

# Laurel Knighthawks

## Basketball Handbook



2024-2025 Edition

## Table Of Contents

Purpose Statement / Guiding Principles .....	3
Sportsmanship Creed / Team Philosophies.....	4
Program Administration / Team Overview .....	5-6
Code Of Conduct .....	7-9
Concerning Disciplinary Action.....	9
Concerning Complaints .....	10
Concerning The Coach .....	11
Concerning Playing Time .....	11
Concerning Practice .....	12
Concerning Injury While In Practice or Play .....	13
Concerning Parental Involvement .....	13
Cost and Fees .....	14
Insurance and Sports Physicals .....	14
Concerning Other Sports.....	15
Acceptance Of Stated Policies.....	15

## Purpose Statement

Laurel Knighthawks Basketball exists as an extension of the local home education community for the purpose of providing a Christ centered environment for home educated students to play the sport of basketball in a competitive program. We recognize basketball as a means to an end. The pursuit of excellence is emphasized through both collective and individual hard work, discipline, and accountability. The greatest goal of Knighthawks Basketball is to serve as a partner to involved parents in the mentoring and sharpening of young men and women as they grow to fulfill their God given roles in His kingdom.

## Guiding Principles

We will govern ourselves with a Christ centered world view and an intentional exercise of Biblical principles.

We will strive for excellence in every aspect of our program and expect the same from our member families.

We will use the game of basketball to teach life skills such as teamwork, trusting others, becoming the best version of oneself in a defined role, loyalty, commitment, responsibility, showing grace in victory and exercising class in defeat.

We will use the competitive environment of basketball to normalize and reinforce the personal pursuit and achievement of worthy goals.

We will emphasize the economy of hard work. It is our position that success isn't born, it is achieved through hard work and discipline.

No award or accomplishment in life is owed to any individual. Every person has the potential and responsibility to earn their own accomplishments.

We will use the teachable moments in the sport of basketball to emphasize humility. Success is a worthy goal and an evidence of an individual's discipline, hard work, and understanding of the objectives of their pursuit, however, it is not a measure of a person's value or worth. All people, regardless of their level of success are worthy of being treated with common decency and courtesy.

We will work to develop and maintain an enjoyable community. The culture and camaraderie within the program should be such that member families look forward to the fellowship to be had with other member families.

## Sportsmanship Creed

Laurel Knighthawks Basketball recognizes that the spirit of the game of basketball lives in skilled offense, effective defense, and a well-planned strategy. The spirit of this game cannot be maintained unless sportsmanship, ethics and integrity are our number one priority. Good sportsmanship will be expected from all groups associated with Knighthawks Basketball activities.

## Team Philosophies

"Play with Honor...Finish Strong...Give God The Glory"

"We Win With Grace, We Lose With Class"

"We Celebrate Our Success, Not Others Failure"

# Knighthawks Program Overview

## **Program Government:**

The Knighthawks basketball program is administrated by a closed board. Members are not elected, but rather, are recruited and seated by the existing board as needed. All non-coaching members of the board comprise an executive committee within the board tasked with handling matters related to coaching.

**Board:** Aaron Anderson, Brice Beech, Mickey Bond, Davy Fenton, Ben Flynt (Varsity Boys Head Coach), Cliff Jenkins (Varsity Girls Head Coach), Jeff Pitts, Anthony Powell, Shon Spradley

**Executive Committee Of The Board:** Aaron Anderson, Brice Beech, Mickey Bond, Jeff Pitts

## **Little Dribblers:**

### **4Y/O – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

#### **Skills and Exhibition**

A program designed to introduce our youngest Knighthawks and Lady Hawks to the game of basketball. Little Dribblers season will be held in the fall / winter and will coincide with JV and Varsity season. Little Dribblers will learn basic dribbling, passing and shooting skills and will display their skills in half time exhibitions at home games.

Expect 4-6 regular season home game exhibitions.  
Boys and girls will practice and play together at this age.

