

**FIREHEART BASKETBALL  
SCHOOL  
HANDBOOK**

### **What is FireHeart Basketball School?**

FireHeart Basketball School is an on-going not-for-profit “school” to teach youth about life through basketball and to teach basketball skills to young players. The primary operating facet of FireHeart will be our ongoing basketball skills instruction and competition club basketball team. We aim to make better players, students, people, and citizens through the game of basketball. FireHeart is not just a place to learn how to become a better basketball player- it is a school designed to use basketball as a vehicle to teach about life. With FireHeart, basketball serves as a microcosm for life. Above all else, basketball will be used to teach about character. This will be evident in our teams’ social service programs and academic readiness programs. Players who sign up to become a part of FireHeart can expect to take part in service learning projects and “field trips” in conjunction with their basketball skills development. Eventually, FireHeart aims to establish scholarships for FireHeart players to attend colleges and universities that they apply for and are accepted to. Monthly dues to the school will go to pay for our operating costs and fees for privileges and services incurred by the club. Once enough capital is established, we aim to dedicate a significant portion of our income to social service learning opportunities and charitable causes.

Players who are enrolled in the school are automatically placed on the Arizona FireHearts Basketball Team- a competitive skill building club basketball team for all ages. Basketball will serve as a “fun” microcosm for the lessons that can be learned throughout life. Reward through hard work, earning achievement, teamwork, hustle, fair play, overcoming adversity, never giving up, cooperation, and learning “grit” are all themes that will very much be present on a daily basis at practice and in games. Additionally, from a basketball and athletic standpoint, players will be taught to be competitive but learn to keep competition within themselves- learning how to always aspire to get better, regardless of the score on the scoreboard or the ability of another player. Everyone most certainly will NOT get a trophy... But everyone will learn, have fun, and become a better person, student, and basketball player... IF they work hard. While prior experience, natural athletic ability, and physical gifts certainly can help a player; those attributes are not necessary to be successful. All that is required is a desire to learn the game, improve, and have “fire” in one’s “heart” for the game of basketball and competitive greatness in life. FireHeart Basketball School is indeed a SCHOOL. Participants come to learn within the context of basketball. The subjects are basketball, character building, and physical fitness. Every practice will continually teach individual and team

basketball skills that can be applied in games and character-building life skills that can be applied in life.

### **What is the Arizona FireHeart Club Basketball Team?**

The Arizona FireHearts Basketball Team is a club team that has only FireHeart Basketball student-athletes participating. FireHeart Basketball School will prepare students for competition as a member of our basketball club team. Club team competition will be optional and players wishing to participate need to only let the coaching staff know that they wish to do so. At that point, the coaching staff will identify local leagues and tournaments that we can participate in. The fee for participating in these leagues and tournaments will vary depending upon the cost each organization charges us to participate. This will be optional and "pay as you play" in nature. FireHeart will not charge a handling fee for registering participants in leagues and tournaments. Only the actual cost of the league/tournament will be passed on to players and their families. Students do not have to participate on the club team and play in leagues/tournaments in order to enroll in the basketball school. We do ask that anyone wanting to participate on the club team be enrolled in the basketball school... This will help us practice together as a team and be prepared for competition.

### **FireHeart Basketball Quick Facts**

\*We are the only club program in Southern Arizona (and one of only three in the entire state) certified/licensed by USA Basketball (this is the same USA Basketball organization that you see play in the olympics and in other national and international competitions with elite level players. The men's national team has been coached by Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski and is managed by former Phoenix Suns owner Jerry Colangelo). The biggest way we are connected to USA basketball is through the curriculum we use to instruct and the resources we can use to coach. Being affiliated with USA Basketball will provide our program with resources that other clubs and youth sports organizations do not have access to. Many of these resources will be able to be accessed by you and your children at home via website.

\*The basketball school, club team, and coaches are fully insured. Furthermore, all participants are required to show proof of personal medical insurance. (Many club teams and coaches do not carry insurance).

\*We focus on developing players, not just finding talented kids and rolling out the ball for them. Our goal is to teach and build talent over time- not to merely find the already talented players and use them to win games. Furthermore, we want to inspire our kids to enjoy and appreciate the game of basketball as they grow and want to keep playing.

