



November 30, 2016

Dear Parents:

Congratulations and welcome (back) to the Falls Church Boys Basketball program. Enclosed is the participation packet for the 2016-2017 basketball season.

Please find enclosed the following:

1. Team Rules form
2. Volunteer form
3. Letter from former St. Louis Cardinals Manager Mike Matheny
4. Practice Schedule

FALLS CHURCH HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL **TEAM RULES**

All players who are members of the Falls Church Jaguars Boys Basketball Program understand playing basketball demands tremendous commitment and dedication to the game and their team. Likewise, parents make great commitment and sacrifice for their sons to play with the team. Playing for the Jags is a privilege not a right. As Falls Church players and parents, we understand and agree to follow the mission statement, creed, and rules.

Failure to meet these expectations will result in consequences administered at the discretion of the coaching staff based on the severity of the violation.

Consequences that may be applied:

1. Verbal Reprimand
2. Additional Basketball Workout
3. Dismissal From Practice
4. Game Suspensions
5. Dismissal From Team

Below are the expectations. Please read them carefully. Sign and return the last sheet.

Varsity

Head Coach: Derek Gaunt
dgaunt@fcps.edu

Asst. Coach: Kevin George
kevingeorge12@yahoo.com

Asst. Coach: Lawrence Lewis
meoceolaw2@netzero.com

JV

Head Coach: Joshua Figueroa
coachjfig@aol.com

Freshman

Head Coach: Jim Ryan
Ryan.appraisal@verizon.net

TWITTER: @FCHSJAGZHOOPS

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Falls Church Boys' Basketball Program to develop young men who strive for and exemplify championship habits that will provide an opportunity for them to reach their potential, academically, socially and physically through athletic competition.

Jags' Team Creed

"I will excel athletically, academically and socially by committing myself to performance excellence, hard work, integrity, team success and discipline."

Player Rules

1. Treat coaches, teachers, administration, officials and opponents with dignity and respect.
2. All players, regardless of ability and/or playing time are equal members of the team. Each will treat all teammates with acceptance and respect.
3. **Attendance at all practices, team mtgs/functions, and games is mandatory.**
 - **Injured players are expected to arrive on time, listen and learn.**
 - **They will be given extra duties to help with practice or game management**
4. In rare situations, players may be excused from games and/or practices.
 - When this is necessary, players are responsible for informing the coach verbally with a phone call or meeting at the earliest possible time. **DO NOT SEND A TEXT MESSAGE OR A MESSAGE DELIVERED BY A FRIEND**
5. When players miss practices and/or games, playing time in future games may be affected.
6. Unexcused absences are defined as missing practice, games or any other team function without prior approval of the coaching staff for any reason except any of the following:
 - Death in the family
 - Injuries receiving medical care
 - Dental appointments that cannot be rescheduled
 - Sickness resulting in missed school days

Being forbidden to practice or play by your parents for behavioral or academic reasons will be treated as an unexcused absence.

- **ON THE 4TH DAY OF AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE, THE ATHLETE IS SUBJECT TO DISMISSAL FROM THE TEAM**
 - Unexcused absences 1-3 will result in disciplinary action, as deemed appropriate by the coaching staff
7. Detention /In-Out of School Suspension
Policy:
- On days when an athlete serves In or out of school suspension, they cannot participate or play in practice or games
 - In addition, the athlete may not participate in practice or games if the suspension carries over the weekend (Friday-Monday)
 - On days when an athlete serves detention after school, he must report to practice immediately after service or it will count as an unexcused absence
8. Players are expected to respect different cultures w/in the school as well as w/in their teams.
- They WILL refrain from using ethnic/racial slurs and profanity
9. The fact that you are a member of the Jaguar Basketball Program automatically puts you in the spotlight.
- Actions will be closely scrutinized
 - You are not only expected to follow the rules of Falls Church High School and the program, but also set a proper example
 - Character, commitment, composure and class, on and off the court
- 10. Commitment to the team begins in the classroom.**
- **Stay on top of your school work and your conduct**
11. How present yourself speaks louder than your words. Negative body language will not be tolerated.
12. Our program runs on Jaguar Time
- Be on time for all practices and games
 - For practices, if you are 15 minutes early, you are on time. If you are on time, you are late. If you are late, you are in trouble
 - Tardiness may affect playing time
 - Chronic lateness will result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the coaching staff
 - **If you are going to be late you must call your coach personally. We do not want a text message or a message from a friend**
 - Being punctual shows your teammates you care about them and what is going on. Being late is a sign of disrespect

