

# Valor Collegiate Academy



## 2017-2018 Athletic Handbook

# Valor Athletics Philosophy

## Mission Statement

The Valor Athletics Program aspires to be an outstanding educational-athletic organization that provides a high-quality experience to every athlete. A high-quality experience is one in which every athlete:

- Is coached using the principles of Positive Coaching
- Has fun at practices and games
- Feels like an important part of the team regardless of performance
- Learns "Compass Lessons" that have value beyond the playing field
- Learns the skills, tactics and strategies of the game and improves as a player

We recognize that coaches are the people who most directly make this all possible. It is our goal to provide every coach with the tools to succeed as a Positive Coach. We are committed to creating a positive culture, in which coaches, parents, fans, officials and athletes work together to achieve our mission.

## Positive Coaching Alliance

Valor Athletics partners with the Positive Coaching Alliance to help create a positive experience for all our scholar-athletes.

To further the Compass mindset of character growth in athletics, Valor has chosen to partner with the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA), whose goal is to develop **BETTER ATHLETES, BETTER PEOPLE** through resources for youth and high school sports coaches, parents, administrators and student-athletes.

The following become the prevailing models in youth and high school sports:

- The Double-Goal Coach®, who strives to win while also pursuing the more important goal of teaching life lessons through sports.
- The Second-Goal Parent®, who concentrates on life lessons, while letting coaches and athletes focus on competing.
- The Triple-Impact Competitor®, who strives to impact sport on three levels by improving oneself, teammates and the game.



## **Available Sports**

**The following sports (try-out based) are available for Middle School athletes grades 7 through 8:**

Volleyball (Early Fall): Girls, Varsity

Cross Country (Early Fall): Boys and Girls, Varsity

Soccer (Late Fall): Boys and Girls, Varsity

Basketball (Winter): Boys and Girls, Varsity

Lacrosse (Spring): Boys, Varsity

## **Harpeth Valley Athletic Conference (HVAC)**

Valor Collegiate Academy competes in the Harpeth Valley Athletic Conference (HVAC) for middle school athletics. We adhere to the conference scheduling guidelines to provide our scholar-athletes the opportunity to participate in all four sports seasons.

## **Available Sports Clinics**

**The following after-school sport clinics (registration based) are available for Middle School athletes grades 5 through 8:**

Lacrosse (Fall): Boys

Soccer (Fall): Boys and Girls

Basketball (Spring): Boys and Girls

Volleyball (Spring): Girls

Running (Spring): Boys and Girls



## **Athletic Department Code of Conduct**

The Valor Collegiate Academy Athletic Department Code of Conduct is a standard of expectations that is required to be met by all scholars, athletic staff, parents, and spectators.

The Athletic Department of Valor Collegiate Academy aims to protect and promote the integrity of our program by ensuring every scholar-athlete is working toward being a Triple-Impact competitor. To this end, the following behaviors will not be tolerated before, during or after an athletic contest;

- Any form of communication that is somehow intimidating, belittling, demeaning or insulting
- Vulgar or profane language
- Acts of retribution or retaliation
- Acts of deliberate indifference toward scholars' rights, privileges and dignity
- Insensitivity or prejudice toward ethnicity, culture, race, religion, national origin, or handicap
- The use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and any other mind-altering substance
- The use of any illegal performance enhancing substance
- Other behaviors by spectators, coaches or athletes that school personnel deem inappropriate

Valor Collegiate Academy will not hold as hard evidence any rumor, innuendo, gossip or anonymous letters or phone calls.

**Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right.** The Valor community maintains strict standards in academics, behavior and making healthy choices. Our athletic program and teams are an extension of the school community and its representative to our neighbors and opponents. It is because of this conviction that we hold our scholar-athletes to the highest standard.

This standard is known as the Triple-Impact Competitor - someone who works to make themselves better, who work to make their teammates better, and who works to make the game better. Triple-Impact Competitors make the game better by competing by a code of Honoring the Game. The acronym ROOTS describe behavior that makes the game better—respect for: **R**ules, **O**pponents, **O**fficials, **T**eammates, and **S**elf.

Since it is a privilege, the coaching staff, in accordance with the MNPS policy and due process procedures, has the authority to suspend or revoke the privilege when the rules and standards of this athletic program are not followed.