\*The head coach and founder of the school, Christopher R. Jackson, has two master's degrees in education and has been a school teacher/coach/administrator for almost 20 years in pre-k, kinder, 1st-12th grades, and college.

\*We will only use state-of-the-art equipment, gear, and facilities. Proper use of equipment will be embedded in instruction.

\*Character, heart, self-control, sportsmanship, listening & learning skills, and a desire to always get better will be stressed above all else... Of course, this will be taught through FUN activity.

\*Instruction will ALWAYS be done with a coach's mindset and a parent's heart, because that is who the head coach and founder of FireHeart is- a parent and a coach. We understand the importance of being both and how they compliment one another.

### **About Head Coach and Founder, Christopher R. Jackson**

Chris Jackson grew up playing all sports, his favorites being baseball and basketball. Jackson coached his first organized basketball team when he was 17 years old. As a college student, Jackson studied education at the University of Arizona, where he also earned an opportunity to serve as an undergraduate assistant within the Athletic Department. Jackson worked with the athletic directors and head coaches, specifically serving alumni, academics, marketing, and men's basketball. Later, Jackson became a graduate assistant where he worked even more closely with Arizona Athletic personnel. During this time, Jackson helped aid the Arizona Men's Basketball staff with game day statistics and real-time game analysis. Jackson also served as a head coach at the Lute Olson Basketball camps for several years. It was during this time that Jackson also served as a head coach at Mike Krzyzewski's Duke Basketball Camp, the Five-Star Elite Camp, and other university/college sponsored youth camps around the country.

Jackson graduated from the University of Arizona with a degree in education and a master's degree in literacy.

Jackson has served as a pre-school, middle school, and high school teacher of history, economics, government, english, and english for non-native speakers. Jackson has also coached boys and girls basketball at the middle and high school levels, having been both an assistant and head coach on championship winning teams. Jackson served as a high school varsity basketball coach at two high schools and briefly served a stint as a junior college assistant coach. Additionally, Jackson has served as a high school athletic director and has started an entire high school athletic program from the ground up before.

Jackson now holds a bachelor's degree in education and two master's degrees in education, including Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University. Jackson earned his degree in Educational Leadership with "distinction" (4.0 GPA). Jackson pursued a career in educational administration where he has been an administrator at three schools over the course of 10 years. After having been a high school assistant principal and principal, Jackson became a middle school assistant principal and principal, and currently he serves as an elementary school principal.

Jackson has remained in touch with the game of basketball throughout his time as administrator and maintains close relationships with some of basketball's best teachers, coaches, and personalities in high school, college, and the pros. Some of Jackson's former players have gone on to earn athletic scholarships and earn opportunities to play professionally in the United States and overseas. Many of Jackson's former players and students also have gone on using the lessons they were taught on the basketball court to succeed in non-athletic careers helping others.

Jackson is married to wife, Elisa, and has two young sons, Jaedan and Jace. The Jackson family resides in Sahuarita, AZ where they are always looking for fun, healthy, and meaningful ways to spend time together and live life to the fullest. Fire-Heart is the most recent way in which they look to do so!

**FireHeart Mascot, Colors, Home Facilities, and Uniform Details**

Everything we do at FireHeart is done with purpose and detail. Details help keep one focused on success. Our name, our colors, and our gear is all carefully selected for specific reasons...

## **MASCOT**

FireHeart- We are the only team/youth organization we know of in the WORLD that uses the name "FireHeart." We know this because we copyrighted it and invented the name. To be a successful part of FireHeart, it takes a special set of personality traits. First and foremost we want student-athletes to have "Fire" in their hearts and souls as they pursue their basketball and life goals. Complimenting the "Fire" we want our students to have inside of themselves, we want them to also demonstrate their "Heart" by never giving up, demonstrating outstanding character, and doing what is right rather than what might be popular. In all cases, we want student-athletes that are willing to work harder than anyone else to accomplish their goals. Someone who does this is a new breed of champion in the making in our minds... This person is a "FireHeart." Students should wear that name with pride and a sense of honor because they know they hold themselves to a higher standard. Simply put, the definition of FireHeart is simple yet powerful...

