ER Falcons Baseball
Team Standards And Expectations 2016

ER Falcons Baseball
Senior Legion
Junior Legion
Falcons 15U
Falcons 13U
Attitude, Respect, Behavior
Athletes, whether in or out of uniform, carry with them not only their own reputations, but also that of their family, their teams and their sports organization. This will always be a major point of emphasis for us as a program. The expectation is that all members of ER Falcons Baseball behave like gentlemen and leaders always.

Respect self, teammates, opponents, parents and other spectators, umpires, managers, coaches, and anyone else that we come in contact with. Self-respect is essential and with self-respect other quality behaviors will follow.

Good sportsmanship is paramount. We will not tolerate unacceptable behavior. Unacceptable behavior is anything that is disrespectful to our team, opponent, umpires, spectators, or the great game of baseball. This includes and is not limited to the following:

- Any display of disgust or anger - throwing equipment, inappropriate language, kicking the dirt, the fence, a bench, etc.
- Questioning an umpire’s call - the only communication one of our players should have with an umpire is the exchange of pleasantries. Only the coaches can discuss questionable calls with an umpire.
- Cheering against an opponent is unacceptable even if it is in response to their statements. Again, this will be addressed by the head coach if necessary.
- Not hustling. Baseball is a very old game. As with any of our elders, it should therefore be respected. Failure to do any of the following will get you pulled from a game – hustle to one’s position or to the dugout at the end of an inning, run out a batted ball, run to every base and never jog. The only exception is after an umpire has declared an automatic Home Run. Even if you know the ball will clear the fence or be foul, you run until the umpire makes the call. We also sprint to 1B after ball four.

Team First
Being a member of ER Falcons Baseball means always putting the team first. A priority and goal for each player will be to help your teammates be more successful. If each one of us as a group was as focused on team success as we are on individual success, wouldn’t we all be more successful? Think of how much more confident and productive each player on a team would be if he knew that all of his teammates wanted him to succeed even more than he wanted to succeed himself. Imagine how empowering it would be and how much better each of us would be? What if self-confidence, which is perhaps the obstacle that blocks most from maximizing potential, was no longer in the mix because all of your team supported you so much that self-doubt and fear of failure never entered your mind? With
all of that confidence behind you the mind games that go on within would vanish because there would be no room for self-doubt. Let us make this a priority and a personal responsibility this year.

Additionally, baseball is a team game and success in baseball is measured in team success. Individual success means very little and is difficult to attain unless others are successful with you. For example, a pitcher can have dominant stuff but unless the pitcher strikes everyone out he will need his teammates to make the plays behind him and for his offense to score some runs.

No individual is more important than the group. If any player in the program is not on board with this philosophy that individual should not be a part of the program. If an individual’s conduct and/or attendance is becoming detrimental to the success of the team the following will occur:

1. Player and parent(s) being made aware of the player not meeting expectations and what he needs to do to improve.
2. Reduced role with team/program if changes are not made.

**Playing Time**

Concern over the amount of playing time an individual receives is perhaps the biggest detriment to team success. When an individual becomes concerned with playing time they are thinking about themselves and not the team. Playing time and roles on a team are at the coaches’ discretion and these decisions are based on what the coaches’ think is in the best interest of the team and not based on playing time. In Little League, decisions are based on playing time. As players get older, this is no longer the case. In this instance, I think this mirrors life. On the various teams we are a part of (family, work place, sports teams, school clubs, volunteer organizations, classes at school, etc.), there will be times when we have a leading/major/starting role, and there are times when we have a supporting/minor/backup role. A great example of this can be seen in a school play—when done right, what a great example of a team. You have the students that have starring roles, supporting roles, others that may only have one line, and you have the behind the scenes people like lighting and stage crew. In order for a play to be a success, everyone must accept their role and their job well night after night for the play to be successful. In order for us to be successful in this area, there needs to be a shift in the terminology from “playing time” to “role” on a team. This does not mean that any individual is stuck in their role, nor does it mean they have to be happy in that role, but it does mean that they need to accept whatever role they are asked to perform on a given day for a team to be a success. Roles can and will change frequently. A starter may find himself in a backup role one day while
a regular reserve is called upon to be a starter. It is expected that every member of the program support each other as roles change. If an individual desires a different role than their normal role, they need to prepare themselves to be successful when given an opportunity in the role they desire. If the coaches feel that it will be best for the group to have individuals switch roles, those individuals need to be understanding, try their best in their new roles, and be supportive of each other. In baseball, a player may initially have a role as a bench player and their role may be to pinch hit, pinch run, be a relief pitcher, or a defensive replacement. When called upon, their performance can be more important than a starter’s role on a given day. The starter may come to the plate three times with two outs and nobody on and not have a single ball hit to them in the field during that game. That reserve player may only have one play in the game, but that one play could be the difference in their team winning or losing on that day. When a team wins or loses, everyone plays a role whether you played a lot or not at all. Results on the field not only come about as a result of what occurs on the field that day. Bus rides, supporting that player who just made a big error when he comes back to the bench, pushing each other at practice, hitting that teammate a few extra fly balls after practice, etc. are all factors in determining our success.

