



# **Spring Lake Park Panthers**

## **Basketball Club**

**Updated June 2025**

## **Traveling Program Handbook**

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Spring Lake Park Panthers Basketball Club  
P.O. Box 490004, Blaine, MN 55449  
[www.pantherbasketball.org](http://www.pantherbasketball.org)

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*Every effort has been made to ensure that this handbook is accurate as of the date of printing. As the year progresses, the Board may have to make changes in response to changing circumstances. Please consult the Handbook section at the Club's website ([www.pantherbasketball.org](http://www.pantherbasketball.org)) for the most recent version.*

## 1. Mission Statement

The **mission** of the Spring Lake Park Panthers Basketball Club is to provide the youth in the Spring Lake Park/School District #16 attendance area the opportunity to learn and enjoy the game of basketball at a competitive level.

Our **focus** is on teaching basketball fundamentals, promoting team play, improving individual skills, and having fun in order to promote a life-long enjoyment of the game of basketball.

Our **goal** is to create a positive environment through positive reinforcement of fundamental skills and a competitive team atmosphere.

The Club demands a high degree of ethical conduct by all its coaches, players, volunteers, and parents so that it provides a good example for the community, the opponents, and its participants, thus helping their growth to adulthood.

## 2. Player Eligibility

### 2.1 Residence requirement

A player's home basketball association is based upon the public school in attendance, not by a home address. The club follows the guidelines & requirements set forth by the Minnesota Youth Basketball Alliance (MYBA), [located/located at myas.org](http://located/located at myas.org).

For home schooled players, their eligibility will continue to be based on their home address. For example, if they live in Centennial School District, they are eligible to only play for Centennial's travel basketball association.

Players who attend a private/charter/magnet school may choose to:

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- Participate in the private/charter/magnet schools travel basketball club (if one exists)
- Participate with the traveling basketball association where the school is located.
- Participate with the traveling basketball association where the player resides.

A player may apply to the Board for permission to try out for an SLPPBC team by following the Waiver Request guidelines outlined in section 2.7 of this Handbook.

### **2.2 Age and Grade requirements**

Players must be enrolled in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade and must play in their grade division. A player who wants to play at a different grade level (“play up”) may try out for the grade above with prior approval of the Board. At tryouts, the player would need to score in the Top 2 to make the grade above team for that year. If a “play up” player does not make Top 2, their score will be moved, as is, to their appropriate grade and that player will be ranked as if they tried out with their grade and would be subject to rules described in section (d) Player Assignments along with all other players from that grade.

If a player plays up one year, the player will need to try out at the next grade level each year and score high enough in the evaluators ranking to be placed on the grade above team again. Teams are selected through evaluator’s picks and coaches’ picks. The returning play-up player would need to be an evaluator’s pick to be able to play on the team again. The rank number varies based on the final team roster size. For example, if evaluators pick five players for a ten player team, then a returning play up player must be ranked in the top five to be placed on the team.

### **2.3 Other Eligibility Rules**

As required by the MYAS guidelines and the MSHSL, an athlete who plays at the High School level (Varsity, Junior Varsity, B-Squad or any 9<sup>th</sup> grade team) is ineligible to play for an SLPPBC team.

### **2.4 Moving away during the season**

A player who makes a traveling team and moves out of the SLPPBC Area or leaves a Spring Lake Park School in mid-year, may finish out the season with his or her team.

### **2.5 Split Families**

If a player lives in a split family, where their legal guardians each live in a different school district, eligibility to participate in a traveling program is based on which school they attend (not where they reside). For example, if a child’s legal guardians live in Centennial School district and Spring Lake Park School district, the family cannot pick which traveling program they want to attend. Rather, the player will participate in the program based on which school they attend.

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If this player is homeschooled, then eligibility is based on the home address of either legal guardian.

### **2.6 *Joining after registration deadline***

A player may only join a team after the registration deadline with the permission of the Board and of the coach.

### **2.7 *Waiver Requests***

Non-District 16 players may apply to the Board for permission to try out for an SLPPBC team if they first obtain a waiver from their home basketball club for which they would otherwise be eligible to play, and that waiver meets the Minnesota Youth Athletic Association's (MYAS) waiver criteria. Waiver requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Board.

Once an incoming waiver request to enter the SLP program has been approved by the board that player's participation is continuous in the program for subsequent years, and they are thereafter treated as an SLP player, unless there is a gap in their participation on an SLPPBC travel team. Players are still required to obtain the annual MYAS waiver policy form signed by the waiver out club(s). Players with approved waivers are considered part of the SLPPBC in subsequent years. District 16 youth who are cut at tryouts and there is not another SLPPBC team for them to play on may request a waiver to play with another club.