*FireHeart (definition)*- Someone who lets the fire deep down in their soul drive their heart to push them towards unrelenting success. Fire and Heart are the two elements that cannot be measured or contained and are necessary for anything that is truly great to be accomplished in this world.

## **COLORS**

FireHeart Basketball uses more colors than most teams or organizations for very specific reasons.

**PRIMARY COLORS:** *FireHeart Red, Anthracite*

**ACCENT COLORS:** *Black, White*

**"FireHeart" Red-** This is not just any shade of red- this is "FireHeart Red." The dominant color of our organization is "FireHeart Red" in order to signify the intensity of passion we have for basketball and life. Red is a color of passion and only passionate people transcend life.

**Anthracite-** Will be used as another primary color to "balance" the intensity of FireHeart Red that we use. Anthracite is used to remind ourselves of the importance to remain

calm, cool, and collected when under pressure in order to perform at our peak levels. Also, in the physical world, anthracite is the purest burning of all coals to “fuel” our heart’s passions. Anthracite has a shine to it, like our skills in basketball and life. Anthracite has the fewest impurities of all burnable materials and is known to be the finest of coal-like and other burning materials. This quality of substance is fuel for our hearts’ desires on and off the court!

Black- Used to accent the “FireHeart Red” with a reminder to everyone that whoever stands in the path of our intensity and passion will be “scorched” if they get in our way.

White- Used to remind everyone that we must remain “pure” in our intent to improve, work together as a team, be humble, and uphold the integrity of the game of basketball, sports, academics, and life.

### **BASE OF OPERATIONS**

Founded in 2017 in Sahuarita, AZ. Serving the greater metropolitan areas of Tucson and all of Southern Arizona. For middle and high school participants, FireHeart membership is open to neighboring cities and states as well (including Greater Phoenix metro area, Southern California, and Western New Mexico).

### **PRACTICE FACILITIES**

\*FireHeart Basketball will use the facilities of Sahuarita Unified School District and Sahuarita/Green Valley Parks and Recreation.

# **FIREHEART BASKETBALL CORE PRINCIPLES**

## **I. "FIRE" & "HEART"**

All aspects of the club must be clearly actioned through evident displays of heart, fire, passion, desire, and hard work.

## **II. HISTORY & EDUCATION**

Many young players in today's game are sorely lacking the proper context for the game they play. Hopefully, players have heard of Michael Jordan- but do they know he is more than expensive shoes and apparel? Do they know why Michael Jordan was great and what it took for him to become that way? Furthermore, do today's young people know about all of the other great players and coaches that have created the game we love today? Many of today's players may not have ever heard names such as Wooden, West, Cousy, Mikan, Robertson, Russell, Bird, Johnson, Stockton, Iverson, Nash, Kareem, Pete Carill, Dean Smith, or Naismith, and others. Do they know about all of the great UCLA teams? The '79 NCAA Championship? The '88 Arizona Wildcats? International hoops? What made Duke the power it is today? The culture of Indiana basketball? Players need to be taught fundamentals but they need to gain a context for the game, such as how rules have evolved and why. We are missing out on so many intangible gifts from the game of basketball if we only focus on winning and losing games, the marketing, and the hype. The people who are responsible for creating, evolving, and revolutionizing the game we love need to be acknowledged, remembered, and learned from as we grow as players, coaches, and spectators. If we are students of the game we will learn, grow, and become better from the history that has made basketball what it is today... Furthermore, we are collectively responsible for what it will be in the future so we better learn from history. FireHeart Basketball will weave the history and culture of the game into everything we do.