#### **Scrimmage Teams**

A program designed to advance the skills of our older Little Dribblers. Players will practice and perform with the exhibition team as well as play 4-6 half time scrimmage games during JV and Varsity regular season home games.

Expect 4-6 regular season home game scrimmages  
Boys and girls will practice and play together at this age.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Intramural Teams (Developing into 10U and 12U Competitive Opportunities)**

The purpose of this program is to create an opportunity to learn to play competitive basketball in an environment that will allow players to learn and develop their skills without all of the pressures of full competitive basketball. The success of this program depends on parent involvement. Games will be operated in an “Upward Basketball” style and will be parent coached and parent refereed. Team structure will depend on the number of participants of each gender. Boys and girls may practice and play together at this age.

### **14U Competitive Basketball (6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 14 Y/O as of 8/1 Of Current Roster Year)**

14U ball is the first level of true competitive basketball in the Knighthawks organization.

Season will run Mid-October – Mid December or longer and will consist of a series of “Round Robin” style Tournaments, “Bracket” tournaments, individual games, and / or "Inter-Squad" scrimmages. This will culminate in a 14U tournament at the end of season.

Travel to surrounding states is likely.

Season practices will be held multiple times per week at various locations beginning late summer. Some spring and summer practices may be held as well.

Expect Approx 10+ games.

Boys and girls will have separate teams.

\* Scheduling 14U games can be difficult as there are a limited number of teams in the area to compete against. To fill in the schedule, intersquad games will be held on home game nights when we have open time slots.

### **16U and 18U Competitive Basketball (16 or 18 Y/O or younger as of 8/1 Of Current Roster Year)**

16U & 18U Basketball are competitive, travel basketball leagues.

Expect 25-35 games involving travel held from October – February and several multi-day tournaments held throughout the year in MS and surrounding states.

Practice is held multiple times per week at various facilities.

Limited spring and summer camps and practices will be held March - August.

Season practices will be held 2-3 nights per week and / or Saturdays beginning in August and will last the duration of the season.

## Code Of Conduct

Laurel Knighthawks Basketball is an organization unapologetically guided by Christian principles. As such, administration, coaches, players, and parents are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is Christ honoring. In keeping with this standard, it is our expectation that all members will observe the following while acting on behalf of or while representing the Knighthawks program in any capacity.

Violation of this code of conduct is grounds for suspension or dismissal of players and / or member families from the Knighthawks program as determined by the Board. Persons found to be in violation may be asked to leave games without refund. Subsequent violations may result in suspension and / or dismissal from the program and a ban from attending Knighthawk events. If dismissed for failing to abide by these rules, no fees will be refunded and no previously published media will be retracted or revised.

### 1. Dress and Appearance

Dress and appearance should be modest and above reproach. This includes practice apparel for all participants.

### 2. Personal Conduct

- a. Personal conduct should be Christ honoring and above reproach.
- b. Language should be graceful and edifying. No foul language is permitted.
- c. Personal interaction with others should be pleasant and constructive.
- d. Bullying, shaming, hurtful taunting and harsh criticism is not permitted.
- e. Use of alcohol, tobacco, electronic cigarettes or vape (ing) by those legally underage or use of controlled substances is not permitted.
- f. Violence will not be tolerated.
- f. Sexual misconduct of any form will not be tolerated.

### 3. Media and Social Media

- a. Media and social media should be wholesome and of a manner that is in keeping with Christian principles.
- b. Crude or vulgar music, text or images in print or electronic form is not permitted.
- c. Social Media representing or depicting Knighthawks Basketball or its members should be such that it represents Knighthawks Basketball in a positive manner.

#### **4. Game Environment**

- a. While good natured cheers and jeers are part of an exciting game environment, coaches, players and fans from either team are not to be heckled or taunted.
- b. Coaches, players and fans are expected to treat game officials, including, but not limited to, the referees and clock operators with respect. Openly complaining about, arguing with and / or insulting game officials is not permitted.
- c. During games, Head coaches and team captains are the representatives delegated by the officials to communicate on behalf of the team. Assistant coaches, players and fans should not directly engage or “Talk At” a game official.
- d. Coaches, players and fans are expected to act at all times in a manner that is consistent with Christian character, respectful of others and positively represents the program

#### **5. Game and Practice Facilities**

These policies are put in place to help protect players, coaches and fans from injury, to protect the Knighthawks Program and partner facilities from liability for avoidable accidents and to protect partner facility properties from any preventable damage.

