

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Melrose Travel Basketball (MTB)**

### **1. History**

Prior to 2023, the City of Melrose Recreation Department managed the Melrose Travel Basketball program (the "Program") and successfully grew the Program to include middle school boys and girls teams in grades 6-8 (six total teams). At the conclusion of the 2022-23 travel basketball season, the Recreation Department determined that the Program had grown to a point where it should be managed by a new non-profit parent supported organization, called "Melrose Travel Basketball."

MTB will elect its first Board of Directors in advance of the 2023-24 basketball season and fall tryouts. MTB adheres to a singular player development model ensuring that youth players have an opportunity to grow and develop their skills to the highest level through a well-defined, age-based, systematic approach.

MTB manages registration, coaching, equipment ordering, player evaluations, team formations, court allocation, community events, scheduling, marketing and communications, fundraising, and clinics and camp offerings for both the boys and girls programs under the direction and supervision of the MTB Board of Directors.

For announcements, MTB will be primarily using its website for all youth travel basketball announcements such as registration dates, important announcements, and Program information.

MTB is becoming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation in the Fall of 2023. Its mission is to promote the sport of basketball in Melrose in a positive and enriching way.

### **2. General Information**

MTB will typically field two boys teams and two girls teams of about 12 players, no less than 9 players per team and no more than 12, for grades 5 through 8, so long as the number of players registered for tryouts allows for the formation of two teams per grade and gender. We may have multi grade B teams if two grades don't have enough for a second team. We will have 15 teams total year 1 and 16 likely year two depending on demand.

MTB currently participates in two leagues: The River Valley League for the girls teams and the Cape Ann League for the boys side of the program. Where two teams per grade are fielded, MTB creates a Red Team and a White Team across the age groupings. Players are evaluated at tryouts that are usually held in the fall preceding the season of play.

### **3. Acknowledgement of Policies**

Upon registration for tryouts, parents/guardians and players acknowledge and accept all of the policies and procedures of MTB. Parents/guardians through acknowledgement of the policies of MTB are fully responsible for their guests/other family members at all MTB activities including prior to, during, and after these activities.

Players agree to review and accept the Code of Player Conduct set forth herein, together with the consequences of violating the Code of Player Conduct. MTB expects parents/guardians and Players to review these Policies and Procedures, with special emphasis on understanding the Code of Player Conduct.

In order for the Program to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of everyone involved: players, coaches, administrators, and especially parents/guardians. To make sure that Players get the most out of their playing experience, parents/guardians should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of their child's performance

and effort. Coaches volunteer their personal time to spend it with your child. They need you to be supportive of their decisions, and not undermine their efforts. Parents/guardians are expected to support the MTB mission to promote the sport of basketball in a positive and enriching way among the youth of Melrose.

In the event a dispute arises, parents/guardians should attempt to speak (and listen) to their child's coach. There should always be open communication between parents/guardians and coaches.

#### **4. Residency, Age and Grade Requirements**

Players must be Melrose residents or attend Melrose Public Schools to participate. They must be in the grade for which team they are competing as of September 1 of the school year. If a player is repeating a grade (or has previously repeated a grade), they may request a special exemption to play with a higher grade team. The request must be made in advance of tryouts, and should be directed to the MTB Board of Directors. For example, if a child plays on the fourth grade team, and repeats fourth grade, the child may request to be placed on a fifth grade team during the child's second year of fourth grade. In such a situation, the determination of placement shall be the sole and exclusive decision of the MTB Board of Directors.

#### **5. Tryout Process**

All players must register for tryouts online at the MTB website.

MTB will host one tryout evaluation for all age groups. Attendance at the tryout session is a requirement. The evaluators at tryouts will consist of Board Members or Independent Evaluators as determined by the MTB Board of Directors. No parent will evaluate their child. Parents/guardians will be notified via email of team selection once all player evaluations are reviewed.

Tryout exemptions for medical issues are given on a case-by-case basis. The MTB Board of Directors reserves the right to approve/deny an exemption and subsequently determine (if approved) the evaluation of the player outside of the scheduled tryout period. Parents/guardians wishing to obtain a medical tryout exemption must file a written request for medical exemption with the MTB Board of Directors prior to the first tryout session so that coaches and evaluators know the numbers for a given team.