## **III. REVOLUTIONIZING CLUB BASKETBALL**

Club basketball is ripe for evolution. It is ready for something to truly transcend it. FireHeart Basketball aims to humbly begin to take on that endeavor. Our club program is unlike many others in that it is a true "program" that strives for consistency in everything we do. We want to help high school, middle school, and elementary school coaches rather than threaten what they are doing within their school programs. FireHeart Basketball strives for basketball, educational, and social growth simultaneously. We do not want our program to merely be a "basketball showcase." Rather, we are a teaching

*school* that looks for students of the game that are good and could be great through hard work, commitment, and dedication. We will “showcase” our players’ talents when it can benefit them to do so, but there is a lot of hard work and preparation that leads up to that. For this reason, we structure our program within a framework of developmental teams that prepare the most advanced players for “elite” teams. Naturally, our “elite” teams will travel to and participate in showcase events and tournaments (middle and high school teams only). Our developmental teams (which will also include elite participants) will participate in local tournaments, leagues, and camps in order to develop their skills. Our developmental teams will help in establishing a presence throughout the community and attract kids and their parents into the program through demonstration of what we do. This process will enable us to help as many kids as we can to achieve their goals. By operating this way, we will avoid the exclusion of kids or the souring of our reputation by serving while maintaining elite competitiveness. The truth is that there are a few really good high school basketball programs for the right reasons. The truth is there are also a few really good club basketball programs for the right reasons. There are A LOT of mediocre and downright bad high school and club programs. Many of these so-called “programs” actually damage young people’s psyches, emotions, and futures in athletics. FireHeart aims to heal such behavior in youth sports. It is possible to be competitive and positive at the same time- in fact, they go hand-in-hand. The game of basketball and the players/coaches playing it deserve better. Therefore, one of the biggest driving forces behind the conception of FireHeart Basketball is creating a revolutionary program to include all of the things sorely lacking in most basketball programs (high school and club alike). Furthermore, FireHeart Basketball wants to bridge the gap and mend the disconnect between high school and club basketball programs. It is disappointing to see players learn one thing within a high school basketball program only to be allowed to “unlearn” it and get away with committing bad habits in a club program. This detracts from what high school coaches are working so hard on with their teams during their seasons. We are also disappointed to see players’ belief in their abilities become artificially inflated after gaining a false sense of their skills and abilities due to unearned praise from inconsistent club experiences. Make no mistake about it- there are club programs that benefit their players and the high school teams they play for- but we believe we can be a program that transcends the club experience. We have a staff of coaches and advisors that truly know the game of basketball and the players involved. We have current and former high school, college, and professional personnel (including USA Basketball) from various levels guiding our playbook, activities, procedures, and

protocols. We also utilize our team of FireHeart advisory board members to educate and inform our players and families about what it takes to play at the “next” level while still making a difference and getting the most out of the level they are currently playing at. Best of all, we look to teach our players how to play basketball in a way that can be adaptable to ANY system or framework that they may play in beyond ours. We do not want to merely teach our players a singular system that only benefits what we will do within our organization. We want to prepare and teach our players how to play the game of basketball no matter where they are- with their high school team, in a pick-up game, or at the next level. Too often we have seen players that have been so conditioned for a particular type of system that they cannot adapt to new systems and coaching styles. We want to empower our players to be the consummate player who can play with anyone, anywhere. We also aim to eliminate the frustration of high school coaches who become frustrated over their players not growing or digressing when not practicing with their high school teams. For this reason, we welcome input from high school coaches as to what they would like to see their players receive work and instruction upon- this is why every FireHeart player is required to collect a “high school coach’s survey” every year (for high school players only). We understand that it is not just our responsibility to prepare our players for our games- but also for all of their high school (and hopefully, college) games they will be playing when we are not coaching them.

#### IV. INDIVIDUAL FUNDAMENTALS

We must continually maintain a focus upon “team” play. However, our team will not function properly if we do not focus upon what we can do as individuals. We must consistently and properly push ourselves to refine our strengths and improve our weaknesses in ways that will benefit our teams every time we play. Participants will learn how to play the game of basketball- not just a specific system. Through participating in our program, players will be able to apply what they have learned to any team, any place, any time. This is because the FireHeart offense and defense is based in basic fundamentals that can be applied to any other offensive or defensive system. We teach good basketball behaviors and skills rather than specific “plays.”

#### V. TEAM FUNDAMENTALS

We must continually focus on the things that will make us successful as a team- spacing, tempo, team defense, team offense, conditioning, communication, and brother/ sister-hood.