## **3. Board of Directors**

For a current list of Directors, see the club's website ([www.pantherbasketball.org](http://www.pantherbasketball.org)).

## **4. Contact Information**

### **4.1 *Email***

Contact the club president or any of the board members listed on the club website.

### **4.2 *Website***

<http://www.pantherbasketball.org>

### **4.3 *Address***

Spring Lake Park Traveling Basketball Club  
PO Box 490004 Blaine, MN 55449

### 5. Level of Commitment

The Club has high expectations for its teams, coaches, and players. Here's what you can expect:

- The practice season begins in October and tournaments end in March.
- Practices are generally scheduled two weeknights per week for an hour and a half.
- Tournaments are generally held two to three weekends per month.
- Most tournaments are two-day events, with multiple games per day. Some may include Friday night. Teams generally play at least three games in a tournament.
- Sunday morning games are likely.
- Parents must volunteer at SLPPBC tournaments.
- Every effort is made to provide you with a schedule of practices and games early in the season. The expectation is that you will be able to eliminate most scheduling conflicts if provided with adequate time to make adjustments. The goal should be to attend every practice and game. If a conflict does exist, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the coaching staff as soon as possible.

#### 5.1 Playing time

Every player is a contributing member of a team. Players are challenged in practice sessions and are given opportunities in game situations to display their basketball skill. All players get playing time, but some players may get more playing time than others. Playing time is determined by several things, including:

- Basketball skill
- Foul Trouble
- Match-ups
- Attitude
- Attendance
- Hustle at practice and games
- Work ethic

At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, the basketball experience will be primarily focused on teaching and developing players' skills within the "team" context. For traveling teams at 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades, the minimum expected playing time for every player is an average of 40% of game time per game over the course of a tournament, as this allows coaches more flexibility than having a minimum per game. (Tournaments differ between 20-minute running time halves and 14-minute stop time halves)

For grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, while still focused on teaching and the development of players' skills, there will be an increased emphasis on the team performing at a higher, competitive level. As a result, playing time is at the discretion of the coach. However, the expectation at this level is that all players should get playing time in each half of all games.

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Modifications to playing time are allowed as result of injury, foul trouble, practice/game attendance issues or other disciplinary reasons. Coaches should provide player and parents with a verbal warning if play time will fall below the minimum for disciplinary reasons. Coaches should be clear in their communication with players and parents about expected playing time so that expectations can be managed.

Please do not forget that coaches are volunteers – respect their decisions. If you have questions about your child, discuss them with your coach in private. The Club recommends that you arrange your conversations with the coach for at least one day after a game – not on game day. The boys and girls travel directors and/or Team Liaison may also be consulted.

## 6. Registration

Registration is an online process at [pantherbasketball.org](http://pantherbasketball.org) where families can register and pay for the upcoming basketball season.

Late registrations will only be accepted with the permission of the Board. If you are applying for a scholarship, a copy of the approved lunch letter should be emailed to the Club Secretary. For those who are given scholarship approval, a discount code will be provided for the online registration. The scholarship form is available online.

## 7. Costs

### ***7.1 Registration Fees***

Please see the website for the current season's fees.

When registering, you have a choice to pay in full or pay in installments (up to 3 months). If registration fees are not paid in full by Dec 1, your player(s) will be held out of practice and not allowed to take part in any games.

Board members receive a 50% discount code for one player each year and head coaches are refunded 50% of one player registration at the conclusion of the season to be used towards their child's traveling or in house registration fees.

### ***7.2 Financial Assistance***

If a family cannot afford the full registration fees, the family can apply for financial assistance. Proof of participation in the educational benefits program from the school district will be required., and a copy should be emailed to the Club Secretary. If approval is granted, a discount code for 100% off rec or 50% off travel registration will be provided for your online registration. Scholarships are limited and on a first-come, first serve basis.

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### 7.3 Refunds

Traveling teams depend on every player to keep up their intense schedules. Teams have a limited number of players and if a player leaves during the season, another child may have been deprived of an opportunity to play. The Club also incurs expenses relating to each player that cannot be recovered if a child leaves. For these reasons, refunds will not be given for any part of a player's registration after the team has held two practices. Refunds will be provided to players that do not make a team as a result of tryouts minus the non-refundable tryout fee.

### 7.4 Volunteer Requirements

The boys and girls SLPPBC tournaments, usually held in November or December, are the primary source of income for the club. Without successful tournaments, player registration fees would be much higher. Holding a successful tournament requires a substantial commitment of time and energy by volunteers.

To ensure the support needed, each family is required to volunteer *8 hours at SLPPBC tournaments*. For families that fail to meet the 8-hour commitment, they will be billed a volunteer fee via the form of payment used at registration. A pro-rated amount will **not** be refunded if a family partially fulfills the volunteer requirements. The volunteer fee will be disclosed in the registration process.