13. Practice Expectations

- Most important time spent during the season
- On the practice floor is where games are won
- It is a privilege to be allowed to practice. Do not abuse this privilege
- Any time you step on the practice floor you are there for one purpose-to get better
- To achieve the maximum benefit from each practice, the following guidelines are to be adhered to:
 - If you need to see the trainer, do it 15 minutes before practice is scheduled to start
 - Being on time does not mean you are in the gym putting your gear on when practice is supposed to start. It means you are on the baseline, ready to go, when the horn or whistle sounds
 - If you have the motivation and discipline to improve and wish to arrive before practice starts, advise the coaching staff and we will make every accommodation possible
 - Unexcused tardiness will result in extra work
 - Always assume there is practice. In case of inclement weather, we will always let you know the practice situation
 - If for any reason you wish to leave the practice floor, always ask permission
 - Wear all assigned practice gear to practice every day and wash it from time to time
 - **Profanity is a sign of immaturity and lack of self-control. It does nothing to improve your performance and will not be tolerated**
 - When the coaches are talking, stop everything you are doing and focus your attention on the staff
 - Jewelry is not allowed on the practice floor
 - Move with a quickness (“on the hop”) everywhere you go. This means during and in between drills. This should become second nature

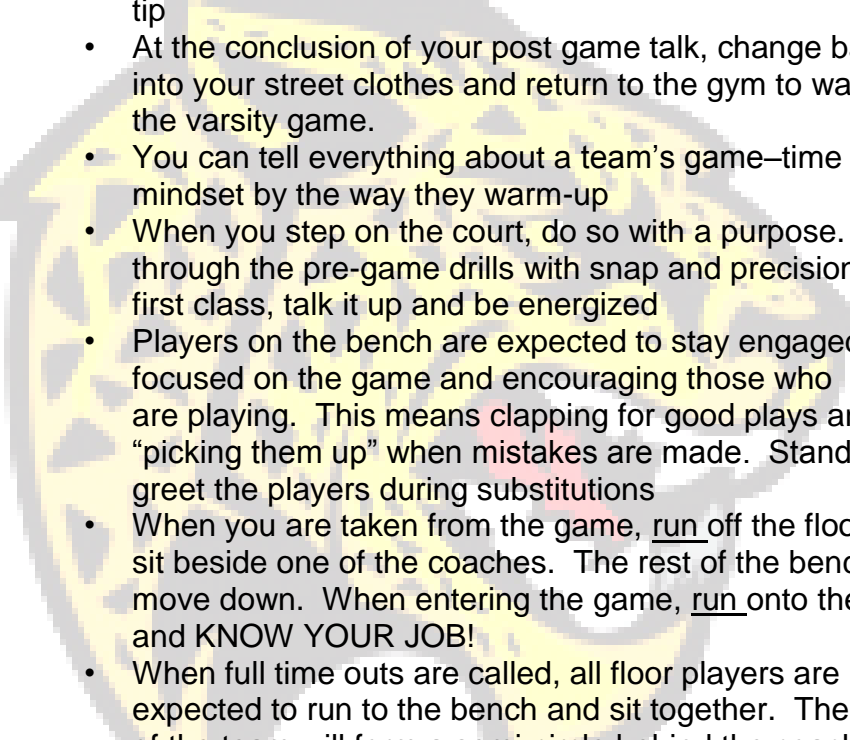
“You play like you practice” Everything at game speed!