## VI. SIMPLICITY

One of the reasons many players of the game don't understand the game is because they have not been taught the proper mental, spacial, and procedural framework- both cognitively and physically. Basketball is a very spontaneous and seemingly erratic game. However, STUDENTS of the game must be taught the why and when of how to do things on the basketball court. Basketball must be learned in a simple straight-for- ward, thorough introduction and then built upon thereafter. Doing a *few* things extremely well will always prove much more successful than doing *many* different things marginal- ly well. We do not believe in making players learn countless set plays, out of bounds plays, and numerous "trick" and "junk" plays. We will run simple defense, offense, and a few "extras" that will be introduced, practiced, and refined in detail. Our "elite" level teams that can handle more complicated offense & defense will be exposed to it. How- ever, the "little nuanced things" are what make all the difference in successful basket- ball. We will spend enough time covering tiny details of basic things- we cannot misdi- rect our energy trying to do too much. This will improve consistency and confidence of successful play. Furthermore, all of our teams at all of our levels will run the same sys- tem in order to account for consistency as students move through our program. Also, what students learn within our program can be applied to ANY other team or coach's system of play.

## VII. LIFE EDUCATION

We believe basketball is the greatest (and most fun) method we know to teach and learn about life. How we respond to events that transpire on the court reveals to everyone (including ourselves) who we are as people and it will help us in handling life's daily moments- for better or for worse. Through FireHeart Basketball, the game of bas- ketball serves as a microcosm for life learning.

## VIII. CHARACTER EDUCATION

FireHeart Basketball focuses upon Respect, Responsibility, and Accountability (RRA). We wish to instill in every player we work with the values of Respect, Responsi- bility, and Accountability. We want to use the game of basketball to help our student-ath-

letes connect to the game of life with success. Therefore, it is important we instill in our players the ability to be respectful of themselves and others by making good decisions on and off the basketball court. We expect our players to be at practices and games on time, dress appropriately, speak appropriately, and act appropriately- all of us will be expected to be responsible. We encourage and support our student-athletes as they grow from their mistakes- that is what accountability means. Accountability is not something to be ashamed of... Accountability is something to embrace, harness, and use as a tool for growth and improvement. "RRA" is crucial to everything we do within FireHeart Basketball. We subscribe to the principles embedded within "The 6 Pillars of Character," "Pursuing Victory With Honor," and John Wooden's "Pyramid of Success" positive behavior supports. RRA defines who we are as sportsmen, competitors, and people.

#### IX. WORLD CHANGE (SERVICE LEARNING)

The very reason FireHeart Basketball exists is to make things related to basketball and beyond better for it's participants. All participants will realize that what they learn through basketball with FireHeart will improve their own lives, as well as the lives of those around them. For this reason, we will plan for, implement, and execute team service functions for players to take part in. The focus of these team service functions are for players to gain perspective, experience, and make sense of the world around them. Furthermore, the goal of FireHeart basketball is ultimately not to only demonstrate our heart on the basketball court but to help players understand their abilities to positively impact the world they live in. The "World Change" component of FireHeart Basketball will be realized through the multiple "team activities" participants will experience (older players will be expected to participate in more community service activities).

#### X. NATIONAL & LOCAL EXPOSURE THROUGH TEACHING & LEARNING

FireHeart Basketball participants will be grouped into age and skill appropriate levels to learn, improve, and showcase their talents. For Middle and High School Aged participants, there will be "Elite" level teams created that focus extra on exposure and competition in the most competitive tournaments, but still using the FireHeart fundamentals and values as their foundation for doing so. FireHeart Basketball participants will be humble, however we will take pride in our accomplishments to the point where we want others to know about them. We want others to know of our accomplishments only so we can impact positive change by influencing those around us with what we have discovered on our own. Our philosophy is that we want to positively inspire others by who we

