the following:

1. To glorify God through the use of His gifts to us.
2. To provide a Christian environment for players to develop their skills.
3. To instill in the players an attitude about sportsmanship and respect to players, coaches, fans, and officials that is consistent with Christian values.
4. To develop each student's individual and team skills and strategies, as well as an understanding of different roles in team make-up.

## **Communication:**

We place a very high value on face-to-face communication, trusting in the Christian charity (love) of all members of the IGNITE family. IGNITE asks parents to wait 24 hours after a game or event to approach a coach if a complaint arises. It is also requested that complaints are directed to the coach alone face-to-face or by phone and not emailed and copied to others or posted on social media sites. This is in keeping with the Biblical mandate of Matthew 18:15-17 to first attempt to settle our dispute with our brother one-on-one.

## **Our complaint process:**

- 1) If a problem arises concerning a player or coach, the first step in resolution is direct communication between the parties involved. (vs.15)
- 2) If additional steps are necessary to resolve the situation, then the Athletic Directors will be consulted. (vs. 16)
- 3) If a resolution cannot be reached with the Athletic Directors and the party in question, then the IGNITE Board of Directors will review and solve the situation. (vs. 17)

## **Athlete Eligibility/Participation**

“Homeschooling” is defined as to mean that a student’s education is parent-directed.

Athletes must be homeschooled at least 51% and not play on any other school sport team for the same sport, during the same season. If a student is taking more than 3 courses at a public, private or vocational school, he/she is not considered homeschooled. If there are special circumstances, a student may apply for a hardship exemption.

Athletes must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA (on a 4 point scale) during the active season. (This applies if we are going to any National/Regional Tournaments)

### **Age and Gender Requirements (for national tournaments)**

A player’s age group is determined by his/her age on September 1, of the current school year. For example, a player who is 16 on September 1, but turns 17 on October 5th is considered eligible to play in the 16-and -under age group at NCHC events. Players may play in a higher age group, if desired. A player is only eligible to play in the gender division that the player was born, there are no co-ed teams.

### **Ignite will offer these age groups:**

Volleyball-	Basketball-
U14- Middle school	U14- Middle school
U18- High school	U18- High school



## **IGNITE Guidelines and Conduct**

### **Guidelines and Conduct for Athletes**

As a Christian association, we expect the following of each athlete:

- Each athlete is expected to be committed to team goals. This implies that personal performance is not the only focus, but is directed toward achieving team goals and team unity.
- The coach is the head of the team, and as such needs each athlete's undivided attention during practices and games. Each athlete is expected to be attentive to the coach and to give him the respect he is due as the athlete's superior. The quality of athletic experience and success depends on a good working relationship between team members and coaches. If a problem between coach and athlete arises, both have the responsibility to work out a solution through good honest and charitable communication.
- The athlete is expected to maintain top physical condition by eating properly, getting sufficient rest, and observing other good health and fitness habits. As Christian athletes, it is essential to abstain from the use of tobacco products, alcohol, and illegal drugs. These items will not be tolerated and any violation will result in expulsion from the team.
- The athlete is expected to exhibit Christian conduct at all times. This is especially important during athletic contests. Respect for opponents and officials must be evident at all times. Such attitudes are a reflection on individual athletes and on IGNITE.

- The athlete is required to attend every practice and game. Any absence must be coordinated with the coach prior to the event.
- At all times the athlete is expected to do his/her very best, giving 100%.
- The athlete is expected to accept responsibility for the care and maintenance of all IGNITE sports equipment and uniforms.
- No foul, vulgar, or abusive language will be tolerated (at any time).
- Athletes will not question the judgments of coaches or game officials (on or off the field/court).

### **Penalties:**

- Any player found in violation of the rules and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action. Such action may range from temporary suspension to expulsion from the program.
- Any player who verbally/physically abuses another player, participants or official may be suspended from play for the remainder of the season and may be disqualified from IGNITE competition.