## Partnering with the Valor Athletic Department

### Scholar-Athlete

As we partner together, VCA will expect each scholar-athlete to understand the following:

- Participation is an honor and a privilege.
- Work to be a Triple-Impact Competitor, who strives to impact sport on three levels by improving oneself, teammates and the game.
- Honor the Game. The acronym ROOTS describe behavior that makes the game better—respect for: **R**ules, **O**pponents, **O**fficials, **T**eammates, and **S**elf.
- Academic excellence must take priority over athletics.

### Parent/Guardian

As we partner together, VCA will expect each parent to understand the following:

- Parents are **highly** encouraged to participate in Positive Coaching Alliance workshops that will be provided by the athletic department in the Fall and/or Spring. VCA has partnered with the Positive Coaching Alliance ([www.positivecoach.org](http://www.positivecoach.org)) to help create a positive experience for all our scholar-athletes. To further the Compass mindset of character growth in athletics, Valor has chosen to partner with the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA), whose goal is to develop **BETTER ATHLETES, BETTER PEOPLE** through resources for youth and high school sports coaches, parents, administrators and scholar-athletes. Many of the guidelines that follow have been formed in conjunction with the Positive Coaching Alliance as a best-practice model of achieving our mission.
- **Let Coaches Coach.** It can confuse players to hear someone other than the coach yelling out instructions. Also, your instructions may counter the coach's strategy and tactics, undermining team performance. Vocal support by parents during athletic contests should always be supportive of the scholar-athlete, his/her teammates, and the leadership of the coaches chosen to guide him/her during this sport. VCA expects parents to refrain from being derogatory or abusive toward coaches, officials, and all players. The administration will address any departures needed, due to failure of these expectations.
- **Fill Your Child's Emotional Tank.** Competitive sports can be stressful to players. The last thing they need is your critiquing their performance...on top of what the coach may deliver and what they already are telling themselves. Let your children know you love and support them regardless of their performance.
- Parents should not purchase and/or provide athletic apparel without prior approval by the Athletic Director. Therefore, parents are to gain approval by the Athletic Director before ordering and/or purchasing T-shirts, sweatshirts, warm-ups, or any additional apparel for teams or groups which bear the language "VCA", "Valor" or "Valor Collegiate Academy."

### Coach

The Athletic Director holds VCA coaches accountable through a clearly articulated set of expectations and a yearly detailed evaluative process. All VCA coaches are committed to supporting the school mission and the philosophy of the Athletic Department. Coaches have a separate comprehensive set of expectations.



## Communication

### **Athlete/Parent/Coach Communication Process**

Communication is critical to the success of any athletic program. It is essential for Middle School scholars to develop productive communication skills with adults. In addition, it is essential for each program to have an open line of communication with parents regarding schedules, injuries, policies, and procedures.

There are certain discussions that will not be held, such as discussing personnel or strategic decisions, including playing time. Don't share your disapproval of a coach with your children. Doing so may force the child to take sides, and not necessarily your side!

**\*\*Athlete and Coach communication SHOULD be face to face at an appropriate time and NOT through any form of email, text, call, or any other form of messaging.**

Policy:

1. The Athletic Department will follow a consistent communication protocol as follows:
  - a. Athletes should bring any questions or concerns directly to the head coach. We ask that parents encourage their scholars to address concerns on their own with their coaches.
  - b. If the initial athlete/coach conversation does not resolve an issue, then the parent should communicate with the coach.
  - c. If the parent/coach conversation does not provide resolution, then the Athletic Director of the respective school may be contacted to join in the conversation with the parent and coach.
  - d. The Athletic Director will not discuss team policy or procedure (beyond affirmation) with a parent without the coach present.
2. Coaches will send competition and practice schedules to all parents via e-mail as soon as they are finalized.
3. Coaches will send a weekly schedule to parents via email.
4. Coaches will host a parent meeting before the first official contest of the season to cover team policies, procedures, and expectations.
5. Parents should never attempt to approach a coach with a difficult issue immediately following a game or practice.

### **24-Hour Rule**

The "24-Hour Rule" is a tool used to allow discussions pertaining to athletics in a more constructive and fruitful environment. Parents who have concerns with a child or coach regarding athletic performance, day-to-day team operations, or an aspect of an athletic event are encouraged to wait for 24 hours. This allows the initial emotions from the game or event to calm and a more reasoned, thoughtful and productive discussion can ensue about the issue.

**Recognize the Coaches' Commitment.** Your child's coaches have made a commitment that involves many hours of preparation beyond the time spent at practices and games. Respect their commitment and imagine yourself in their place before approaching them to discuss any issues you may perceive.