are and how we play. At the very least, FireHeart Basketball aims to build future leaders. It is because of this philosophy that we will proactively advocate for all of our players to have an opportunity to earn a chance to play basketball at whatever level they set their sights on- be it middle school, high school, college, or even the professional ranks. We will help our players own a realistic understanding of their skill sets and learn what they must do to improve to a level of competitiveness they choose. We cannot guarantee that every player who works with us will be successful at their chosen level. However, we can guarantee that we will do all we can to help each player improve and have a chance to show others what they can do. Most importantly, as players set their sights on basketball-related goals, they will learn and acquire skills to help them in life. With that philosophy, no one can lose, regardless of what scoreboards will say at the end of individual games. We have a staff of coaches and advisors who are connected to some of the best basketball people in the country- those basketball people will help players be noticed, recognized, and rewarded if they truly have the ability to compete at the “next” level. We firmly believe that the most talented players will eventually rise to the top. No recruiting or scouting service can make a player better. However, we will focus upon the tournaments and establish the contacts necessary to put players in situations where they will be able to showcase what they can do on a basketball court to all who see them play.

## XI. CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS FOR LIFE

Most people who have participated in athletics for an extended period of time will agree that the relationships they have developed through sport have paid dividends that reach far beyond the playing fields and courts... Recommendations for college, job interviews, partnerships in business, and many other contacts all spring out of sport because it is one of the most personal testaments to one’s work ethic and character. Because we know this to be true, we have consciously included leaders in education, business, and the community to serve on our advisory board and to become involved in our program. We don’t just want to set our students up for success on the basketball court- we wish to set them up with a network of people supporting them throughout life.

## XII. PHYSICAL CONDITIONING

FireHeart Basketball knows that the most consistent teams are the best conditioned teams. The very essence of “heart” means to go the distance in all that you choose to do. That is not easy when things get challenging. We WILL be the best condi-

tioned team to take the floor every game- this means that we will work EXTREMELY hard on conditioning. This means a strenuous running, jumping, and quickness training program that will push every player further than they've ever been pushed before. Practice is where we will do our work. More than anything else, conditioning will reveal who has the most "Fire" and "Heart" as a player. FireHeart students understand that we will not be able to execute anything well unless we work on our physical fitness of the body, mind, and heart.

### XIII. AMBASSADORS FOR SPORT

As an organization, we will perpetuate everything that is good about the game of basketball and athletics... We will do this first and foremost by how we carry ourselves on and off the basketball court. We will earn a positive reputation for excellence in everything we do. When people hear the word "FireHeart" they should automatically think "elite, earned, educated, integrity, character, and work ethic." In the athletic world we want the word "FireHeart" to evoke the kind of feeling one gets when they hear "Navy Seal," "Marine," "Army Ranger," "Fortune 500," "Honor Roll," or "Valedictorian." There will be an earned status attached to it... Not everyone will be able to be a FireHeart... Only those with hearts of fire can earn the honor. Members of FireHeart basketball will be exposed to and take part in public service causes, special service learning activities, and more to support and compliment everything that is good about basketball, sports, fitness, health, life, and more.

## **FIREHEART A-Z's**

### **Advisory Board**

FireHeart coaches have relationships and friendships with coaches, players, leaders, and professionals all over the country. Not only do we have relationships with some of the best athletic personalities one can find, we maintain relationships with lawyers, accountants, teachers, physicians, trainers, school administrators, professors, military personnel, law enforcement, entrepreneurs, business men and women, public leaders, and more. We share what we are doing with all of these leaders so that they can offer us support, guidance, mentoring, and a pathway for our students to learn beyond basketball and sports.

### **Calendar**

All practices and games will be communicated as far in advance as possible. There will be a monthly schedule of events (practices, games, other events) distributed at the end of the current month for the upcoming month. FireHeart Basketball School calendar will

follow the Sahuarita Unified School District Calendar and will observe most school holidays and breaks. The two weeks during holiday break and portions of the summer we will not be in session. Tuition rates will remain the same and practice dates and times may be adjusted to provide at least 4 practices a month, or the equivalent in minutes.

### **Character Reports**

All student athlete participants will be required to submit a weekly character report completed by their teacher and parents. This is done to keep students focused on the connection between what they are learning on the court and how their schooling and home life are all interconnected upon the character values being learned at FireHeart Basketball School.