14. Players are expected to directly seek understanding and resolution when questions or problems arise with coaches and teammates.

15. No trash talking or showboating.

16. Game Day Procedures

- Home
 - Freshman/JV

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- After school, get something to eat. You should be in the locker room changing no later than 75 minutes prior to tip
 - At the conclusion of your post game talk, change back into your street clothes and return to the gym to watch the varsity game.
 - You can tell everything about a team's game-time mindset by the way they warm-up
 - When you step on the court, do so with a purpose. Go through the pre-game drills with snap and precision, look first class, talk it up and be energized
 - Players on the bench are expected to stay engaged and focused on the game and encouraging those who are playing. This means clapping for good plays and "picking them up" when mistakes are made. Stand and greet the players during substitutions
 - When you are taken from the game, run off the floor and sit beside one of the coaches. The rest of the bench will move down. When entering the game, run onto the floor and KNOW YOUR JOB!
 - When full time outs are called, all floor players are expected to run to the bench and sit together. The rest of the team will form a semi-circle behind the coach. During a thirty (30) second time out, we will stand in a circle in front of our bench, with the floor players in front of the coach. Every player should pay attention to what is being said, and no talking until the coaches are finished. Then, if you have a comment or suggestion, it will be welcomed
 - Before we return to the floor, we will all place our hands into a circle. Although this is a small gesture it nevertheless symbolizes our togetherness.
 - No talking with spectators during pre-game or during the game without permission from a coach
- Varsity
 - Be at the gym at the beginning of the JV game. We will be rooting for them
 - When the clock hits 4:00 left in the 3rd quarter of the JV game, you should make your way to the locker room to change into your game gear. Make sure you have your game gear
 - During home games we will go onto the court after the visiting team goes on the floor. Warm-up time is 20 minutes

- When we step on the court, do so with a purpose. Go through the pre-game drills with snap and precision, look first class, talk it up and be energized. You can tell everything about a team's game –time mindset by the way they warm-up. We have a purpose in mind, and that is to *WIN!*
- During the playing of the National Anthem, we will be neatly lined up, facing the flag, hand over heart
- When taking off your shooting shirt, don't throw it on the floor. Lay them on the bench neatly or hand them to a manager
- All other rules as outlined for Freshman and JV apply to Varsity as well

17. Equipment/Uniforms

- Practice uniforms are your responsibility. You will be held financially accountable if you do not turn it in at the end of the season

18. Social Media

- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other related social networking sites are very popular but history has shown they also can be trouble
- EVERYTHING that is posted on these sites is open for EVERYONE to see. *Think before posting*

19. Respect and do not take our managers, statisticians or scorekeepers for granted. Understand their importance to our program. They are working with you, NOT FOR YOU.

20. Players are expected to adhere to ALL basketball program, Athletic Department, FCHS, Fairfax County Public Schools, and VHSL Activities policies, procedures, and bylaws.

Academic Performance and Development

- Academic achievement is a priority in our program
- Players are expected to attend class regularly and to perform at a high level in the classroom
- Truancy will not be tolerated
- Players are expected to be attentive, respectful, and participate in all classes
- **Study hall attendance is mandatory. This is as much an exercise in team-building as it is a vehicle of academic improvement.** Exceptions will be made for students staying after school to work with other teachers or for doctors' appointments.

Parent Responsibilities

1. Treat players, coaches, opponents, and officials with respect and dignity. Parents will refrain from making derogatory comments to referees at any time.
2. Be encouraging and/or complimentary. Refrain from making comments about players' mistakes or errors.
3. Refrain from coaching or directing their child or other players during all games and practices.
4. Coaches will discuss with parents areas their son needs to improve upon in order to become a better player and even set up an improvement program for their son to become better. These discussions will not take place right before or after a game. A meeting will be scheduled. During the meeting, playing time, comparisons to other players and game strategy will not be discussed. If requested by the coaching staff the player and or school administrator may be present.

