South Wake Sabres

Handbook

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Who We Are

The South Wake Sabres, a highly competitive athletics program for homeschooled student-athletes, is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization based out of Fuquay-Varina, NC. We are a member of the NCHEAC (North Carolinians for Home Education Athletic Commission) and are thereby considered to be a sanctioned, non-member team of the NCHSAA (North Carolina High School Athletic Association). Our athletes are middle and high school-aged and come from various parts of Wake County and beyond. We compete against other homeschool, private school, and public school teams.

Completely volunteer-driven, we are more than "just sports." We are a community, and our players and families highly value building relationships that are long-lasting and extend beyond the court. This quote from one of our recent graduating seniors expresses the heart of our organization: *The Sabres is "a place where you can play the game you love while growing in your love for others."*

Our basketball teams have played for 18 seasons, winning 36 NCHEAC Regional Championships with 17 Runners-up, 29 NCHEAC State Championships with 13 Runners-up, and 25 East Coast Homeschool Nationals Tournament banners with 12 Runners-up in their age division. Our baseball program competed in their third season in 2026 with Middle School, JV, and Varsity teams. This is the FIRST season for Sabres Volleyball with the Aletheia Giants merging into the Sabres in 2026.

Program Mission

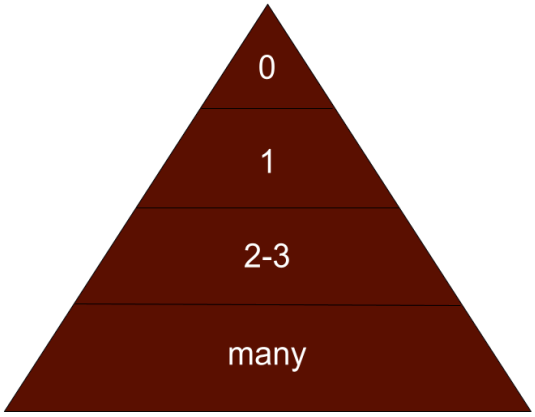
The South Wake Sabres is a highly competitive athletics program for homeschooled student-athletes who are in middle school and high school. We seek to provide our players with basketball training as well as guidance related to good character development, teamwork, and integrity in an environment centered on exemplifying behaviors and teachings of Christ as presented in the Bible.

Leadership

The day-to-day functioning of the Sabres organization is led by an Athletic Director who works closely with a Board of Directors and sport-specific Steering Committees. The Board provides oversight to the organization, while the Steering Committees coordinate more specific operations. Each team is also assigned Steering Committee liaisons. The liaisons are members of the Steering Committee who will be a first line of contact if there are any issues or concerns within a particular team. They will do their best to resolve any issues and will involve the Athletic Director when necessary.

Parent Guidelines and Expectations

- Exhibit excellent sportsmanship when at any Sabres function and remember that, as a parent, you have come to watch and support your son/daughter and his/her team. Remember the “pyramid” illustration: A player is guaranteed **zero** playing time, the role of the **one** head coach is to coach the players, the role of the **two or three** officials is to officiate the game, and the role of the **many** parents is to cheer and encourage the players. Please refrain from performing the coach’s or officials’ jobs for them.



- Volunteer to help. Since the Sabres organization operates entirely by volunteer power, each parent in the organization is required to volunteer, often for several duties throughout the year. Your willingness to help is not only essential to the life of the organization but is also very much appreciated. Detailed information regarding how to sign up will be communicated after team rosters are complete.

- Address any problems or concerns according to the *Sabres Guidelines for Communicating About Specific Team Concerns*.

- Support your sons/daughters by giving them lots of encouragement, getting them to practices and games on time, making sure they understand expectations as outlined in this handbook, and reminding them to communicate directly with their coaches if they have questions.

- Understand that players will be played at the discretion of the coaches. If you have concerns about playing time, please address concerns privately with the coaches (not other people) outside of game times in compliance with the **24-hour rule** and *Sabres Guidelines for Communicating About Specific Team Concerns*.

- Remember that our coaches volunteer hundreds of hours on and off season to coach and mentor our children. They are trying their best to consider all aspects of the team and individual players when making their decisions.

- Refrain from complaining; criticizing; gossiping; using profanity; and negatively critiquing coaches, teammates, opposing team's coaches, players, other parents, referees, or other affiliated parties.

Please note: Accidents and injuries may happen when playing any sport. It is highly recommended that you have medical insurance for your son/daughter. We also suggest a physical check-up with your son/daughter's doctor before entering the season.

Player Guidelines and Expectations

Player Code of Conduct

Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
(Romans 15:5-6)

As the player of a Sabres sports team, I will:

- Treat my coaches, teammates, fans, opposing teams, and game officials with respect always.