Please note that these policies should be observed in our practice facilities, home game venues, and venues we play in as visiting teams regardless of how other programs utilize their facilities.

Knighthawks administration has no desire to become the policy police, please hold yourself and your family accountable to these rules.

- a. No player or member family should speak in an official capacity on behalf of Knighthawks Basketball to any facility owner/operator, school official, program administrator, opposing team coach, player or fan unless specifically tasked to do so by the board. Membership within the program does not grant the right to speak on behalf of the program, raise complaints on behalf of the program or to enter agreements on behalf of the program.
- b. Only players, coaches or those invited onto the court should be on the court at any time.
- c. No one should be shooting on the court during any intermission except the teams currently playing, or, in their absence, and if allowed by officials, the teams playing in the next game.
- d. No balls should be played with on or around the court at any time due to the potential for loose balls to roll onto the floor and create distraction or cause injury. This includes players on the bench.
- e. No one should be in the locker rooms at any time other than coaches, players, or appointed team parents unless invited in by the coaches.
- f. No children should play unattended in the foyer, hallways, bathrooms or other unsupervised areas of the gym or outside in the parking area.
- g. No food or drink should be taken onto the stage in the gym or onto the court.



- h. Parking should be in designated parking areas only. Please do not park on the grass, in roadways or drives.
- i. In the event of personal injury or damage done to a facility or facility campus , home or away, due to a violation of these policies, Knighthawks Basketball will not accept liability for repair, replacement or costs of damages. The individual member family or families responsible for the violation will be personally responsible for any necessary repair, reimbursement, or restitution.

## Concerning Disciplinary Actions

The Knighthawks basketball program recognizes the authority and autonomy of the individual families that comprise its membership. Matters of personal or individual discipline will at all times be referred to the parents of those involved.

For the preservation of a positive athletic culture, board members and coaches will hold member families within the Knighthawk program accountable to the stated Code of Conduct and other stated policies within this handbook. Board decisions are final in disciplinary matters.

1. If problems arise between individuals or member families, those families should seek resolution and reconciliation among themselves. Unresolved conflicts that create discord within the program will not be allowed to remain.
2. If problems arise between members and coaches or if a complaint needs to be raised against a coach, an Executive Committee exists within the board. This committee has been uniquely tasked with mediating and resolving conflict involving coaches and is the first and only channel through which complaint and criticism of a coach should be voiced. The executive committee will act within the scope and agreement of stated policies within this handbook.
3. If a code of conduct violation occurs, the board reserves the right to investigate the violation and to suspend or dismiss members. If dismissed for a code of conduct violation, no fees will be refunded and no previously published media will be retracted or revised.
4. In general, procedures regarding issues and corrective actions will consist of:
  - a. A verbal notice and explanation of the problem
  - b. If the problem is not resolved after notice and continues, suspension from all program activities for a time period determined by the board.
  - c. Persistent disregard of the expectations and policies agreed upon within this handbook will result in dismissal from Knighthawks basketball.
  - d. Serious code of conduct violations may be met with immediate dismissal.

## Concerning Complaints

Before making a complaint, members should consult the handbook for stated policies relevant to their complaint.