### **Equipment**

Balls, gear, and other equipment must be treated with care and returned in the same condition it was in when loaned. This also applies to indoor only basketballs that are checked out to students for the school year. Those balls must not be used outdoors or on damaging surfaces at all.

### **Dismissal From the Program**

While we do not plan for any student to leave our program once they join, and while we will always do all that we can to work with a young person; if a student/player fails to meet the character expectations of FireHeart basketball school, they will be dismissed from the program.

### **Electronic Communication: Email & Text**

It is expected that parents and players check their email and text messages regularly in order to receive communication and updates about anything related to FireHeart Basketball. Please make sure that all contact information is up-to-date and on file with us.

### **Emergency Contact Forms**

All student-athletes participating with FireHeart must have on file current emergency information and current emergency contact information in the event of an emergency situation. All portions of the form must be completed.

### **Games**

The coaching staff of FireHeart Basketball will identify developmentally appropriate leagues and tournaments throughout the year for players and teams to take part in. Ideally, when one league ends, we will enter another one as soon as we can so that players are always being provided with opportunities to apply what they have learned in practice and to experience real game situations. At times, there may be a few weeks in between leagues taking place, however, practices will continue and scrimmaging within the team will continue in order to keep kids growing and learning. Each league and tournament we enter will carry with it a team or individual player registration fee. These will vary based on league and will be collected at the time of sign-up. Tuition covers the on-going basketball school practice sessions only and not league and tournament fees.

### **Payment, Tuition, & Registration Fee**

Tuition for students is \$45 per month (for Primary and Secondary levels) and \$55 per month (for Middle and High School levels). The middle and high school levels receive extra instructional time each session. There will be one class/practice per week during a regular week. Families can pay monthly and can stop at any time and pick up again if they are unable to participate in a certain month. However, spots are very limited and cannot be reserved. Tuition for FireHeart Basketball School is due on or before the last day of each month for the upcoming month. If payment is not received by the end of the day on the last day of each month for the following month; the student-athlete associated with that account will not be permitted to participate until all accounts have been balanced with payment. ***Late payments will incur a \$15 late payment fee.*** Forms of payment can be personal check, cashier's check, wire transfer, or money order. All checks made payable to: FireHeart Basketball, Inc.

Leagues, tournaments, and games will only be offered to members of our club teams if we have enough students/players to field a team in a respective age division. These are opportunities are "in addition to" the regular basketball school. Payment for leagues, tournaments, and games will vary based on each event's registration fees. When leagues, tournaments, and games are announced; parents will be communicated with about the cost and details. Side fees will be collected at that time for those students/parents wishing to participate. Some leagues and tournaments will also provide an additional t-shirt specific to the league or tournament in which we play.

The registration fee is an annual fee of \$185 assessed at the time of sign-up and at the beginning of each season (typically September-May). The registration fees cover insurance, use of facilities, equipment, filing of documents, licensing, and other incidentals. Additional equipment and team apparel/fan gear can be purchased if desired or when players grow out of their initial gear.

\*For families with immediate family members (siblings) enrolling of 3 or more, a maximum of two annual fees (\$370) will be assessed. Players joining after January will be assessed a prorated annual fee based on the months remaining in the instructional season.

### **Philosophy & Curriculum of FireHeart Basketball (X's & O's)**

All coaching and instruction with FireHeart focuses on teaching life lessons through the game of basketball and teaching basketball skills that can be applied on any team. Specifically, we teach players to "think" the game of basketball as they are shown how to read offenses and defenses, learn basic concepts of court balance and spacing, and acquire strong defensive fundamentals. We do not use "trick plays" or "isolated plays" for specific players at the early levels. Some advanced special play situations will be taught to the older levels with the elite competitive teams only- however, that will be within the context of team play and FireHeart fundamentals. Our goals include teaching young athletes good basketball behaviors and positive "habits" that they can later adapt anywhere they play. Beyond the X's and O's of the game, we observe John Wooden's

Pyramid of Success and have been greatly influenced by the basketball instruction of Mike Krzyzewski, Dean Smith, Lute Olson, and Phil Jackson.