- Speak positively to my teammates and coaches. I will refrain from the use of profanity; discussing things of a sexual nature; gossiping; lewd speech; and complaining about, criticizing, and critiquing coaches, teammates, opposing team's coaches and players, parents, referees, or other affiliated parties.

- Maintain a positive attitude always, regardless of circumstances. Persistent negative attitudes are not acceptable.

- Address any problem or concern I have with a coach or teammate by going directly to that person and talking to them in a kind manner, clearly addressing the problem. If that does not resolve the issue, I will enlist the help of my parents and follow the *Sabres Guidelines for Communicating about Specific Team Concerns*.

- Pursue all physical conditioning activities and drills at practices with 100% effort, unless excused by a doctor or the coach.

- Report all injuries to the coaches immediately.

- Be on time for all practices and games, realizing the team is dependent on each individual player to fulfill this commitment to the team.

- Notify my coaches when I am going to be late or absent for a practice or game. I understand too many absences can affect my playing time in games.

- Watch and actively support the other Sabres teams when possible.

- Wear my uniform properly with my jersey tucked in and my shorts not rolled.

- Use the facilities and equipment provided respectfully (both in our home gyms/fields and at away games).

- Assist in the set-up and cleanup for games, practices, and Sabres events.

- Accept that any conduct which is unsportsmanlike or is in contradiction to the Sabres Program Mission will result in disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Actions for Players

Understand that while the organization desires to extend grace as we guide our players, rules and regulations are essential to maintain team morale, the safety of each athlete, and fairness to the entire team. Participation on a team is a privilege and not a right, so it may be revoked at any time when rules are violated.

Violating Player Code of Conduct standards will result in disciplinary action and parent notification. Disciplinary action will be based upon the degree of the offense. Disciplinary course of action may include additional physical activity (running, sit-ups, etc.), sitting out of practice, sitting out the remainder of the current game, game suspension (player must attend the game and sit on the bench for the suspension to be fulfilled), or other. In the event a player obtains multiple offenses, a player may be dismissed from the team. If this were to occur, there will be no player fee refunds. All disciplinary actions will be addressed by the coach and/or the Athletic Director or other members of leadership.

Ejections/Technical Fouls: In accordance with the NCHEAC, any ejection from a game carries with it an automatic two game suspension in addition to the game in which the ejection occurred. Technical fouls are subject to review by the coach and Athletic Director and may carry disciplinary action.

Playing Time Expectations

Playing time is a sensitive subject because all players want to play. A player's value to the team is not determined by the amount of time played in a game. Instead, each player is essential to the team's success, whether on the court/field during the game, cheering from the bench, or helping during practices. Because the Sabres is a highly competitive organization, **PLAYING TIME WILL NOT BE EQUAL** among players and will

be determined by the coach. Playing time is most often determined by a player's skill and athletic ability and is earned, not a given. Other factors that can influence playing time are:

- Be at all practices, on time, ready to focus
- Show your competitive side – hustle, learn the plays
- Be attentive, have a positive attitude, and show a strong work ethic
- Follow the Player Code of Conduct at all times
- Be an excellent teammate and treat other players with respect and kindness
- Demonstrate a strong commitment outside of practice to develop as a player

Parents and players are expected to respect the decisions made by a coach in regards to playing time, substitutions, and game strategy.

Guidelines for Communicating About Concerns

Specific Team Concerns

The South Wake Sabres organization is a close-knit community, and we want to honor God in everything we do. Working on issues in a positive way together will help our organization be even better. If you have a concern about your team or coaching, please adhere to the following guidelines.

1. Concerns regarding a specific team should be first expressed directly to that head coach. If your concern is about something that happened in a game, practice, or Sabres event, **please wait 24 hours** before approaching the coach. **Waiting 24 hours** will allow for the best environment for a productive discussion with the coach–this is a firm requirement. In addition, the coach may be able to resolve your concern immediately, or your coach may ask to get back to you in a specified time frame after he/she has had time to think, pray, and seek wisdom about it.

2. If you feel that you and your coach have not been able to come to a resolution, please share your concerns with your team's Steering Committee Sponsors. The Steering Committee Sponsors will work with you, other Steering Committee members, and the coach to try to help reach a resolution.

3. If a resolution has not been reached, the Steering Committee Sponsor will contact the Athletic Director for input.

External Organization Concerns

Never approach (in person or via other means of communications) another program coach, Athletic Director, parent, or player to express any level of dissatisfaction or complaint. This information should be communicated to your player's coach or to your team's Steering Committee Sponsor for a determination regarding how to handle the

issue which may likely involve the Sabres Athletic Director contacting the Athletic Director of the outside party. In addition, please do not discuss internal Sabres concerns with members from other team organizations.