Through the registration process, families can proactively opt to buy out this commitment by proactively paying the volunteer fee in advance. In doing so, you will not be required to volunteer at either of our annual tournaments.

Board members and head coaches receive a full volunteer credit. Each head coach is credited with an additional 8 hours of volunteer credit to be allocated towards their assistant coach(es). If the head coach allocates the full 8 hours to one assistant coach that will fulfill their volunteer requirements for the season. For teams with multiple assistant coaches the 8 hours can be split among them with the expectation that the assistant coaches will fulfill the difference in remaining hours at one of the SLP traveling home tournaments.

### 7.5 Uniforms

Uniforms are purchased every two (2) years, and the Club, may subsidize a portion of the cost. If at any time, a player needs a new jersey top or shorts, the full cost is the responsibility of the family.

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### 7.6 Other Costs

#### (a) Tryout Fee

The tryout fee is included in the registration fee. This helps the club recover the cost of hiring independent evaluators. Players cut as a result of tryouts will be refunded their registration fee minus a non-refundable tryout fee.

#### (b) Admission to Tournaments

Most traveling basketball clubs are now moving to a No Gate Fee model, where that fee is wrapped into the cost of the team registration. There are some tournaments, however, who will charge a gate fee – and that is the responsibility of the family.

#### (c) Team Apparel

SLPPBC offers sweatshirts, t-shirts, and other branded items for sale periodically throughout the season for purchase online with a small portion of the proceeds going back to the SLPPBC.

### 7.7 Traveling Basketball Annual Expenses

Annual expenses include:

- Gym rental
- Insurance
- Storage fees
- Equipment
- Coaches' and player shirts
- Website
- Financial assistance (scholarships)
- Postage and printing
- Other equipment
- Background checks for coaches
- Tryouts
- Trainings and clinics

## 8. Fundraising

Teams may not carry out fundraising activities or seek sponsorships without Board permission. The Board may grant permission if, in its opinion, the money raised will be spent for a purpose consistent with the Club's mission.

## 9. No Competing Tournaments

No director or coach may organize any basketball tournament for MYAS-recognized traveling teams that is held between October and March, other than a tournament sponsored by SLPPBC.

# 10. Tryouts

## 10.1 Purpose

The purpose of tryouts is to assign players to teams based on an objective assessment of skills and abilities. It is impossible to accommodate individual parent requests for team assignments. Tryouts therefore rely on independent evaluators to assess players' skills and abilities as they perform drills and scrimmages.

## 10.2 Required for all Players & Teams

Tryouts are required for all team placements regardless of the number of players registered. We announce tryout dates by the end of May to give families adequate time to prepare and plan for tryouts, which are generally held the latter half of September.

In the event of a conflict preventing the player from attending tryouts, you must notify the **Board tryout committee** (President, Vice President, Boys Travel Director and Girls Travel Director) for special consideration **before** tryouts start.

- If the absence is approved by the committee, the player can be selected as a coach's pick and the previous year's tryout score will be used minus 10% (see scoring section 10.5b)
- For players with no previous tryout score, the board tryout committee and applicable grade level coaches will meet and decide on the appropriate placement of the player in question.
- Placement on a team is not guaranteed for either situation.

## 10.3 When two teams are formed at a grade level

If 16 or more players register and have the skills capable of playing for a grade level, then two teams will be created (subject to coach availability).

## 10.4 Scheduling

The Board will determine the dates, times, and location for tryouts. Tryouts are normally held shortly after the player registration deadline so that teams can be formed as quickly as possible. Check the Club website for schedule details.

## 10.5 Tryout Rules

### (a) General rules

Tryouts are required for all teams registered in the program regardless of the number trying out. A non-refundable tryout fee is paid with registration fees.

All tryout judging will be conducted by independent evaluators selected by the Club. Evaluators are selected based on their knowledge of the game. The Board will ensure that there are no conflicts of interest between the evaluators and the players/families

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participating in the tryouts. There will be a minimum of two evaluators per tryout group and may be as many as four.

Each grade level will have either one or two tryout sessions. The tryout sessions will be no more than three hours in total. Players will receive a tryout jersey to wear with a pre-assigned tryout number. Athletes should **arrive at least 15 minutes prior** to their tryout time. Team placements for the entire season depend on tryout results.

A player may request to try out with a different grade due to a scheduling conflict if the tryout committee is notified of the conflict at least 48 hours prior to tryouts. In this case the player will be allowed to participate in another grade's tryout and their score will be moved, as is, to their appropriate grade. That player will be ranked as if they tried out with their grade and would be subject to rules described in section (d) Player Assignments along with all other players from that grade. In these cases where a player is trying out with a different grade or at a different time there is no way to ensure the player receives the same score had they tried out with their grade. No modifications to a players tryout score will be considered. The player and family choosing to try out with a different age group/time assumes the risk that scoring could impact overall player placement on a team.