## **Guidelines and Conduct for Parents**

- As examples to our children, parents are expected to display Christ-like behavior at all times at all sporting events. We kindly ask that you refrain from drinking of alcohol at any IGNITE event, game and or tournament.
- Parents will show respect for our opponents and officials at all times.
- The parent is expected to encourage loyalty and dedication to the team, fellow parents and to the coaches. Attitudes of parents directly impact the attitudes of athletes. Prayers for athletes, coaches, and teams are important and appreciated.

## **Penalties:**

- A parent who verbally/physically abuses another player, participant or official or is found in violation of the rules and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action. Such action may range from temporary removal from the IGNITE sporting event.

## **Tryouts & Player Selection Guidelines**

Tryouts should be advertised prior to registration and tryout date(s) set on the organization calendar approximately 1 month in advance of said date(s), if possible.

Players at the high school level who are kept but for whom little playtime is expected, should have this conveyed to parents and athletes, who can then make an informed decision about sticking with the team.

Results should be delivered by coach within one week by email. If extenuating circumstances exist, families should be notified of a longer decision making process. Ideally, not more than one week.

Coaches should list their kids who did not make the initial cut, into an ordered list of alternates, in the case of drops.

After tryouts, and after alternates have been contacted, if roster is still open, more players may be added to the team at the coaches discretion.

Ideally, two or more coaches/former coaches/athletic director/others should review each team tryout and give input. At least three coaches/other should review each team tryout to provide more well-rounded decision making.

In selecting players, factors such as loyalty to loyal IGNITE families should be factored in. Longstanding families with parents who have been involved should get special consideration under this principle to cultivate attitudes of

loyalty within the organization. One example of this would be to opt in favor of a longstanding player of mediocre skill versus a walk-on senior with higher skill. While this is not necessarily a trump factor for making the team...it should be a factor nonetheless.

If the player does not make the mandatory evaluation night(s) without prearranged registration plan, his/her spot is forfeited to the next alternate.

## **Team Size**

The normal team size for IGNITE teams are:

VOLLEYBALL     10

BASKETBALL     10

**Coaches may not cut below established norm for roster size or increase above the norm without approval from the board.**

**Late adds:** If minimum roster size is not met, additional players are allowed to add up through the 1st week of practice. Coaches are encouraged to accept players throughout pre-season practice, but once uniforms have been ordered, new players may not be added. Final decision regarding late adds falls to the coach and athletic director, and on a case-by-case basis.

## **Playing Time Guidelines**

While we trust our coaches will strive for balance and fairness in determining playtime at all levels, because of the formative aspect of our program, it is expected that they will adhere to the following guidelines at each level.

**14U ( Middle School) Program:** Amount of playtime will depend more on athlete's level of ability and as game situations dictate. If a player does not receive much playing time one game he/she may receive more the next. In the case of large leads players will be rotated through on a fairly even basis. The coach will take into consideration player's skill level, attitude, attendance at practices and games.

**16U-18U (High School) Program:** Amount of playing time is solely at the coach's discretion. The coach will decide which players at any given time will maximize the "teams" ability to compete in the games at the highest level. The coach will take into consideration player's skill level, attitude, attendance at practices and games.

### **Penalties pertaining to all levels:**

1. Coaches have authority to withhold playtime due to missed practices and games and this penalty takes precedence over playtime guidelines for that level.
2. Tournaments can be considered a more competitive event and coaches may prioritize more skilled and older players at these events, regardless of level.
3. Poor sportsmanship/inappropriate behavior, attitude, missed/late to practices or games can be used to withhold playtime, regardless of level.

## **Playing Across Team Lines**

Placement of student athlete when grade is not applicable: Below is the rule concerning team placement. However, on occasion, these guidelines can be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Athletic Director to determine if a player can qualify for that sport season to play on a lower level team. In some cases a player may play on more than one team to help fill the roster.