Parents/guardians should include the following information in their request: (i) players name, (ii) grade, (iii) prior travel basketball experience, (iv) nature of injury, (v) expected date of return to play, and (vi) any other information the parent/guardian deems relevant.

#### **6. Team Placement/Formation Process**

A panel of evaluators as determined by the Board of Directors will evaluate and assess players during tryouts using a standard evaluation form. Players will be labeled with numbers on their shirts at tryouts. Each player will be scored using the evaluation form. All such scores will remain confidential and shall not be disclosed to anyone other than the evaluators and the MTB Board of Directors. Players are placed on teams based on evaluation scores. Parents are not allowed into the gymnasium to watch, or to participate in the assessment of players. The sole exception to this policy is coaches or parents who are on the board. They will not evaluate their own children however.

After evaluation results are collected and tabulated, an appointed representative from the MTB Board of Directors will present team rosters for final approval. Not all players trying out for a team will make one. Parents/guardians should prepare themselves

and their player for that situation. Any questions or comments regarding tryouts/team selection should be addressed with the Board President.

## **7. Player Registration**

Once team selections are announced, players must accept roster spots in a timely fashion as announced by MTB (within two weeks). Once the roster spot is accepted, payment to enroll is required on the designated due date, and is payable through the Website. After payment to MTB is rendered there are no refunds.

Players who do not get selected to participate on a travel team are encouraged to participate in the Melrose Recreation Basketball program.

Players who are unable to pay the enrollment fee at the time of registration may submit a written request for financial assistance. Financial assistance may or may not be available, but one of the goals of MTB is to provide for players without regard for their ability to pay.

## **8. Player Commitment**

It is expected that players commit to:

- **Attendance at all scheduled practices;**
- **Attendance at all scheduled games; and**
- **Attendance at all scheduled tournaments.**

Commitment to the Melrose Travel Basketball and all basketball related activities should be treated as a priority. MTB understands that on occasion, a player may miss a practice or game due to illness, school commitment, vacation, or otherwise. Players will be permitted to play Melrose Youth Basketball with the Recreation Dept. each winter but must ensure that it will not impact their commitment to any MTB practices, games, and/or activities. Parents/guardians and players must inform their coaches as soon as possible if they will be missing any practices or games.

Coaches shall have discretion with respect to the appropriate action to be taken in the event a player misses practice(s) and/or game(s). No player may be removed from a team due to missed practices and/or games, unless the MTB Board of Directors approves such removal in advance of removal.

## **9. Uniforms**

MTB will provide a link to order a team uniform for the 2023-2024 season, for which parents/guardians and players are responsible. All players are expected to wear only approved Melrose Travel Basketball uniforms and warm up apparel during games and pre game warm ups.

Individual coaches will coordinate the assignments of jersey numbers.

## **10. Practices and Games**

The expectation is that all grades 6-8 will practice 2 times per week. 5th grade teams may practice 1-2 times per week. Practice schedules are set as far in advance as possible. Every effort will be made to keep practice times and locations consistent throughout the season.

Game scheduling is organized through coaches and League meetings and requirements set by the League. The majority of games are typically played on the weekends with some exceptions. All teams will participate in a playoff tournament at the end of their season.

## **11. Games Playing Guidelines -**

Travel basketball is a competitive sport and players and families should know coming in that playing time is earned through hard work, commitment, attitude and skill.

### **Grades 5**

Coaches will focus on the development of all players. All players will play a minimum of 12 minutes per game, including 4 minutes per half. A player who has missed practice and/or games may receive slightly less time than those players who have been present at the foregoing.

### **Grades 6-8**

In grades 6-8, more emphasis will be placed on performance and competition. Over time we hope that all players earn plenty of playing time, some in more competitive games and others in less close games. Coaches will continue to focus on development, but greater emphasis will be placed on how a player is performing to earn playing time. Practices will be more intense and competitive.