Head coaches are welcome to watch the tryouts, but must not communicate with the evaluators before, during, or after tryouts. The only scoring considered in the ranking of athletes will be the scoring of the judges. It is unacceptable to approach any coach, board member, or evaluator to dispute tryout scores.

A member of the Board of Directors will be present to be the responsible adult from the program. Parents may drop off their player, or they may wait outside the gym. **There is a mandatory parent information meeting at the start of tryouts.**

### **(b) Scoring**

SLPPBC uses an online scoring application that allows for live scoring by the evaluators while observing each player. Head shots of each player are taken upon check in as an identification for evaluators, in addition to the tryout number, for reference during evaluations. These photos/images are not distributed or used for any additional purpose. The players will have a total score to creating a ranking. All evaluators' scores are final and not open to debate.

The independent evaluators' final scores and rankings is reviewed only by the Board Tryout Committee. This committee reviews "player readiness" and total grade roster sizes to determine any need for additional coaches.

### **(c) Team sizes**

The maximum number of players on a team is ten, unless the Board approves a coach's request for a larger number.

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In general, for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, team sizes are based on the number of players who register. Typically, the following chart is used as the guideline (Table 1).

**Table 1 - Team Sizes**

Number of candidates	Team	Players
20 or more	A	10
	B	10
19	A	9
	B	10
18	A	9
	B	9
17	A	8
	B	9
16	A	8
	B	8
15 or fewer	One team only	No more than 10

Note: In general, the Board strives to follow this guideline and to have 10 players on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams. The Board may opt to have smaller A team (8 or 9 players) based on evaluator and tryout committee recommendations.

The A team coach for grades 6-8<sup>th</sup> will decide whether they would like 8, 9 or 10 players for the A team. B teams will have a maximum of 10 players.

### **(d) Player assignments**

Tryout results by rank order are used to place a certain number of evaluators picks players on a team depending on number of candidates. The remaining selections are by coach's choice, with approval by tryout committee (See Table 2).

For grades 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>: If 20 or more players register and are deemed "travel ready" by the evaluators, then the top 5 will go to Team A, except that the Team B head coach has the right to keep their child on their own team. The Team A coach then chooses additional players. The A team coach's player must score in the Top 12 or have tryout committee approval to be selected as a coach's pick. Of the remaining players, the top 5 go to Team B. The Team B coach may then choose additional players to bring the Team B total up to 10. If the skill level and registration numbers support a C Team, after the A and B team selections are made, the remaining top 5 go to Team C. The Team C coach may then choose additional players to bring the Team C total up to 10.

If fewer than 20 players register, the number of players assigned to Team A on the basis of tryout scores is shown in Table 2. The Team B head coaches may keep their own

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children on their team, as before. After Team A receives its score-based assignments, the Team A coach chooses additional players to reach the team size. All remaining players go to Team B.

**Table 2 – Player Assignments for Skill-Graded Teams**

Number of candidates	Team	Positions determined by top tryout scores	Positions selected by coach
20 or more	A (10)	5	5
	B (10)	5	5
19	A (9)	5	4
	B (10)	all remaining	
18	A (9)	5	4
	B (9)		
17	A (8)	4	4
	B (9)	all remaining	
16	A (8)	4	4
	B (8)	all remaining	
15 or fewer	One team only, no more than 10 players	5	5

For 6-8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Depending on the number of players the A team coach opts to have (8, 9, or 10)

Team	Positions determined by top tryout scores	Positions selected by coach
A (10)	5	5
B (10)	5	5
A (9)	5	4
B (10)	all remaining	
A (8)	4	4
B (10)	all remaining	

### **(e) Third “C” Teams**

Due to limited practice space, the board is committed to filling two teams at each grade level if there are enough players. Adding a third team at any grade will be evaluated based on the total number of traveling and rec teams and the practice space availability.

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### **(f) Announcement of results**

The tryout committee will communicate results with the head coaches and the results will be posted by player number and initials on the website within a couple days following tryouts.

Players have 24 hours to decline placement on traveling team and receive a refund (minus the non-refundable tryout fee and any online transaction fees). Players may decline their spot on the traveling team and opt to play for a rec team but may not opt to play for a lower-level traveling team.

Rosters are posted for all teams even if a head coach has not been identified. Teams without a head coach at the specified deadline on the results web site will be cut and receive a refund (minus the non-refundable tryout fee and any online transaction fees).