**a. Players may move up a divisions, but not down (i.e. a 12U athlete may play Varsity, but a 14U athlete may not play Junior Varsity - unless prior permission has been granted for special cases.**

**b. Players may play only 6 quarters excluding overtime, per day. An athlete should play 4 quarters of their main team's game and 2 quarters of the team they're helping out. This practice is not encouraged and included to benefit schools with small rosters.**

## **Player Placement**

Players will be placed on the team of their age level unless they will contribute substantially to the next level team. Final decision regarding player placement will be determined by the coach & athletic director.



## Expectations for Athletic Participation

### Volunteering

Parents are an important part of the IGNITE program. IGNITE is a volunteer, non-profit (501c3) organization with a governing board. We need the participation of ALL our families to make IGNITE a successful organization. Parents are needed and expected to play a supporting role in this organization.

Each family must agree to fill some volunteer role. Needs will vary by season but team needs range from: statistician, concession coordinator, admissions coordinator, gym monitors, line judges, and more. This is not a *pay and drop-off your children* league. If parents refuse to volunteer, their athlete will be considered ineligible to play in games.

**All parents are expected to help out if their children are playing on a IGNITE team - there are no exceptions.**

\*\*\* (Volunteer Questions should be directed to the Athletic Director for each respective sport)

## **Fundraising Expectations**

IGNITE continually strives to keep the cost of our sports programs as low as possible. The registration fee per sport covers only the basics needed for each sport to function. It covers the cost of gym and/or field rentals, referee fees and insurance fees for athletes. The registration fee does not cover the full amount needed to run each sport and extra money is needed to cover items like tournament fees, equipment, gym rentals and uniforms.

\*\*\*The major fundraiser for IGNITE is our sponsorship program. Sponsors pay for ad space on our t-shirts and home gym banners.

To keep the registration fees as low as possible, we require family participation in selling ads for the banner/t-shirt or the option to pay an extra fee instead. These extra funds are essential to keep the IGNITE athletic program running and that is why each family is required to meet the fundraising obligation set by each sport.

### **Families have three options to meet this obligation:**

1. Obtain IGNITE Sponsors or participate in fundraiser set by the Board.
2. Write a check payable to IGNITE for the obligation amount.
3. Participate with option 1 without obtaining the full obligation amount and make up the difference with a check.

## **Fundraising Deadlines**

**\*\*** The Fundraising Obligation for each family should be received by the first game of the respective sport season.

In order for IGNITE to continue to operate smoothly every family must be responsible for their fundraising obligation.

If the fundraising obligation fee is not paid or met by the first game, athletes from that family may not be eligible to play in games until their fundraising obligation is met.

Putting together a program like this requires an enormous amount of time and energy. It is through these efforts that all families have an opportunity to keep their registration fees as low as possible.

## **Registration Fees**

Registration fees are expected to be paid in full upon sign-up. If any family cannot meet this expectation, then a payment plan can be arranged between the family and the IGNITE treasurer. Even with a payment plan, a \$50 down-payment is expected at sign-up.

## Registration Refund Policy

If an athlete decides not to participate in an IGNITE sport after registering, our refund policy is as follows:

\*\*\*Athlete quits the team between registration and the first practice: receive registration fee minus a \$25 administration fee.

\*\*\*Athlete quits the team during the second week of practices: receive 50% of registration fee back.

\*\*\*Athlete quits the team after uniforms have been ordered, there is no refund.

\*If the athlete is facing an unforeseen medical situation less than two weeks into the season (beginning of season is defined as the first game played by the team), IGNITE will refund to the athlete all but the a \$25 administration fee.