As this is a competitive program, playing time will be at the discretion of the coaches. At a minimum, a player shall receive 4 minutes of time per 16 minute half, unless the player has missed prior practice and/or game(s).

Parents/guardians and players should understand that there may be an individual game where a player does not receive the minimum time set forth above. In the event there are multiple games where a player is getting less than the minimum time set forth above, parents/guardians are encouraged to speak with their child's coach and discuss the situation reasonably, no less than 24 hours after the conclusion of the game. If the problem persists, parents/guardians are encouraged to speak with the MTB Board of Directors

### **Goal and Exceptions**

Boys and Girls Travel Coaches will work hard to follow the foregoing minimum playing time guidelines. These guidelines assume that players are attending practices and games on a consistent basis, and are conducting themselves in accordance with the Player Behavior Policy set forth below. Participation on a travel team does not guarantee equal playing time. Parents/guardians have the right to discuss playing time with their child's coach and if not satisfied present the issue to the appropriate MTB Board Member.

## **12. Player Behavior Policy**

Players are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner at all times, both on and off the court. Actions including, but not limited to, fighting or arguing with teammates, coaches, opponents and referees, exhibiting poor sportsmanship, throwing or kicking objects, and swearing in public are not tolerated. Any player who fails to follow this policy, the League Rules and Regulations, or team specific rules regarding behavior, attitude and attendance will not be permitted to continue participation with MTB. Players may be suspended and/or dismissed from their team for a violation of these rules as set forth below.

It is expected that all parents/guardians and players read and understand (i) the Player's Behavior Policy and (ii) the League Rules and Regulations regarding player conduct, and follow each throughout the year.

Over the course of the season, a coach (or the MTB Board of Directors, by majority vote) may, at their discretion, suspend a player for two or fewer games for violation of the

Player Behavior Policy (or the Rules and Regulations of the League) or for behavior detrimental to the team or the organization. All suspensions initiated by a coach will be reported to the MTB Board of Directors immediately. Suspensions for more than two games, or dismissal from a team, must be approved by the MTB Board of Directors by majority vote in advance of the dismissal. If a coach determines that a player should be suspended for more than two games or should be dismissed from the team, the coach shall notify the President of MTB and the following procedure shall be followed:

- A. The coach shall file a written statement of specific reason(s) for suspension or dismissal with the MTB Board of Directors and provide a copy of such statement to the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).
- B. The player's parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be permitted three days after receipt of the coach's written statement (excluding the day the coach's statement was received) to provide a written response, including specific reasons why the player should not be suspended or dismissed. If such a written response is not submitted within three days of receipt of the coach's written statement (excluding the day the coach's statement was received), the suspension or dismissal shall be put to a vote of the MTB Board of Directors.
- C. If a written response is filed, the MTB Board of Directors shall meet to review the facts presented and to determine, by majority vote, whether the player should be suspended or dismissed within seven (7) days of the MTB Board's receipt of the parent(s)/guardian(s) written response.
- D. If the MTB Board of Directors votes to uphold the suspension or dismissal of the player, the MTB President shall notify the player's parent(s)/guardian(s) after the decision is rendered.
- E. Pending a resolution of the suspension/dismissal, the player shall not practice with his/her team or play in any game(s).

### **13. Parent/Guardian/Spectator Codes of Conduct**

It is expected that all parents/guardians read and understand the Parent/Guardian/Spectator Code of Conduct and follow the Parent/Guardian/Spectator Code of Conduct throughout the year. The Parent/Guardian/Spectator Code of Conduct consists of the following commitments:

- I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflict without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will never yell, taunt, threaten, or inflict physical violence upon any player, coach, official, or other spectator at any MTB activity.
- I will refrain from the use of abusive or vulgar language, and racial, ethnic or gender-related slurs at any time prior to, during, and after MTB activities.