Being on a team is more than what takes place on the field. It is about supporting one and other, working together towards a common goal, pushing each other, giving encouragement, thanks, suggestions, friendship and many other things that are so much more valuable than playing time. It is our goal as the coaches to have every player in this program play a role in what we are building. This is dependent on each athlete’s individual skill level, ability, attitude, effort, and attendance. We play games with the goal of being successful. Each member of the program will be asked to fill many different roles while they are a part of this program. As your coaches, we promise to do our best and we ask that you do your best in whatever role you are placed. If we all agree to always give our best effort we will be at our best as a group as a result. Together we will make each other better at the game of baseball and better as individuals by competing, encouraging, and supporting each other.

**Decision Making**

Student/athletes, as well as adults, have difficult choices to make everyday. We are all part of a larger group be it family, a corporation, or in this case a team. Choices affect the individual, but they also affect the group. As a member of this program each player must be cognizant of this fact. We are hoping to build something special here and a bad decision by any individual will affect us all as we are one.

Use of **drugs, alcohol, or tobacco** by any player in this program is completely unacceptable. Any player that chooses to be involved with any of these substances has
made a decision that they do not wish to be a part of the ER Falcons Baseball Program. Our hope is that a zero tolerance policy and knowing what is at stake will hopefully keep the members of our program from ever trying any of these substances in the first place.

**Coaching Decisions**

Coaches coach teams and seasons, not games. All decisions are made with this in mind. With most decisions there are many options. As coaches, it is their job to choose the option that they feel is in the best interest of the team. Players and parents may not agree, but we ask that you support our decision regardless of your opinion. It is the player’s job to play; the coaches job to coach; the parents job to support the players and coaches. Our coaches are professionals and their job is to do what they feel is in the best interest of the team. The players and their parents may not always agree, but we need you to support their decisions. Coaches are the only ones that will be on the field with the players all the time at practices, games, and team meetings so they are the only ones that are in a position to make team decisions. They are also the only ones that can be objective when it comes to the kids.

It is very common in youth sports for player’s parents to discuss the jobs that the coaches are doing from the sidelines and in the car ride home and it is usually associated with their child’s role on the team. This undermines the coach and creates a negativity that will prevent our team from being the best that they can be. We ask that you please do your best to not have these discussions. Players need to trust their coaches and if parents do not trust the coaches it is hard to gain the players trust. Sharing concerns with the coach about your child’s playing time or role on the team is not permitted because as soon as this conversation occurs a thought has been put in the coach’s head that will not allow him to be objective when he is making decisions. If you have a concern, the proper person to share it with is the program General Manager. The GM will determine if a concern should be shared with the coaches. At the end of the season a couple of things can/will occur:

1. Each player and parent will have to decide if they want to return next season.
2. The general manager, assistant general manager, and coaches will decide if they want to have a player back next season. This decision will be based on the player’s performance on the field and on the player and parent’s positive support of the program.

**Attendance**

Players are expected to be at all games and team events and to be on time. Being on time means that you are fully dressed (your shirt is tucked in, hat, and spikes are on) and you are ready to go at the pre-determined time. If the start time for a given practice or pre-game
warm up is 9:00 and it takes the player 15 minutes to get dressed, be sure to arrive by 8:44 so you are ready to go at 8:59. We understand that things happen that can cause lateness that is not in the player’s control. For example, parents getting stuck at work, having to make arrangements for other children, etc. We ask that parents please try to help each other out by using car pools whenever possible. We are trying to teach the boys what it means to be a part of a team and being on time is an important element of that. Attendance is essential for us to be successful. If a player is going to miss a game or practice we ask that it be for a very good reason and sufficient advance notice from a parent/guardian is required. Weddings and other events of this nature are planned well in advance so we expect to be informed well in advance. If you miss a game or several games somebody will obviously have to play in your place. This is an opportunity for this player to impress the coaches and there is no guarantee that when you return from your absence that you will fill the same role on the team as before your absence.

**Coaching Goals**
The coaches in this program have a responsibility to the players who choose to make the commitment to the program. It is their job to help this group of young men become better ballplayers and people, both individually and collectively. They will accomplish this by teaching teamwork, a strong work-ethic, discipline, sacrifice, togetherness, setting and attaining goals, and working together toward a common goal. The players and coaches will spend many hours together as a team and the coaches’ look forward to building trust and a strong relationship with each individual. The coaches’ view their time with their team as a privilege and it presents them with a wonderful opportunity to teach the players some qualities that will serve them now and later in life. In order for our organization to be successful we need buy in from everyone involved in the program. Our goal is simple, to help the members of the program be the best they can be individually and collectively on and off the baseball diamond using the great game of baseball as the vehicle to help us get there.
Players: I agree to abide by all of the Team Standards and Expectations to the best of my ability. I understand that failure to follow these Team Standards and Expectations can result in a diminished role in the program, and the possibility of not being invited back next year.

Parents: By signing below, you agree to support your child in following the Team Standards and Expectations. Additionally, you certify that the below named child has your permission and is medically able to participate in the physical activity of this intensive program. By signing below you are also stating that you understand that there are risks involved with participation in competitive sports and that you will not hold ER Falcons Baseball, LLC or its’ volunteers or coaches responsible in case of accident or injury as a result of his participation in the program.

__________________________________  
Player’s Name (Printed Legibly)

__________________________________  
Player’s Signature  Date

__________________________________  
Parent/Guardian Signature  Date