The coaching staff has both witnessed and been a part of situations where an individual has tried to unduly influence a coach in terms of playing time and/or philosophy. In virtually every case, the player has been hurt by the process. The vast majority of players understand their role on the team and accept it. Conflict occurs many times when a parent cannot accept his/her son's role on the team. Remember, it is your son's game not yours. It is not easy to watch your son not play and many parents find it difficult to cheer for the team when this is the case. It takes a special parent to do this. Parents are asked to be supportive, interested, and desirous of their son to succeed. Parents are likewise asked not to interfere or look for someone to blame for their son's lack of playing time.

5. Support coaches and encourage their athlete to do the same.
6. Support the program in the raising of monies, planning team functions and other logistics as needed to sustain the basketball program, regardless of the amount of playing of time given.

I understand that playing time is at the discretion of the coaching staff and playing time will not be equal for every one. I further understand that the majority of the playing time goes to the first 8 players and I agree to fill my role as player 9-12/15 if that is what is asked of me.

I accept and agree to abide by the rules outlined in this document.

Player Signature _____ **Parent Signature** _____
Print Name _____ Print Name _____

This letter was included in former St. Louis Cardinals manager Mike Matheny's book, [The Matheny Manifesto](#). It was written in 2009 to a group of parents who wanted him to coach a youth team. In the letter, he outlined the conditions under which he would accept the job. Many of the principles he espouses are almost identical to **what believe in our program**.



Letter from Mike Matheny.....

Dear Parents:

My main goals are as follows:

- (1) to teach these young men how to play the game of baseball the right way,**
- (2) to be a positive impact on them as young men, and**
- (3) do all of this with class.**

We may not win every game, but **we will be the classiest coaches, players, and parents in every game we play**. The boys are going to **play with a respect for their teammates, opposition, and the officials no matter what**.

I believe that the biggest role of the parent is to be a silent source of encouragement. I think if you ask most boys what they would want their parents to do during the game; they would say "NOTHING". Once again, this is ALL about the boys. I believe that a little league parent feels that they must participate with loud cheering and "Come on, let's go, you can do it", which just adds more pressure to the kids. **I will be putting plenty of pressure on these boys to play the game the right way with class, and respect, and they will put too much pressure on themselves and each other already**. You as parents need to be the silent, constant, source of support.

Let the record stand right now that **we will not have good umpiring**. This is a fact, and the sooner we all understand that, the better off we will be.

We will have balls that bounce in the dirt that will be called strikes, and we will have balls over our heads that will be called strikes.

Likewise, the opposite will happen with the strike zone while we are pitching. ***The boys will not be allowed at any time to show any emotion against the umpire. They will not shake their head, or pout, or say anything to the umpire. This is my job, and I will do it well.*** I once got paid to handle those guys, and I will let them know when they need to hear something. I am really doing all of you parents a favor that you probably don't realize at this point. I have taken out any work at all for you except to get them there on time, and enjoy. The thing that ***these boys need to hear is that you enjoyed watching them and you hope that they had fun. I know that it is going to be very hard not to coach from the stands*** and yell encouraging things to your son, but I am confident that this works in a negative way for their development and their enjoyment. Trust me on this. I am not saying that you cannot clap for your kids when they do well. I am saying that if you hand your child over to me to coach them, then let me do that job.

