

2022

Athlete Handbook



Welcome to Ignite Athletics!

Mission Statement and Core Values

Ignite Athletics exists to provide homeschooled students the benefit of participating in competitive team sports that glorifies God.

Ignite Core Values

Ignite coaches, athletic directors, and board members are guided by our core values of:

I - Integrity (Titus 2:7-8) Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in our teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

G - Grace (2 Timothy 2:24) And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil.

N - Nerve/No Fear (2 Timothy 1:7) for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

I - Initiative (Proverbs 3:27-28) Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it" - when you have it with you.

T - Teamwork (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, 12) Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. T - Teamwork (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, 12) Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! ...And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him - a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

E - Endurance (Galatians 6:9) And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

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Athlete Eligibility

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

- All athletes must submit a NOI (Notice of Intent) to the athletic director of their sport yearly. In addition, the parent/guardian must sign the NOI statement that indicates the child is CURRENTLY being homeschooled.
- Athletes who attend private school or public school full-time are not eligible. Students who are homeschooled, but attend classes part-time at a school and do not play the same sport at that school ARE eligible to play for Ignite. Students who are virtually schooled through their county are NOT eligible to play for Ignite.
- A player’s age group is determined by their age on **August 1** of the school year. Players must play by age/grade unless there is a player deficiency on a team.
- High school graduates are not eligible to play, no matter their age. Athletes who have repeated a grade, who are older, but have not yet graduated are eligible and must be 19 or under. All athletes have 4 years of high school scholastic eligibility.

Ignite Sports and Seasons

Sport	Season	Age Group	Gender
Cross Country	Fall (Aug-Nov)	EL, MS, HS	Coed
Volleyball	Fall (Aug-Oct)	MS (5 th & up), HS	Girls
Soccer	Fall (Aug-Oct)	MS, HS	Coed
Archery	Winter (Oct-Mar)	EL (4 th & up), MS, HS	Coed
Basketball	Winter (Nov-Mar)	MS, HS	Boys
Track & Field	Spring (Mar-June)	EL, MS, HS	Coed
Softball *	Spring	HS	Girls
Baseball*	Spring	HS	Boys

*** Offered through Cross Lanes Christian School**

Ignite offers programs for elementary, middle school and high school students. Not all sports offer elementary options.

Key: EL=elementary (8 & up), MS=Middle school (6th-8th), HS=High School (9th-12th). Note: Some teams start at 5th for MS.

Player Selection

Tryouts/Evaluations

Some Ignite sports limit the number of players and have tryouts prior to the season, while some have open registration and have an evaluation instead of a tryout.

The tryout/evaluation date will be 6-8 weeks before the season is to begin. Advertisement will be done through sport specific app, social media, and email, and will be sent out at least ONE MONTH in advance.

- 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.
- 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 coach's discretion.
- Two or more coaches/former coaches/athletic director/others should review each team tryout and give input to provide more well-rounded decision making.

Team Sizes

Team size is at the discretion of the Athletic Director and coaches for each individual sport. The minimum for each sport is:

Volleyball: 10 per team

Basketball: 10 per team

Soccer: 16 per team

Archery: 12 for a team (4 of opposite gender)

Cross Country/Track: no minimum

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.

Elementary Program: This level of participation will be to develop skills and abilities within young athletes to prepare them for competing in their specific sport. Meets or games are not guaranteed at this level. With the exception of archery where elementary students (4th and 5th grade) will compete in tournaments.

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.

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.

Player Placement

1. Players will be placed on the team of their age as of August 1 that school year. Final decision regarding player placement will be determined by the coach & athletic director with board approval
2. Ignite does not allow playing on both teams (middle school and high school) unless attending a tournament or a minimum roster has not been met for a particular team. Playing across team lines is at the coach's discretion in these situations.

Athlete Conduct

- 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/her the respect he/she is due as the athlete's superior. 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 strive to model Christ-like 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, their families, the homeschool community, their team, and on IGNITE.
- The athlete is expected to attend every practice and game/meet. Any absence must be coordinated with the coach prior to the event.
- 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).

Player Penalties:

- Any player found in violation of the rules and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action by the Ignite board or Athletic Director. Such action may range from temporary suspension to expulsion from the program.
- Any player who verbally/physically abuses another player, participant, coach, athletic director, 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. Use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs at any IGNITE event, game and or tournament will not be tolerated.
- 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, or by written means abuses a player, participant, coach, athletic director, board member, vendor, or official or is found in violation of the rules and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action by the Ignite Board or Athletic Director. Such action may range from temporary removal from the IGNITE sporting event to expulsion from the program.

Any accusations of potential criminal conduct will be immediately reported to the proper authorities.

Complaints made by parents or athletes will be reviewed by the Board of Directors.

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 is expected to fill some volunteer role. Needs will vary by sport. 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. 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 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.