General Sabres Issues and Suggestions

For more generalized issues and suggestions that will help the organization as a whole (e.g., "I want to make a suggestion about fundraising"), please email the Steering Committee at large steering-committee@southwakesabres.org. Someone from the Steering Committee will answer you in a timely manner.

Agreements

As a condition of membership in the South Wake Sabres organization, you must consent to the following agreements during the online Player Registration process.

South Wake Sabres Fee Agreement

Each player registered for a South Wake Sabres sport shall be required to pay a player participation fee. You are required to pay a South Wake Sabres team fee for each child participating in the South Wake Sabres athletic program and will make team payments in accordance with the payment schedule.

Waiver/Release of Liability Agreement

As parents or legal guardians of the named South Wake Sabres participant, I/We understand that competitive sports are HAZARDOUS activities. I/We recognize that there are inherent risks in sports, including but not limited to illness (ex: communicable diseases such as MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19), paralyzing injuries, and possible death. The participant hereby agrees to and is capable of participating in the South Wake Sabres Homeschool Athletics program's 2025-2026 season including open workouts, tryouts, games, practices, and other functions. I/we hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless the South Wake Sabres Homeschool Athletics program, its coaches, officers, directors, agents, volunteers, and employees against any liability resulting from any illness or injury that may occur to the participant while traveling to and from and/or participating in the South Wake Sabres Homeschool Athletics open workouts, tryouts, practices, games, and any other functions. I/We also agree to indemnify the South Wake Sabres Homeschool Athletics program from any damages incurred arising from any claims, demand, action, or cause of action by the participant.

I/We authorize any representative of the South Wake Sabres Homeschool Athletics program to have the participant treated in any medical emergency during their participation in the South Wake Sabres Athletics open workouts, tryouts, practices, games, or other functions. Further, I/we agree to pay all costs associated with medical

care and transportation for the participant. I/We have noted at the bottom of this form any medical/health problems of which the coaches should be aware.

I/WE HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE ABOVE LIABILITY RELEASE AND AGREE WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE OF ITS CONTENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE. YOUR AGREEMENT WILL BE INDICATED ONLINE IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT DURING THE PLAYER REGISTRATION PROCESS.

Volunteering Agreement

South Wake Sabres is a 100% volunteer organization. Families are required to support the program through volunteer service. Each parent is required to sign up for one or several volunteer roles (depending on the demands of the role) including things like team administrator (TA), scorekeeper, clock operator, first responder, etc. Parents and players will also assist with setup/take down at home games, concessions, fundraising, and other more general needs of the Sabres program. Players will have the opportunity to participate in volunteer service during the season.

NCHEAC Program Commitment and Non-Transfer Agreement

The South Wake Sabres participate in the NCHEAC (North Carolinians for Home Education Athletic Commission). As a condition of membership in this conference, all members are required to agree with the NCHEAC Program Commitment and Non-Transfer rules. Please read Section 5 of the NCHEAC Handbook for more details: https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/e1d3-3416806/NCHEAC_Handbook_2025-26.pdf

Photography, Image & Media Release Agreement

I/We hereby agree that the South Wake Sabres coaches, officers, directors, agents, volunteers shall not be liable for any use of images/photography of South Wake Sabres players or families taken during South Wake Sabres events and may use these images on its' website, on social media pages (e.g., Facebook, Instagram), or in other promotional literature, recruiting guides, and other mediums related to the function of South Wake Sabres organization.

Fees

2026-2027 FEES:

- Fees will vary depending on age group and sport.

Fees can be paid in one of two ways:

1. Via TeamSnap invoice. You will be sent a bill after tryouts with the option to either pay in full or split the fees into installments.
    - The first installment will be due within 2 weeks of tryouts to accept your roster spot, and the others are due prior to the season. Exact dates will be shared in our parent meetings & email communications.

2. Send a check made out to the “South Wake Sabres” to:
   South Wake Sabres
   P.O. Box 63
   Fuquay Varina, NC 27526
   - Checks can be for the full amount due, or for installments as listed above.

Fundraising

Please see Fundraising Playbook

Sabres Handbook Acknowledgement

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE CONSENT. THIS IS A PLAYER/PARENT CONTRACT.

Our entire family, Parent(s) and Player(s), have read the entire Handbook and will do our best to adhere to the standards set forth by the Sabres. I/We understand being part of the Sabres as either a parent or player is a privilege, not a right, and that this privilege could be revoked at any time. If I/we leave the team before the season is over, either on our own accord or due to disciplinary action, I/we understand there are no refunds.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Printed Name: _____

Player Signature: _____ Date: _____

Player Printed Name: _____