## **Athletic Director and Coach Selection Guidelines**

*Philosophy: Keep a balance between encouraging athletes, teaching skills to fine tune the athletes' abilities and creating a competitive team, all the while seeking to glorify God in all that we do.*

Every year, coaching positions should be open to review and new applications, if necessary. Athletic Directors should review and suggest to the Board their choice for coach based on past evaluations and qualifications of past coach and new applicants. Board reviews and approves appointments. Every effort should be made to honor loyalty to past coaches, but honest evaluation of a coach's record of:

1. Coaching ability
2. Christian character
3. Adherence to IGNITE philosophy must also be taken into account
4. Respect for Ignite leadership, players and parents.

Coaches may be replaced if problems and complaints have plagued his/her season and or the Athletic Director and Board deems there has been serious lapse in one of the above three areas. Replacement should take place only following a fair assessment and review between AD, coach and the Board of Directors.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Athletic Director**

- Recommends and or recruits coaches (send out email blast and announcement on website).
- Receives coach applications and makes recommendations to the Board
- Maintain communication between coaches
- Provide coaches with guidelines along with mentoring and promoting the IGNITE philosophy.
- Help initiate and facilitate tryouts requirements
- Setup and Run Parent Meeting (beginning of season)
- Second level of communication between parent and coach
- Be actively involved in the Budget (IGNITE board will provide a general budget outline).
- Schedule games for teams
- Adherence to all items in this document and the IGNITE Athletic Handbook
- Encourage parent involvement
- Recruit players
- Pre-Season, Mid-Season, and Post-Season meeting with coaches.
- Give information to the webmaster to be added to website or app

### **Coaches**

- Coach the team!
- Work with the Athletic Director on Budget projections
- Help Athletic Director with initiating and facilitating tryouts
- First level of communication to parents.
- Adherence to all items in this document and the IGNITE Athletic Handbook
- Adhere to scheduled game and practice times. (outdoor practices will shift based on weather and sunset time)

## **Guidelines and Conduct for Coaches**

Coaches are Christian role models for the young men and women who benefit from their instruction. IGNITE recognizes that coaching is both rewarding and challenging. Coaching is also a great opportunity for developing close relationships with athletes and families, for achieving excellence in athletics, and for glorifying God.

- All coaches are expected to be leaders in exhibiting Christian values and responsibility. As a highly visible representative of IGNITE and the community, the coach must accept a special role in demonstrating positive and responsible leadership and treat all athletes as valued members of the team.
- The coach is expected to treat all athletes, opponents, coaches, game officials, and IGNITE leadership with respect, dignity, and fairness.
- The coach is expected to resolve all team conflicts with honest and charitable communication, equitable treatment of all persons involved, and a willingness to achieve positive results.
- Dress Code: Coaches are expected to look presentable in a team logo shirt or polo (if provided) with jeans or khaki (pants or shorts coming at least mid-thigh) for all home and away games.

### **Penalties:**

- Any coach ejected from a game because of unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for the next game and may be subject to additional penalties.
- Any coach who verbally/physically abuses a player, parent, official or IGNITE leadership may be suspended.

## **Policy for Multiple team coaches**

While all coaches are incredibly valued, there will be one head coach named to each team to direct communication with players, parents, athletic director, scheduler, and board in an effort to avoid confusion.

The head coach will be given a stipend for their service. In the event of a co-coaching situation, the two coaches will split the stipend.



## STAY CONNECTED:

### Ignite Board

Michael and Carrie Black- President/Vice President

304-444-6997 (C) 304-610-8588 (M)

Tera Carr- Secretary

Jessica Bailey- Treasurer

George Vickers- Member at large

Nikki Farley- Member at large

Jeff (Mary) Black- Member at large

Karri Ramey- Member at large

Seth (Cari) Lyle- Member at large

Volleyball Athletic Director: Carrie Black

Basketball Athletic Director: Nikki Farley

Ignite webpage/facebook/app: Adam Black

Ignite website: [ignitehomeschoolsports.com](http://ignitehomeschoolsports.com)

Ignite email: [ignitehomeschoolsports@gmail.com](mailto:ignitehomeschoolsports@gmail.com)