### **Playing Time**

For younger players (1st-3rd grade) playing time will be equally distributed to allow for each player to become comfortable in knowing they will get equal time every game to apply what they have learned. As players mature in age (4th grade and up), playing time will be distributed based on performance and work ethic in practice and games.

For all ages, while playing time may not be equal for all players, all players WILL play each and every game. ALL players will receive equal attention and opportunities to practice at each and every single school practice session. There will never be a game for any age group where a player does not play. FireHeart Basketball believes that the team is strongest when all players have an opportunity to contribute. This is also why spots are limited- to ensure each and every player receive the developmental attention to become successful.

For all ages, the only time a player may not be allowed to play in a game or practice is if they fail to meet the character requirements of FireHeart Basketball. This will be determined and upheld by the coaching staff. Simply put, bad attitude = no play. In the rare event that a student demonstrates behavior that is unbecoming of a "FireHeart," that student and his parents will meet with the head coach to discuss a plan of action to correct behavior. If after implementing a behavior plan, the student does not show signs of improvement, then the student and his/her parents will be refunded the balance (prorated sum) of the current month's tuition only and dismissed from the school.

### **Practice**

Practices will last approximately 1-1.5hrs with optional "extra" workouts available after practice for players who wish to attend. Practices will take place at Anza Trail School Gymnasium in Rancho Sahuarita and at Madera Highlands Park outdoor court, unless otherwise communicated. In the event that practices are cancelled or postponed due to school and holiday breaks, they will be rescheduled or the time will be re-allocated and communicated in advance. In the event that the coach cannot attend practice, parents will be notified in advance and a make-up date & time will be arranged. *Note: The only time the coach will not be able to attend is if he or one of his family members have a serious illness or emergency. This is not something that is expected to happen often, if at all.*

### **Practice/Game Attire (what students and players should have with them every day)**

All basketball students are required to bring/wear to every practice and game the following:

- Team issue jersey (if applicable) (t shirts may be worn under jerseys)
- Indoor/outdoor basketball (write name on ball) in size 5 for ages 6-11, size 7 for ages 12 and up
- Basketball shorts (w/ athletic compression shorts worn underneath)
- Athletic socks

-Basketball shoes made for basketball and to be used only for basketball (no rocks, dirt, or other debris should be on the bottom of the soles and players should not put them on until they are inside the gymnasium/ players should remove them before they leave the gym in order to preserve the traction of the shoes). If we practice outdoors, indoor shoes should NOT be used.

-A water bottle (no gatorade or other drinks allowed in gyms)- WATER ONLY

### **Skill Bands**

One of the main goals of FireHeart Basketball School is to continually grow players' skills within the game of basketball. The key to personal success and competitive greatness is to always get better. We believe in rewarding hard work and achievement that is earned. Therefore, student players will have an opportunity to earn "FireHeart Skill Bands" that represent specific skill sets and are color coded. FireHeart Skill Bands are armbands that can be worn and represent a player's skill set as demonstrated to the coaching staff. Once a student-player masters and tests for their skill band, they can wear the band with pride knowing that they have accomplished much and look forward to continuing their development in earning their next band.

### **Team Store**

There will be a team store selling FireHeart gear and fan items for players, parents, family, friends, and supporters. The store will be an on-going online order form that will occasionally update and change out products. Some proceeds from sales will go to support FireHeart programs and initiatives, including scholarships.

### **Travel**

It is expected that student-athletes meet at the requested time to all practices and games. This will rely upon parents, family members, or friends to get participants to their scheduled events on time or early. Please do all that you can to be on time and prepared to have your child ready to play and learn. On-time means to be early and ready before the practice/game begins. Punctuality is an important skill we want to teach our young learners. In the event that FireHeart competes in out-of-town leagues/tournaments/games (for middle and high school players only), participants' families are responsible for all travel costs on behalf of the player. If travel happens to be more costly than normal, team fundraisers will be planned to help off-set travel expenses (for middle and high school players only).

### **Waivers and Insurance**

All student-athletes participating with FireHeart must have on file a current medical and participation release waiver form. Players and their parents are also required to provide proof of medical coverage on their registration forms.

