OFFICIAL RULES (ADAPTED FROM USA BASKETBALL AND FIBA)

ARTICLE 1 GOAL HEIGHT, COURT, AND BALL

Goal height is 8' for the Little Dipper League, 9' for the Big Dipper League, and 10' for the Rising Star League. Little Dipper and Big Dipper Leagues will play half-court with a size 5 basketball (27.5 in). The Rising Star League will play full court with a size 6 basketball (28.5 in).

ARTICLE 2 TEAMS

Each team shall consist of 4-6 players (3 players on the court at one time).

ARTICLE 3 GAME OFFICIALS

The game shall consist of one referee and one time/scorekeeper.

ARTICLE 4 GAME LENGTH, CLOCK, TIMEOUTS

4.1 A game shall consist of (4) 8-minute periods, with one minute between periods.

4.2 The game clock will stop only for injuries and timeouts. In the Rising Star League ONLY, the clock will stop during all dead ball situations during the final two minutes of each half.

4.3 Each team shall have 2 timeouts for periods 1-2 plus 2 timeouts for periods 3-4. Timeouts that were unused in periods 1-2 cannot be used in periods 3-4.

ARTICLE 5 BEGINNING OF THE GAME

The first team listed on the schedule will be the GRAY team. The designated GRAY team will begin each game with possession of the ball. Possession will alternate between teams at the beginning of each new period.

ARTICLE 6 SCORING

In the Little Dipper League, the scoreboard will be off. A referee will start and end each period with a whistle, and no official score will be recorded. In the Big Dipper League, every successful field goal shall be awarded 2 points, regardless of where the shot was taken (no three-point goals). Every successful free throw shall be awarded one point. The Rising Star League will follow normal basketball scoring, with three-point goals allowed.

ARTICLE 7 FOULS

7.1 All fouls shall be attributed to the team. Individual players cannot foul out.

7.2 If a foul occurs during a shot that is subsequently unsuccessful, the shooter shall be awarded 2 free throws. (In the Rising Star League, if the shot was taken beyond the three-point arc, the shooter shall be awarded 3 free throws.) If the foul occurs during a shot that is subsequently successful, the shooter shall be awarded one free throw.

7.3 A foul during any other time will result in the transfer of possession from the fouling team to the other. If the fouling team was on defense, possession will remain with the non-fouling team. In the Rising Star League, each foul in the final two minutes of a game will result in 2 free throws for the non-fouling team.

ARTICLE 8 SUBSTITUTIONS AND PLAYING TIME

8.1 Teams may substitute players during any dead ball situation, injury timeouts, called timeouts, or between periods.

8.2 All players shall receive roughly equal playing time.

ARTICLE 9 DEFENSE, DOUBLE-TEAMING, STEALING, FULL-COURT PRESS

9.1 In the Little Dipper and Big Dipper Leagues, only player-to-player defenses are allowed. Each player is responsible for guarding and moving with one offensive player. If an offensive player with the ball advances past their defensive player, another defender may rotate to guard that offensive player until a shot is attempted or until the original defender can resume a guarding position. In the Rising Star League, there are no restrictions on defensive alignment or positioning.

9.2 In the Little Dipper and Big Dipper Leagues, double-teaming/crowding is not allowed due to skill and size discrepancies among children at these ages. There is no restriction of double-teaming/crowding in the Rising Star League.

9.3 In the Little Dipper and Big Dipper Leagues, stealing from a dribbler is not allowed. This allows ball-handlers to develop dribbling skills and confidence with the basketball. In the Rising Star League, stealing is allowed, but teams may not utilize a full court press. Thus, stealing is only allowed on the side of the court that a team is defending.

ARTICLE 10 HOW THE BALL IS PLAYED

10.1 Following each successful field goal or last free throw, play will resume after the referee has retrieved the ball and returned it to a player on the non-scoring team behind the arc for half-court games or behind the baseline for full court games (see 10.3).

10.2 For half-court games, when ball possession changes from one team to another inside the 3-point arc, the new offensive team must return the ball beyond the 3-point arc before attempting a field goal. If the ball is not returned behind the arc before attempting a field goal, it will be considered a foul, and the referee will award possession to the non-fouling team.

10.3 Following any dead ball situation, play shall resume after the referee has retrieved the ball and returned it to a player on the offensive team behind the arc for half-court games or behind the baseline for full court games. There will be no in-bound plays in the Little Dipper and Big Dipper Leagues.

ARTICLE 11 STALLING

Stalling or failing to play actively (i.e. not attempting to score) shall be a foul and possession shall transfer to the non-fouling team.

ARTICLE 12 ENDING THE GAME, TIES

In the regular season, the game shall end when the 4th period has expired, regardless of the score. In the postseason, there shall be a 2-minute overtime period. The first possession shall be decided by a coin flip. If the game remains tied at the end of the overtime period, teams will alternate shooting free-throws, with every player participating, until a team has made 3 successful free throws. Both teams must have an equal number of attempts. If both teams reach 3 successful free throws in the same number of rounds, rounds will continue until one team is successful and the other is not.