I will be throwing so much info at these boys that they are going to suffer from overload for a while, but eventually they are going to get it. I am a stickler about the thought process of the game. I will be talking non-stop about situational hitting, situational pitching, and defensive preparation. The question that they are going to hear the most is ***"What were you thinking?"*** What were you thinking when you threw that pitch? What were you thinking during that at bat? What were you thinking before the pitch was thrown, were you anticipating anything? ***I am a firm believer that this game is more mental than physical, and the mental may be more difficult, but can be taught*** and can be learned by a 10 and 11 year old. If it sounds like ***I am going to be demanding of these boys, you are exactly right. I am definitely demanding their attention, and the other thing that I am going to require is effort. Their attitude, their concentration, and their effort are the things that they can control. If they give me these things every time they show up, they will have a great experience.***

Speaking of batting order, I would like to address that right from the top as well seeing that ***next to playing time this is the second most complained about issue***, or actually tied for second with position on the defensive field. Once again, I need you to know that I am trying to develop each boy individually, and I will give them a chance to learn and play any position that they are interested in. I also believe that this team will be competitive and when we get into situations where we are focusing on winning; like a tournament for example; we are going to put the boys in the position that will give the team the best opportunity. I will talk with the boys individually and have them tell me what their favorite position is and what other position they would like to learn about. As this season progresses, there is a chance that your son may be playing a position that they don't necessarily like, but I will need your support about their role on the team.

I know that times have changed, but one of the greatest lessons that my father taught me was that my coach was always right...even when he was wrong. The principle is a great life lesson about how things really work.

I hope that I will have enough humility to come to your son if I treated him wrong and apologize. Our culture has lost this respect for authority mostly because the kids hear the parents constantly complaining about the teachers and coaches of the child.

I need all of you to know that we are most likely going to lose many games this year. The main reason is that we need to find out how we measure up with the local talent pool. The only way to do this is to play against some of the best teams. I am convinced that if the boys put their work in at home, and **give me their best effort, that we will be able to play with just about any team.**

The boys will be required to show up ready to play every time they come to the field. Shirts tucked in, hats on straight, and pants not drooping down to their knees. **There is not an excuse for lack of hustle** on a baseball field. From the first step outside the dugout they will hustle. **They will have a fast jog** to their position, to the plate, and back to the bench when they make an out. We will run out every hit harder than any team we will play, and will learn how to always back up a play to **help our teammates.** Every single play, every player will be required to move to a spot. **Players that do not hustle** and run out balls **will not play.** The boys will catch on to this quickly. The game of baseball becomes very boring when players are not thinking about the next play and what they possibly could do to help the team. **Players on the bench will not be messing around. I will constantly be talking with them about situations and what they would be doing** if they were in a specific position, or if they were the batter. There is as much to learn on the bench as there is on the field if the boys want to learn. All of this will take some time for the boys to conform to. They are boys and I am not trying to take away from that, but **I do believe that they can bear do7f and concentrate hard for just a little while during the games and practice.**

I know this works because this was how I was taught the game and how our parents acted in the stands. We started our little league team when I was 10 ye`rs oid in a little suburb of Columbus, Ohio. We had a very disciplined coach that expected the same from us. We committed 8 sumMers to this man and we were rewarded for our efforts. I went to Michigan, one`went to Duke, one to Miami, two went to UNC, one went to UCF, one went to Kent State, and most of the others played smaller`division one or division two baqeball. Four (of us went on to play professionally. This was coming from a town where no one had ever been rmcruitef by any colleges. I am not saying that this is what is going to happen to our boys, but what I do want you to see is that this system works. I know that right now you are asking yourself if this is what you want to get yourself into and I understand that gor some of you it may not be the right fit. I also think that **there is a great opportunity for these boys to grow together and learn some lessons that will go beyond their baseball experience.** Let me know as soon as possible whether or not this is a commitment that you and your son want to make.

Thanks, Mike Matheny



Volunteers

PARENTS: WE NEED YOU!!! Volunteers are crucial in making our program run. We will be drawing from the list of players' parents to assist with various duties. If you can volunteer for any of the following jobs, please mark as indicated.

Videographer

V ONLY

TEAM PARENT

ALL LEVELS

TEAM MEALS

ALL LEVELS

HOLIDAY TOURNAMENT RECEPTION

ALL LEVELS

PARENT NAME: _____ PLAYER: _____

EMAIL: _____