## **11. Practices**

Having productive practices is critical to the mission of our program. As such, all practices are **closed practices**, meaning only players and coaches are allowed in the gym/facility while teams are practicing. Board members may also be allowed in the gym/facility under special circumstances.

If parents have questions about practices, they are welcome to contact the coach directly or reach out to the team's board liaison.

## **12. Pairings or Special Selection**

When a family has multiple players at the same age level (i.e. twins), the family has the option to elect to have both players placed on the same team. If electing to place both players on the same team, both players will receive the score of the lowest scoring of their two players, at the end of the tryout process. Both players will then be ranked at their grade level along with all other players according to that lowest score and fall under the previous team selection rules.

Alternatively, the family may opt to allow their players to tryout as individuals with the understanding that they could be placed on separate teams or that one player is cut while the other is placed on a team. The family's preference must be determined prior to tryouts.

## **13. Team Sizes**

Teams normally consist of ten players when 20 or more players have registered and attended tryouts. The Board may consider a coach's request to include more than ten players.

### 14. Uniforms

The Club takes pride in our organization, and hope that coaches, parents, and players alike share that same pride. One of the ways to support the organization is by wearing its uniform. Parents can also show their support by wearing team sweatshirts or other logo items.

When playing as an SLPPBC team, players may only wear uniforms authorized by the Club. Uniforms may only be worn at games authorized by the Club. Uniforms may be worn at other events only with prior permission from the Board.

All head coaches are offered a discount code to purchase spirit wear at the start of the season. As a representative of the program, head coaches are asked to wear SLP apparel to each tournament.

### 15. Coaching

#### 15.1 Coach Selection

The Board will select coaches for each team. Prospective coaches should submit an application, available on the club website, to the Board by the posted deadline. The President identifies board members who will interview all boys and girls team coaching applicants (new and returning) each year. The Board makes coach selections based on:

- Previous experience
- Knowledge of basketball
- Player and parent evaluations from previous years
- Commitment to the mission of the SLPPBC
- Discussions with past players, coaches, or parents

The interview team will make final coach recommendations at a future board meeting for approval by the Board. In the event that no one applies for a certain grade level, the Board will post that opening on the club website and do its best to find a coach. If no coach can be secured by the posted deadline following tryouts, there will not be a team.

Coaches are selected first and foremost based on experience and ability. For situations where the coach selected for the A team has a player competing in tryouts and the player does not score high enough to automatically be on the A team the coach may select his or her player as a coach's pick if that player scores in the Top 12 in the overall tryouts.

When the coach's player scores lower than the top 12, the tryout committee will need to evaluate the circumstance (most likely with tryout evaluator input) and approve the player as a coach's pick. In instances where the player is not approved for the A team, a discussion between the A and B coaches and the board to discuss possible coaching changes will happen. This is designed to ensure that players play on the team best suited for their skill level.

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Coaches selected as B team coach who have a player who makes the A team as a result of tryouts, have option to opt out of coaching or, with tryout committee permission, their player may choose to play on the B team.

Assistant coaches are selected by the head coach with their consent after tryout outs and team formations are final. **All head coaches are required to have at least one assistant coach.**

### **15.2 Background checks**

The Board conducts annual background checks on all head and assistant coaches. There are no exceptions.

Once head coaches' selections are complete, they are required to complete a concussion training, every three years, and a background check, annually, through the Trusted Coaches program as directed by the board. The SLPPBC requires all coaches to pass the background screening without any "flags" as identified by Trusted Coaches. For information on the background screening process and what constitutes a "flag" please reference the Trusted Coaches Background Check Policy and Disclaimer on their website at <http://www.trustedcoaches.org/>. Coaches identified with a "flag" will be asked to step down from their role with the program.

At the conclusion of team formations all Assistant Coaches are required to complete the same concussion and background screening if they will be participating in practices or sitting on the team bench during games. They must also pass all Trusted Coaches screening as described above.

### **15.3 Coach's Code of Conduct**

The head and assistant coaches must sign the Coach's Code of Conduct.

### **15.4 Coach Development**

A variety of online resources exist for coach development, and the Club works to ensure coaches have development opportunities. Please see the coaches' resources portion of the web site for more information.

At the end of the season, the three objectives for each child in our sports program are:

- Did the child have fun?
- Did the child learn and progress in their chosen sport?
- Do they want to come back and play again?

### **15.5 Coach-Board Relationships**

The program cannot exist without good coaches. The Board is always eager to assist coaches in any possible way.

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### **(a) Board Liaison**

A Board member will be assigned to each team as a Board Liaison. The Board Liaison will meet with the team parents at the beginning of the season (usually at the first practice) and will attend team games or practices from time to time during the season. The Board Liaison should be the parents and coaches first point of contact for any questions or concerns.