- I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from MTB activities.
- I will leave coaching to the coaches. I will encourage my child to play in a manner consistent with the team's strategy or plans.
- I also understand that my child's development/game day playing time will suffer by not consistently attending practices and games.
- I will not throw objects of any kind on the court.
- I will not walk on the court during a game or practice unless invited to do so by the coach.
- I understand that travel basketball is a commitment and must be taken seriously.
- I understand the negative talk on the sidelines is not tolerated.
- I will respect the officials and coaches for their authority during games and practices.
- I will refrain from confronting coaches prior to, during, or after practices or games. I will allow at least three hours to pass after a practice or game, and then email or contact a coach regarding any concerns.
- Parents/guardians through acknowledgement of the policies of MTB are fully responsible for their guests/other family members at all MTB activities including prior to, during, and after these activities.
- Any violation of the code of conduct by parent/guardian or their guests/family members may result in disciplinary action including loss of participation of the player, parent/guardian suspension/removal from team activities including attendance at games, and player suspension from team activities including attendance at games and practices.
- I will remember that my child plays basketball for his or her enjoyment, not mine.

#### **14. Parent/Guardian/Spectator Behavior**

During all MTB activities coaches, parents, spectators and participants are expected to maintain a high standard of conduct and always display good sportsmanship. Screaming, taunting, swearing, willfully violating rules, and physical behavior will not be tolerated.

Whenever a coach, parent, spectator, or participant displays attitudes, actions and/or conduct that is contrary to the rules, regulations, and philosophy of MTB, that person will be asked to leave the practice, game, or activity. Any such removal will be reported to the MTB Board of Directors upon the conclusion of the event. Whenever an individual is removed from an event they will, at a minimum, receive a one game suspension and possible permanent suspension from all MTB activities for the remainder of the season.

In most circumstances the above procedures will be followed when dealing with a disruptive person. However, if the incident is severe in nature the individual may automatically be removed from the event and suspended.

#### **15. Coach Selection Process**

All interested coaching candidates must apply by September 30 each season to be considered. Interested coaching candidates can apply by contacting the board with a letter of interest, coaching resume and references. Coaching applications are reviewed by the MTB Board of Directors. Coaching positions will be reviewed on an annual basis. Only approved candidates will be considered for coaching positions. The Board will select head coaches. Head coaches will select 1-2 assistant coaches and ensure they are CORI'd and complete the required concussion training.

All 15 - 16 teams will have 1 Head Coach and 1-2 Assistant Coaches for a total of a max of 3 coaches per team. Additional coaches may not be added during the season.

Coaches will be chosen and formalized after roster selection. Child placement on any team will not be determined based on coaching availability and parent involvement.

## **16. Coach Requirements**

Coaches are required to complete the following to be eligible to coach:

Concussion Training:

All coaches, including assistant coaches, will be required to complete the online NFHS Concussion Training at <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61151/concussion-in-sports>.

Criminal Offender Record Information ("CORI") check:

All coaches, including assistant coaches, will need to have an annual CORI completed.

## **17. Coach Conduct**

MTB expects the following conduct of head and assistant coaches:

- Refrain from criticism of opposing teams, their players, coaches, and fans by word of mouth or gesture.
- Accept final decisions of game officials, as fair and called to the best of the abilities of the officials.
- Do not use abusive or profane language at any time.
- Strive to make every game serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
- Emphasize that winning is the result of good teamwork.
- Do not "run up the score" in games; rather, using lopsided games as opportunities to play and develop less skilled players.
- Do not permit participation of any player who is ineligible for any reason.
- Remove any player from games when in doubt about his/her health, whether or not as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
- Do not incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Treat all players in a fair and equitable manner.
- Follow these policies and procedures and the rules and regulations of the League.
- Do not use alcohol, illegal substances, or tobacco products at game sites.
- Ensure that any player who violates the rules of player conduct are held accountable.

## **18. Fundraising**

MTB will organize fundraising events throughout the year.

## **19. League Rules**

Specific League information can be found at the league websites.

## **20. Medical Disclosure**

Parents/guardians should disclose any medical conditions impacting their player directly to the coach and/or MTB Board of Directors.

To the extent a parent/guardian wishes the disclosed information to remain confidential, they should so indicate prior to making the disclosure.

### **21. Skills Clinics**

MTB may operate skills and drills clinics in collaboration with the REC Department. Cost for programs will be announced and registration is required. All coaches are encouraged to participate in some capacity.