## Athletic Department Policies/Regulations

### **Medical Requirements/FinalForms**

A yearly physical examination is required. The standard physical form must be completed and cleared by the physician and a hard copy must be submitted to the athletic department prior to trying out for any VCA team. The examination covers all sports for a 12-month period from date of exam.

Each athlete and parent(s) / guardian is required to complete scholar information and medical release forms online. These online forms must also be completed prior to trying out for any VCA team.

All online forms must be completed at <https://valorcollegiate-tn.finalforms.com/>

### **Athletic Fees**

All scholars who make an athletic team must pay a \$50 athletic fee per sport to the Athletic Department at Valor Collegiate Academy. This fee is vital to the Athletic Department budget, as we use it to help pay for equipment, uniforms, officials and facility rental fees.

### **Tryouts/Cuts**

One of our core beliefs at Valor is that “greatness comes from having a **growth mindset** and that **effort**, more than talent, matters in the end.” Athletics offers a tangible opportunity to reinforce this belief.

Most sports will have roster limitations for a few reasons. If enough scholars show interest in a sport with roster limitations, it will be necessary to conduct team tryouts and make cuts. At Valor, we encourage scholars to try out for a team if they are interested, and regardless of the final roster, their courage and effort will be celebrated per our core beliefs.

Policy:

1. The head coach is responsible for conducting a minimum two-day tryout.
2. There will be at least two coaches included in the evaluation process.
3. Tryouts are closed to family, friends, or outside coaches.
4. The Head Coach is responsible for communicating with all athletes who were not selected for a team after Day 2 of tryouts via email or phone call.
5. VCA does not post team rosters after tryouts. All athletes should be notified individually or as a group.
6. If requested the Head Coach will provide critical feedback necessary for improvement in the sport to prepare for future tryouts.
7. Roster spots are not awarded on talent alone but per the Triple-Impact Competitor standard, which includes sportsmanship, attitude, and effort.
8. The decision of the head coach is final.



## **Attendance/Participation**

Athletes who do not report to school for at least 3 full periods without prior clearance (if there is a school wide excused absence, athlete will still be able to participate that day) may not participate in sporting events (practice or games) that day. An athlete must report to school for at least 3 full periods on Friday to participate in weekend sporting events.

Athletes must attend all practices and games. **Practice and games are mandatory.** This includes any practices/games during any school breaks. Athletes who miss practices or games without a prior excuse **approved** by the coach and/or athletic director will be subject to disciplinary actions, subject to the coach's discretion. If an athlete is injured they must still attend practices and games unless cleared by your head coach. Athletes are expected to be punctual. Repetitive tardiness will be subject to disciplinary actions, subject to the coach's discretion. **In all instances parents/guardians must give prior notification to the head coach whenever an athlete will be absent.** Athletes will not be penalized by coaches for approved excused absences. Excused absences will be determined by the head coach and/or athletic director.

## **Non-Valor Athletic Teams Participation**

Participating on an outside team in the **same or different sport** during the season is **highly discouraged**. It is in the best interest of the athlete to participate on only on one team in the season of sport. The potential for fatigue, injuries, conflict of commitments and academic pressures may adversely affect the team performance. If the head coach feels that it is in the best interest of the athletic program, the coach and/or athletic director may restrict an athlete from participating on a Valor team if they choose to play on an outside team.

## **Multi-Sport Athletes**

VCA encourages scholars to participate in as many Valor sports as possible. Playing multiple Valor sports is possible only with the permission of the coaches of both sports and athletic director. Athletes will not be allowed to participate in same season sports.

The following rules will serve as a guide for multi-sport athletes:

1. Athlete must communicate with their current season coach their intentions to try-out for another VCA sport.
2. If there is a conflict, the athlete will be excused from current season practices to try-out for other VCA sport.
3. If the athlete makes the team for the other VCA sport, they must wait until the conclusion of the current VCA sport season to end prior to practicing or competing with the next VCA sport season.





## **Athletic Awards**

Valor Collegiate Academy appreciates the participation of all athletes, and each athlete is presented with an Athletic Award Certificate. Certificates are awarded to Middle School scholars who participate in a sport for an entire season. The criteria for earning an Athletic Award Certificate is at the discretion of the head coach of each sport. An Athletic Award Certificate is an earned award for achievement in a sport and contribution to a team.