### **(b) Attendance at Board Meetings**

The Board may invite coaches to attend Board meetings during the year. The purpose of these meetings is to encourage dialog between coaches and the board, and to discuss any concerns or questions the coaches have about the program. Board meetings are an open forum and coaches and parents are welcome to attend any meeting throughout the year.

## **15.6 Coach-Parent Relationships**

Coaches and parents must work together to create the best possible experience for the children on the team. Children learn what they are taught, but they also learn from what they see, including how their coaches and parents behave and interact.

Sometimes a parent will disagree with a coach's decisions or will be unhappy with the way their child is being treated. When these situations arise, it is best to discuss them with the coach – but not when the coach or parent may still be under the stress of the immediate incident. The Parent's Code of Conduct describes the Club's expectations of parents, and includes:

I will respect coaches and their authority during practices and games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at a game, and will take the time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.

Here are some additional suggestions for working out disagreements:

- Remember that coaches are genuinely trying to do the best thing for the team and for each child. Traveling basketball is competitive, and coaches will make player substitutions and assignments based on giving the team the best chance to win in a given situation. That may mean some players don't get as much court time.
- Wait until the day after an incident before mentioning it to the coach. Sometimes "sleeping on it" will give you a better perspective.
- You can disagree with a coach's decision without attacking the coach on a personal level. Both the parent and the coach need to treat each other with respect, even if they disagree.
- Conversations between a coach and a parent should remain private. Neither the coach nor the parent should discuss their disagreement with other parents or with players. To do so can easily lead to feelings of "ganging up" and make it more difficult to resolve the problem.

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- If the problem can't be resolved after the initial conversation, then the parent and the coach should ask the team's Board Liaison for help. If you don't know who your Board Liaison is, consult with the Traveling Director. The Board Liaison will arrange for a Board member to meet with the parent and the coach to discuss the issue.
- If the issue still cannot be resolved, then the parent can initiate a formal complaint. This should happen very rarely. The complaint process will always produce a decision, but it may be a decision neither the coach nor the parent likes. The individuals can usually find a better result if they work things out themselves.
- Don't involve your children. Your disagreement with the coach is for you and the coach to work out. Kids see, listen, and talk. Keep them out of it.
- Never use email to complain to a coach. Email is a great communications tool, but it does not work well when emotions kick in. There is a tendency for people to put things in emails that they would never say to someone's face. It's also very easy to misunderstand an email and read it as a personal attack when no attack was intended. Each angry response leads to another, in rapid succession. Finally, emails are simply too easy to pass along to others. Disagreements between a parent and a coach are private matters. Trust between the parties will completely and immediately be destroyed if one side broadcasts their version of things "to the world".
- Remember: if you can't work things out privately, bring in a Board member for help.

### **15.7 Team meetings**

The Club encourages coaches to conduct a team meeting at the beginning of the season to set expectations, review schedule and any other housekeeping items. Additionally, coaches may meet with team parents during the season. Some coaches hold individual one-on-one meetings with parents (similar to parent/teacher conferences at school). This gives the coach and parent an opportunity to discuss the player's development, as well as any concerns the parent may have.

## **16. Conflict Resolution**

Disputes between parents, coaches, or Board members are subject to an identical complaint procedure:

- The individuals should try to work things out on their own, *privately* (see section 14.6 for suggestions).
- If the problem remains, an independent Board member will attempt to mediate the dispute.
- If the problem is unresolved, either party may file a written complaint. Complaint forms are also available from any Board member.
- Following the schedule set out in the complaint form, the Board will give the other party an opportunity to respond in writing.

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- The Board will convene a Hearing Committee of three Board members and will announce a date for the hearing of the complaint.
- At the hearing, both parties will have an opportunity to argue their case, and to present letters from others who have personal knowledge of the events giving rise to the complaint. Outsiders will not be permitted to attend the hearing.
- The purpose of the hearing is to resolve the dispute, and the Hearing Committee will encourage the parties to do so. If the parties are unable to agree, then the Hearing Committee will render a written report within 72 hours of the conclusion of the hearing.
- The Hearing Committee report will include a summary of the facts, an explanation of how those facts constituted a violation of the relevant code of conduct, and a recommendation for any sanctions or other consequences they consider appropriate.
- The Board will meet within seven days of the Hearing Committee's report to decide on the appropriate sanction. The Board may not change the Hearing Committee's findings of fact but may decide on different sanctions.
- If the final sanctions include removal as a coach, the Board will call a meeting of the team's parents and coaches. At the meeting, participants may express their views on the coach's suitability, general character, or any other matter they think might assist the Board in making a final decision. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Board will meet privately to render a final decision.
- Within seven days of the Board's decision, either party may appeal the decision by notifying the President in writing of the reasons for the appeal. The President will give the other party an opportunity to respond in writing. Within seven days of the notice of appeal, the Board will convene an Appeal Hearing. The appeal will be heard by the entire Board.
- At the Appeal Hearing, the parties may argue why the decision should be changed but may not argue that the Hearing Committee misunderstood the facts. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board will meet in private and announce their decision.