Each Ignite team is responsible for raising their own funds for their particular sport. In addition, each team pays (\$12 per athlete) into the General Ignite fund to pay for items such as insurance, sports banquet, web hosting, etc. for the Ignite organization. We ask that each family participate in whatever fundraiser their sport organizes, as well as the general Ignite fundraisers organized by the Ignite Booster Club. These extra funds are essential to keep the Ignite programs running.

Registration

Registration forms are to be completed online at igniteathletics.org. All fees are to be given to the Athletic Director for your sport by the date that they set (cash or check: payable to Ignite Athletics, accepted).

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 Athletic Director. Refunds given at the discretion of the Athletic Director. Once uniforms have been ordered, there is no refund.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available and are given on a case by case basis. If your family is in need of financial assistance, please let your Athletic Director know that you would like to apply for a scholarship.

Communication

The Ignite organization uses electronic means to communicate between team members, coaches, athletic directors, and parents. Each sport has its own method of communication to be used at the discretion of the athletic director. It is necessary for at least one parent to be in communication with their child's team.

In addition, each head coach, athletic director and board member has an Ignite email. Those should be given to parents at the parent orientation meeting for each sport.

Conflict Resolution

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.

Ignite 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)

Booster Club

The purpose of the Ignite Booster Club is to create and implement fundraising events across all sports to raise funds for the Ignite general fund.*

The Ignite general fund covers all organizational expenses such as web hosting, insurance, photo storage, survey subscription, sports banquet, and marketing costs. This fund will also be used to create savings for a future Ignite facility.

The Booster Club is composed of parent representatives across all sports. These representatives brainstorm fundraising ideas and are in charge of implementing ideas that have been approved by the Board of Directors.

There are 3 fundraising seasons: Fall (Sept-Dec), Spring (Jan-May), Summer (June-August)

There is no limit to the number of fundraisers that can occur during those seasons.

All monies run through the general treasury of Ignite. The Ignite general treasurer will be the contact person for maintaining balances and depositing of funds. Fundraisers that require upfront funding are possible, with Board approval, and all necessary funds will be dispersed by the treasurer.

All fundraisers must be submitted to the board via the Booster Club Fundraiser Form. This form is required for approval as it aids in adding information to our website about upcoming fundraisers. as well as keeping board members informed.

Communication regarding the Ignite Booster Club should be directed to the Executive Director, or board President. All internet communication is to go through our IT team (ads, or promotions to be posted to social media, on the website, etc).

The Ignite Booster Club has one lead person named the director of the club. This person is the main point person for communication with the club members and the Ignite board.

The Ignite Booster Club consists of at least one member from each sport, when at all possible, with a total of no less than 6 members.

*Each sport will still raise their own funds for sport specific operating costs. This club is for the express purpose of the general fund.

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 of coach based on past evaluations and qualifications of past coaches and new applicants. The 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 and AD's may be replaced if problems and complaints have plagued his/her season or the Board deems there has been a serious lapse in one of the above four areas. Replacement should take place only following a fair assessment and review between AD, coach and the Board of Directors.

All coaches and athletic directors must submit to a background check to be eligible to coach one of our teams, fill out an application, and be approved by the board.

Students who have played for Ignite previously are not eligible to be head coach until they are 21 or older.

Roles and Responsibilities

Athletic Director

- Receives coach applications and makes recommendations to the Board
- Maintain communication between coaches
- Provide coaches with guidelines along with mentoring and promoting 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 for their sport
- Schedule games for teams
- Adhere to all items in the IGNITE Athletic Handbook
- Encourage parent involvement
- Pre-Season, Mid-Season, and Post-Season meetings with coaches.
- Give information to the webmaster to be added to website
- Maintain the TeamApp/communication for their team
- Attend the yearly AD training clinic
- Model Christ-like behavior for your teams
- Handle conflict with the Matthew 18 model
- CPR training, if needed

Coaches

- Work with the Athletic Director on Budget projections
- Help Athletic Director with initiating and facilitating tryouts
- First level of communication with parents.
- Adhere to all items in the IGNITE Athletic Handbook
- Adhere to scheduled game and practice times.
- Attend the coach training yearly
- Obtain CPR certification if necessary
- Encourage athletes with positive communication

- Provide weekly devotions for your team
- Be a Christ-like role model for your players
- Handle conflict using the Matthew 18 model

Guidelines and Conduct for Coaches

As outlined in the coaches and Ad clinic:

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 of moderate length- at least mid-thigh) for all home and away games.

All coaches, board members, and athletic directors must pass a yearly background check.

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.

Guidelines for off season play/coaching

Ignite encourages off season training and play; however,

- Ignite coaches may not coach Ignite players who would be on their team during the Ignite season for that sport.
- Off season team formations may include Ignite players, but may not use the Ignite name or Ignite uniforms.

Off-season practices/training may be held with these guidelines in place:

- No more than 18 off season open gyms
- No more than 30 off season team practice/training sessions
- Open gyms must be open to all homeschoolers.
- These numbers include all events held outside of the normal Ignite season.

A head coach who coaches Ignite players during the off-season in a non-Ignite event such as a club team will forfeit the ability to coach for Ignite.

Ignite Athletics Board of Directors

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