1. Complaints will not be considered that are raised in objection to stated policies within the handbook. The handbook is considered the agreement between the program and member families by which the program will be governed.
2. If a complaint is to be raised, the complainant should be prepared to support the complaint with a violation of a stated policy within the handbook.
3. If a complaint is to be raised where no policy exists concerning a specific issue, the board will at that time investigate, determine an appropriate response that is in line with other generally stated policies or principles within the handbook and if necessary, establish a policy and update the handbook.
4. Complaints should be taken to a board member or a group of board members.
5. Board members will hear complaints in person, but will request that complaints be submitted in writing, via text message or through email to ensure that the complaint is accurately represented.
6. If a parent takes exception with a coach or feels there is an issue that warrants a complaint against a coach, they should address concerns directly to a member of the board's Executive Committee.
  - a. Parents or players should not confront the coach directly with complaints.
  - b. Parents should not create discord by engaging in divisive speech or public demonstration that undermines the coach.

These policies constitute the process by which all complaints are to be addressed. Open complaints that are not handled through this process or failure to accept board decisions regarding complaints will be considered a violation of the "Personal Conduct" portion of the Code Of Conduct.

## Concerning The Coach

All coaches are volunteer coaches. They have families, jobs and lives beyond basketball. They volunteer their time to coach your children. They are not paid for their services. Please respect their efforts.

1. Each program has a head coach who is responsible for:
  - a. Setting practice dates, times and locations as they deem necessary
  - b. Developing player's skills and abilities
  - c. Organizing the team's roster
  - d. Deciding team starters, substitute players and determining playing time
  - e. Establishing and implementing game strategy
2. Each program has assistant coaches as necessary to help manage the team's needs
3. All coaches must be vetted and approved by the board before being allowed to coach
4. All coaches and assistant coaches must submit an application and consent to a background check before being considered for a coaching position. Final selection and approval of coaches will be determined by the Executive Committee.
5. Coaches will receive a yearly post season evaluation from the Executive Committee

## Concerning Playing Time

Little Dribbler and Intramural programs are recreational and developmental programs. All participants will receive practice and playing time.

Knighthawks 14U, 16U, and 18U programs are competitive programs. In a competitive program, there are no guarantees of playing time. Every effort will be made to get players playing time, however, playing time is earned based on ability and effort demonstrated in practice and in games. Coaches will decide playing time and game strategy.

## Concerning Practice

1. Coaches will call practice when and where they feel practice is necessary and will run practices in the manner they feel necessary.
2. Some spring / summer practices are not mandatory. Coaches will specify this in their communication.
3. Once season (Mandatory) practices begin, all players are required to be in attendance.
  - a. Players should arrive a few minutes early, change clothes and shoes if necessary and be ready to begin practice at the announced start time.
  - b. Players should not be in the gym dribbling, shooting on side goals or talking loudly while other teams are practicing. These are distractions to the coaches and players currently practicing.
  - c. Practice uniforms or practice jerseys may be issued to players. If so, it is the players responsibility to keep practice uniforms or practice jerseys clean and presentable. Issued practice apparel is mandatory apparel. Players who attempt to attend practice in attire other than issued practice attire may be asked to leave that practice.
  - d. Failure to attend practice or tardiness to practice may result in loss of playing time. Excessive absence or tardiness will be seen as a desire on the players part to no longer participate and the player will be considered “off” the team until a makeup plan can be determined by the player’s head coach and parents.
  - e. Church services and activities are a vital part of the culture of our families. Players who miss practice due to church related services or activities will not be penalized for their absence, however, absence from a significant amount of practice time may affect playing time due to a decline in conditioning, level of play and understanding of team strategies.
  - f. Players who are sick or injured will be under the direct supervision of their parents who will advise coaches of their ability and limitations concerning practice and play. There will be no penalties assessed to a player who misses due to sickness or injury, however, absence from a significant amount of practice time may affect playing time due to a decline in conditioning, level of play and understanding of team strategies.
  - g. Players who work at a part time or full-time job may work out an acceptable makeup plan ahead of their tardy or absence without penalty.

## Concerning Injury Or Medical Condition

1. Knighthawks coaching staff and trainers will do everything feasible to provide emergency care if an injury occurs during practice or play, however, volunteer coaches are not emergency medical professionals. Injuries requiring medical attention will be the responsibility of parents and their chosen physicians.
2. In recent years, concussions have become a more prevalent concern. Knighthawks will treat all significant head injuries with utmost gravity. If concussion is a concern, players will be removed from practice or play immediately and will not return until a player's parent has given consent.
3. If a player receives a significant injury of any kind or develops a condition that requires medical attention, the player must present a signed medical release to their head coach from their physician to return to practice or play.