## 17. Codes of Conduct

Every player, parent, coach, and Board member must read and sign a Code of Conduct. Forms are distributed via the online registration process and are also available on the Club website. Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in a warning, suspension from participation for a definite or indefinite time, removal from a coaching position, or removal from the club.

### ***17.1 Player's Code of Conduct***

I recognize that as an athlete in the community, I must conduct myself both on and off the playing field in a way, which exhibits respect for others and myself. I therefore resolve to conduct myself with dignity as an athlete and as a citizen of the community, recognizing and accepting that I:

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1. Must accept accountability for my behavior and its outcomes.
2. Must honor my obligations and promises.
3. Must exercise self-control.
4. Must be willing to be fair with others in my dealings on and off the playing field.
5. Must take pride in my accomplishments, and myself but never at the expense of demeaning another person or group.
6. Must respect the efforts of others.
7. Must respect authority including, officials, coaches, and parents.
8. Must be a good sport and acknowledge all good performances including my teammates and my opponents.
9. Must treat all fellow teammates and my opponents, as I would like to be treated.
10. Must abstain from the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
11. Must cooperate with coaches, officials, teammates, and opponents, for without them I would not have an opportunity to participate in traveling basketball.
12. Must remember that winning isn't everything. Having fun, improving skills, making friends, and doing my best are important.
13. Must play by the spirit, not just the letter, of the rules of the game and the rules of life.
14. Must strive to make my community - whether that is the team on which I play or the community in which I live - better because of my contributions as a team member and as a citizen.

### **17.2 Player Removal/Violation Process**

Violations to the code of conduct may result in a warning, suspension, or removal from the club. Coaches will communicate with parents of the player in person or by phone but follow up with a written follow up to be signed by both parties to ensure parents understand the violation and consequence(s). Coaches should notify their board representative as well, and if possible, have board member present for meeting with parents. Repeated or escalating offenses can result in either a tournament suspension or removal from the club depending on the severity of the violation.

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### 17.3 Parent's Code of Conduct

Children's sports are supposed to be fun – for the *children*. Unfortunately, many parents don't realize that their actions, whether verbal or nonverbal, can have a lasting emotional effect on children. Too many children are leaving sports activities because the fun is unfairly taken away by adults. Parents who follow this simple code can help reinforce what sports are all about ... BEING FUN FOR EVERYONE.

The Club asks that you pledge to be responsible for your words and actions while attending or participating in all youth sports events and shall conform your behavior to the following code of conduct:

1. I will not force my child to participate in basketball. I will try to make it FUN!
2. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflict without resorting to hostility or violence.
3. I will fulfill my volunteer obligation willingly, knowing that the effort I put forth directly impacts my child's SLPPBC experience.
4. I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
5. I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of the game.
6. I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard, and make my child feel like a winner every time.
7. I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a game.
8. I will remember that children learn by example. I will applaud good plays by both my child's team and their opponents. I will not be critical of, or embarrass any player, including opposition players.
9. I will never question the official's judgment or honesty in public. I recognize that officials are being developed in the same manner as players.
10. I will respect and show appreciation for the volunteers who give their time to basketball for my child.
11. I will never yell, taunt, threaten or inflict physical violence upon any player, coach, official or spectator at any youth basketball activity. I will refrain from the use of abusive or vulgar language, racial, ethnic or gender-related slurs at any time on the court or any youth basketball function. I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth basketball games.

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12. I will leave the coaching to the coaching staff. I will encourage my child to play in a manner consistent with the team's strategy or plans.
13. I will emphasize skill development and a serious approach to practices and explain how skill development will benefit my child.
14. I will attempt to learn about the game of basketball and the policies of the league so that I may best support my child's development in the game.
15. I will communicate all and any concerns regarding inappropriate behavior to the coach or local youth traveling basketball association representative.
16. I will respect coaches and their authority during practices and games and will never question, discuss or confront coaches at a game, and will take the time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
17. I will insist that my child plays in a safe and healthy environment. I will support a sports environment that is free of alcohol, drugs or tobacco and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
18. I understand the benefits from participating in a team sport, the commitment, the discipline, and the social skills learned and acquired.
19. I will remember that my child plays basketball for his or her enjoyment, not mine.

