

Junior High Girls Basketball

Parent & Player Information | Grades 6–8

Dear Parents and Players,

I am excited to get our junior high girls basketball season started! I am looking forward to working with this group and seeing how much we can grow throughout the season.

My goal is to create a competitive and positive environment where the girls are challenged to improve, work hard, support one another, and learn how to be great teammates. I want basketball to be fun, but I also want our girls to understand that being part of a team comes with expectations and responsibilities.

6TH–8TH GRADE TEAM

Our junior high program will include 6th, 7th, and 8th grade athletes.

Sixth graders will have opportunities to practice and compete alongside our 7th and 8th graders. Bringing younger athletes up gives them an opportunity to develop their skills while also helping us create more competitive practices for everyone.

Grade level alone will not determine who plays. A player will not automatically receive more or less playing time simply because she is in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade.

The coaching staff will make decisions based on effort, ability, improvement, attitude, attendance, what we see at practice, and what gives our team the best opportunity to compete.

Our first practice is Monday, October 5th. The JHGBB team will practice at the same location as the HS volleyball team. For our first week, practices will be Lambert, and then rotate to Richey, alternating weeks after that. Please be sure athletes have a physical or a MHSA Interim Medical Form on file or with them at the first practice. They will need practice clothes (shorts, tshirt, socks), clean gym shoes, and a water bottle. They will also need appropriate clothes for bus travel and cold weather.

PLAYING TIME

I want to be very clear from the beginning that equal playing time is not guaranteed.

Playing time is something that will be earned at practice.

We will consider effort, attitude, coachability, attendance, improvement, knowledge of our offense and defense, basketball skills, and how each athlete contributes to the team.

You do not have to be the most talented player on the team to earn opportunities. A girl who comes to practice every day, works hard, listens, encourages her teammates, and genuinely wants to improve will be noticed.

Some games will give us more opportunities to get everyone on the floor than others. In close or competitive games, we may use a shorter rotation and play the athletes we believe give us the best opportunity in that situation.

Because of this, playing time may look very different from one game to another.

PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

Practice is extremely important. It is where we learn our offense and defense, improve individual skills, prepare for opponents, and determine rotations.

Players are expected to:

- Come ready to work.
- Listen when coaches are speaking.
- Participate and give effort during drills.
- Encourage their teammates.
- Accept coaching and corrections.
- Have a positive attitude.
- Take practices seriously.
- Be respectful to coaches and teammates.

Standing around, consistently messing around, complaining, refusing to participate, or showing poor effort will affect playing time.

Mistakes are completely okay! We expect mistakes while the girls are learning. What matters is how they respond to them.

ATTENDANCE

Players are expected to attend practices and games unless they have a legitimate reason for being absent.

If your athlete will miss practice or a game, please communicate with the coaching staff as soon as possible.

We understand that sickness, medical appointments, family emergencies, school activities, and other unavoidable situations happen.

However, unnecessary absences may affect playing time. When a player misses practice, she may also miss learning plays, defensive assignments, rotations, or other important game preparation.

TEAM BEHAVIOR

We expect our athletes to represent our school and basketball program well.

Respect toward teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, and fans is expected at all times.

Bullying, intentionally excluding teammates, disrespectful behavior, poor sportsmanship, or putting another player down will not be tolerated.

We are one team. Whether a player is on the court, on the bench, or waiting for her opportunity, we expect her to support her teammates.

GAME DAYS

Players are expected to arrive on time and prepared for games.

Once we enter the gym, our focus needs to be on basketball and supporting our teammates. Players are expected to listen during timeouts, remain engaged while on the bench, and be ready when their number is called.

Poor behavior on the bench or during a game can also affect playing time.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

I completely understand that every parent wants the best for their daughter, and I respect that. As coaches, we also want every girl in our program to have a positive experience and improve throughout the season.

If you have a concern, please communicate directly with the coaching staff rather than discussing concerns with other parents or players.

I am always willing to have a respectful conversation.

However, please understand that decisions regarding playing time, starting lineups, substitutions, positions, rotations, and game strategy are coaching decisions.

I also ask that playing-time concerns are not addressed immediately before, during, or directly after a game. Emotions can be high during competition, and those conversations are much more productive after everyone has had time to process the game.

If your daughter has a question about her playing time, I encourage her to talk to me first. Learning how to respectfully ask, "What can I work on to earn more playing time?" is an important part of being an athlete.

OUR GOAL

At the end of the season, I want these girls to be able to look back and see how much they improved.

We are going to work hard. We are going to compete. We are going to make mistakes. We are going to learn from them. And we are going to support each other throughout the process.

I am excited about this group and cannot wait to get started!

Thank you for supporting our athletes, coaches, and basketball program!

Coach Mackenzie Lien
Junior High Girls Basketball