## Concerning Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is key to the success of Knighthawks Basketball. **All parents are required to contribute to the work of running the program.** Work is divided into several areas for delegation. Each area will have a leader put in place by the board to ensure the work is done efficiently and effectively. Volunteering is recommended and appreciated. Assignments will be handed out if there are no volunteers.

If you are unable to work a scheduled assignment, do not contact the assignment scheduler to have someone else assigned. It is your responsibility to swap with another individual or family to cover your assignment and you will in turn work in their place on a scheduled assignment they have been given. Failure to cover your work assignments will be penalized \$50.00 per occurrence. Unpaid penalties will be due to be paid at the concession stand within 15 days. All unpaid penalties are due by the last home game. Unpaid penalties after the last home game will result in loss of privilege to participate in post season tournaments until penalties are paid. Regular failure to do your part in the work of the program may result in dismissal from the program.

Some areas of work are:

Coaching	Game Scheduling
Clock Operator	Game Book Keeper
Game Stats	Game Environment
Gate Keeping	Concessions
Sponsorships and Fundraising	Apparel
Team Communications	Gym Cleaning
Banquet and Event Planning	Social Media
Photography	

## Costs and Fees

Knighthawks Basketball strives to keep the cost of playing basketball as low as possible. We are a non-profit organization and there are no paid staff members or coaches. Fees collected are specifically to cover a current or projected cost. Basic fees are: (subject to change)

Registration, Insurance, Uniform, Equipment, Gym Fees,  
Tournament or Other Participation Fees, Awards

Cost and fees will vary year to year. A deadline for fees to be paid will be set at registration each year. If an individual's fees are not paid by the deadline, that individual player will not be allowed to participate and uniforms will not be ordered unless a previous arrangement has been confirmed with program administration.

In addition to the up-front cost, there will be a gate admission fee to attend games and a concession stand in operation during the games.

**\*\* In the event season cost exceed funds collected, additional fees, such as tournament entry fees may be assessed to players participating in those events.**

## Insurance

Sports specific insurance is required to participate in Knighthawks Basketball. This insurance is non-declinable and will be purchased through initial registration fees.

## Sports Physicals

Each participant in a Knighthawks basketball program is required to have a sports physical on file for that current year. Sports physicals are valid for a 12 month period from date of issue. Sports physicals may be obtained at many local General Practitioner Doctor's Offices. Many in the area will provide them for free.

## Concerning Other Sports

Knighthawks Basketball encourages participation in the ever-growing venue of Homeschool sports and recognizes the fact that from time to time, conflicts will arise between sports schedules. The following guidelines are encouraged:

1. The current “in-season” sport should be given priority.
2. In cases of conflict between concurrent sports seasons, games should be given priority over practices.
3. Athletes should communicate clearly with their coaches to work out schedule conflicts and make up requirements for missed practices.
4. Coaches are encouraged to reach out to other sports coaches and coordinate schedules when possible.

## Acceptance Of Stated Policies

1. Prior to final enrollment in any Knighthawks / Lady Hawks program or auxiliary, potential members will be provided a copy of the handbook for the current sports year. This will most likely be an electronic copy posted to the team’s communication platform.
2. Furthermore, each member enrolling will be asked to sign, on their enrollment form, a statement that they have read and agree to the terms and policies set forth within this handbook.
3. Enrollment in any Knighthawks program or auxiliary is an affirmation of the members understanding of, and agreement to abide by the policies set forth within this handbook.

THE LORD BLESS THEE,  
AND KEEP THEE:

THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE  
SHINE UPON THEE,  
AND BE GRACIOUS UNTO THEE:

THE LORD LIFT UP HIS  
COURTENANCE UPON THEE,  
AND GIVE THEE PEACE.

NUMBERS 6:24-26