### **17.4 Coach's Code of Conduct**

The Spring Lake Park Panthers Basketball Club is concerned about the conduct of all coaches during games. The Club wants to ensure that games are fair, positive, and enjoyable experiences for all the children and adults involved. A basketball game should be friendly and unifying - a spirited social and athletic occasion for players, coaches, referees, and spectators.

To satisfactorily meet these responsibilities, the coach is expected to:

1. Know the rules of the sport and abide by them. Instruct team members in the rules of the game and motivate each player to compete according to the rules at all times.
2. Support the Spring Lake Park Panthers Basketball Club and its Board of Directors and will follow the rules and by-laws of the SLPPBC.
3. Respect the game officials and refrain from questioning their decisions or from addressing them in a loud, disrespectful, or abusive manner.
4. Ensure that the fans of his/her team conduct themselves with sportsmanship and maturity at all times while in attendance at game sites. Assist game officials in maintaining control of spectators and players during the games.

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5. Respect the coaches and players of the opposing team both during the play of the game and at its conclusion, win and lose.
6. Teach each player, through personal example, to be humble and generous in victory and proud and courteous in defeat.
7. Maintain control of his/her emotions and avoid actions, language and/or gestures that may be interpreted as hostile or humiliating.
8. Treat each athlete as an individual and help him/her to reach full potential.
9. Let athletes know the benefit of sport and encourage them to participate in sport throughout their lives.
10. Provide a safe environment. Check that equipment and facilities are safe.
11. Keep up with the latest coaching techniques and seek continual improvement.
12. Ensure training and competition is suitable for the age and fitness level of the athletes.
13. Avoid any form of harassment towards your athletes. This includes harassment on gender, place of origin, color, sexual orientation, religion, political belief, economic status, and disability.
14. Support a sports environment that is free of alcohol, drugs or tobacco and refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
15. Realize, accept, and practice the principle that a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability but also on its sportsmanship, courtesy, and manner.

Your example is powerful, for better or worse. If you insist on fair play, if you concentrate on your players' enjoyment of the game and their overall, long-term development, and if you support the officials, your players and their parents will notice. If you encourage (or allow) your players to play outside the rules, if you're overly concerned about results, and if you criticize the officials harshly, your players and their parents will also notice.

Think about what you're doing during a game! Uphold the Spirit of the Game! If you follow the expectations described above, the spirit of the game will be alive and well in Spring Lake Park and will grow, along with the enjoyment of all.

### **17.5 Board Code of Conduct**

Board members are elected by the membership to carry out the day-to-day operations of the Club. Their responsibilities, however, are broader. In their dealings with the community, they are also ambassadors of the sport and the Club. They serve as role

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models for coaches and players. Above all, they are entrusted by parents to provide a safe and supportive environment in which children can reach their full potential in basketball.

To meet these expectations, Board members must:

1. Perform the functions of their office in good faith and honestly.
2. Act in the best interests of the Club and take all necessary steps to assist the Club in achieving its objectives in such a way that the Club's credibility and integrity is not compromised.
3. Conduct themselves in a manner worthy of their position within the Club.
4. Act with due care and diligence in the discharge of their functions for and on behalf of the Club.
5. Disclose to the Club any direct or indirect personal or private business interest that they or their spouses, partners or business associates may have which may conflict with the Club's interests.

Board members may not:

1. Engage in conduct, behavior or practices, which may be detrimental to the best interests of The Club.
2. Engage in any conduct, behavior or practices, which may bring The Club, or the game, into disrepute.
3. Disclose confidential information entrusted to them or obtained as a result of their position as a Board member, unless legally obliged to do so.
4. Disclose information, unless legally obliged to do so, in a way which may damage the reputation of The Club or the game.
5. Use their position or privileges as covered persons for private gain or to benefit another person improperly.
6. Commit or be responsible for, or party to, any form of discrimination including, but not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, religion or political persuasion.
7. Do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, or humiliate any person on the grounds of his or her race, color, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, religion or political persuasion.
8. Harass any person on any grounds whether physical, mental, professional, or sexual.

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9. Accept hospitality, goods or services which may influence or affect judgment in the conduct of The Club's affairs.
10. Give gifts or perform favors of any kind where it could appear designed to influence others improperly or which may influence or affect judgment in the conduct of The Club's affairs.

### **17.6 Anti-Harassment Policy**

The Club is committed in all areas to providing an environment that is free from harassment. Harassment based upon an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristics will not be tolerated. All volunteers, while carrying out club activities, are expected and required to abide by this policy. No person will be adversely affected (e.g. reduced playing time) with the Club as a result of bringing complaints of unlawful harassment.

### **17.7 Anti-Discrimination Policy**

The Club will not discriminate against players, board members, coaches or any other volunteers based on race, creed, color, national origin, or sex.