## **Athlete Misconduct**

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold regulations and standards of the Valor Collegiate Academy Athletic Department. Discipline in the athletic program is to be considered an aspect of moral guidance and not simply a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is to promote genuine development, to increase respect for authority, to assist in the growth of self-discipline and to provide a team environment conducive to learning and winning.

Disciplinary infractions of team rules, school rules and/or athletic department policies while in attendance at or while being transferred to/from an athletic contest/event come under the jurisdiction of the regular school disciplinary procedures. The head coach must inform the Athletic Director of any such infractions. The head coach may also require a meeting with athlete, parent, and athletic director to discuss discipline concerns.

Athletes can be disciplined for the following infractions but are not limited to:

- a)** Unacceptable language;
- b)** Being tardy to meetings, practices or games;
- c)** Unexcused absence from practice or game;
- d)** Lack of sportsmanship;
- e)** Failure to contribute 100% effort;
- f)** Being out of dress code on campus or at practice;
- g)** Breaking athletic facility rules.

Sanctioned disciplinary procedures include:

- a)** Benching (sitting out of practice or games as designated by the coach)
- b)** Suspension or expulsion (only instituted with the permission of the Head Coach; final decision lies with the Athletic Director).

## **Athletic-Recal**

If any athlete earns Recalibration or any form of Re-Set, on any given week (the same weekly schedule for paycheck distribution) during their sport season, will be placed on Athletic-Recal. While on Athletic-Recal the athlete will serve a one game suspension (athlete is required to attend game). The one game suspension shall be served for the next scheduled game. Athlete will still be required to practice while on Athletic-Recal. Parent and athlete will be notified of the suspension by their coach and/or athletic director.



## **Inclement Weather**

In the event of inclement weather, the administrative team at Valor Collegiate Academy will decide, based upon the HVAC and [TSSAA policies and protocols](#), whether to hold practices or games. The administration has the authority to cancel activities, events, practices and competitions in the event of inclement weather.

Practices and/or games will be automatically cancelled if the area is under a severe weather warning. In the event of a severe weather watch, discretion is given to the school administrator.

In the case of a cancellation, the following actions will be taken to communicate the cancellation:

- The coach will use his/her primary mode of communication to pass on information about the cancellation to the athletes.
- The athletics' and/or school's social media accounts will be updated with a cancellation notification.

It is at the discretion of the head coach to consult with the athletic director to schedule any extra practices to make up for practice time lost due to cancellation.

It is a priority of the athletic department to reschedule cancelled games. However, due to many circumstances, make-up games are not always possible and, therefore, are **NOT** guaranteed.

## **Transportation**

All transportation to and from all practices and games will be provided by parents. During each sport's preseason meeting, coaches will discuss with athletes and parents transportation logistics. **The expectation is that athletes arrive to practices and games at the designated time and picked up promptly at the conclusion.** Each athlete will receive (1) 5 minute "pick up" grace period. Any subsequently delayed "pickups", the athlete will be subject to suspension or other disciplinary actions, subject to the coach's and/or athletic director's discretion.

Valor Collegiate Academy coaches and/or staff members are **NOT** responsible for transporting athletes to and from any practices and/or games.

## **Early Dismissal**

Due to the nature of athletics and the travel involved, it is often necessary for athletes to be released from class. This in no way releases the scholar-athlete from academic responsibility, including in class assignments, quizzes, tests and homework. Athletes are expected to notify their teachers prior to leaving campus and arrange to make up all assignments, quizzes or tests, and obtain homework. All early dismissals must be approved by the athletic director.



## **Uniforms/Equipment**

All equipment and uniforms are the property of Valor Collegiate Academy and are loaned to the athlete during his/her season of sport. The athlete is financially responsible for all equipment and uniforms checked out to him/her. The school will supply game uniforms for all sports. All parts of the uniform (shorts, shirt, warm-ups, etc.) must be returned to the coach at the end of the season. Failure to return or if any defect is found with the uniform it will result in a \$25-\$150 fine for each piece. Before awards are received or a scholar begins a new sport, the athlete must return all items or pay the determined fine.



**Valor Collegiate Academy**  
**Athletic Handbook Agreement**

We have read and understand the Valor Collegiate Academy Athletic Handbook for scholar-athletes and agree to abide by the rules and procedures of the Athletic Department.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scholar-Athlete Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scholar-Athlete Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT BEFORE AN ATHLETE MAY PRACTICE OR PARTICIPATE IN ANY SPORT.**