### **22. Social Media Policy**

Upon acknowledging and accepting these policies and procedures during online registration, MTB may post a picture/video of a child on its website, Facebook or Twitter or any other social media platforms and that MTB may share member names and addresses with other basketball related or educational organizations.

### **23. Waiver to Compete and Indemnity**

By registering a child with MTB, including try-outs, I, the parent or guardian of the registrant/player, a minor, agree that the registrant and I will abide by the rules of MTB, its affiliated organizations, and sponsors. Recognizing the possibility of physical injury associated with basketball, and in consideration for MTB accepting the registrant/player for its basketball programs and activities (the Programs), I hereby release, discharge, and/or will otherwise indemnify MTB, its affiliated organizations, agents, volunteers, coaches, members of the Board of Directors, sponsors, and their employees and associated personnel, including owners of the courts and facilities utilized for the Programs, against any claim by or on behalf of the registrant/player or parent or guardian, as a result of the registrant's participation in the Programs and/or being transported to or from the site, which transportation I hereby authorize.

Additionally, as the parent or guardian of the above named registrant, I hereby give my consent for emergency medical care prescribed by a fully licensed Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Dentistry. This care may be given under whatever conditions are necessary to preserve life, limb or well-being of my dependent player.

The acceptance by one parent or guardian is enforceable against any other parent or guardian, and the registering parent or guardian agrees to fully defend and indemnify MTB against any and all claims made by any other parent or guardian of the registrant/player.

To the fullest extent not prohibited by applicable law, parent or guardian shall: (a) indemnify, hold harmless and defend MTB and its officers, directors, employees, agents, coaches, representatives, successors and assigns (collectively, "Indemnified Persons") from and against any and all claims, actions, losses, liabilities, damages, judgments, interest, fines, penalties, costs and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees and all other expenses of investigation and defense (collectively, "Legal Costs")), arising out of, relating to, resulting from or in connection with: (i) any breach or violation of any term, condition, obligation, duty, representation, warranty or covenant set forth herein, (ii) the provision of the Program, including, but not limited to games, practices, clinics, tournaments or any other activities of MTB, including the death of or any injury to any person or any damage to any real or personal property, or (iii) a violation of applicable laws. The payment of Legal Costs shall be an on-going obligation, and is not dependent on the outcome of any



particular claim. In such a situation where this indemnity provision is implicated, MTB shall have the right to the legal counsel of its choosing.

#### **24. Summer League**

Head coaches in each grade are encouraged to enter teams in summer league play. Head coaches must invite all players from their team to participate in summer league. Players are encouraged to participate in their team's summer league. Once team members are given the opportunity to play on a summer league team, but decline to do so, coaches may invite other individuals of the same grade level at the coach's discretion.

#### **25. Grievances**

Process for reported complaint to the MTB Board of Directors:

- A. The MTB Board of Directors will meet to discuss the nature of a complaint and determine the validity of the Complaint.
- B. If deemed to be valid, the MTB Board of Directors will determine the proper course of action, which may include:
  - observation of team in question;
  - meeting with team/coach involved;
  - determination if action needs to be taken;
  - determination of appropriate response to situation.

The MTB Board of Directors reserves the right to determine which action is appropriate. Actions may include:

- verbal warning;
- written warning; and
- removal of player or coach from program.

If a player is dismissed for disciplinary reasons, there is no refund, but the procedure set forth above must be followed in advance of the dismissal.

#### **26. Board of Directors Positions and Personnel**

President:

Vice President:

Girls Director:

Boys Director:

Treasurer:

Secretary:

#### **27. Chain of Command Communication Process:**

MTB encourages open communication with coaches in a positive demeanor and when appropriate. If players have any questions the first point of conversation should be with their parents/guardians, and then with the coach. If the player and coach have not resolved the concern, parents/guardians can request to meet with the coach to discuss any questions. If the parents/guardians after utilizing the previous two modes of communication still feel the concern is not resolved they should reach out to the appropriate member on the MTB Board of Directors.

