



# VALOR

## CLASSICAL ACADEMY

---

VIRTUS • SCIENTIA • FELICITAS

Family Handbook  
2026-2027

<b>The Promise of Valor Classical Academy</b>	<b>7</b>
Vision Statement	7
Mission Statement	7
Pledge	7
Motto	7
Virtues	7
Curriculum	7
School Culture	8
Academic Ethos	8
<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>9</b>
Parents	9
Students	10
Faculty	11
School Leadership	11
Head of School	11
Assistant Head of School	12
Board of Directors	12
Fiscal Accountability	13
Law and Charter Agreement	13
Policy Making	13
Board Meetings	13
Community Comments at Public Meetings	14
Official Posting Place for Communications	14
Open Records Act of Idaho	14
Conflict of Interest Policy	15
<b>Daily School Life</b>	<b>16</b>
Arrival and Dismissal	16
School Arrival	16
Buses	16
Walk/Bike	16
Carline	17
Late Arrivals	17
School Arrival Diagram	18
School Dismissal	19
Buses	19
Walk/Bike	19
Carline	19

School Dismissal Diagram	20
Attendance	21
95% Expectation	21
Attendance Committee	21
Verified vs Unverified Absence	22
Additional Attendance Policies	23
Tardiness	23
Chronic Absenteeism	23
Hall Passes	24
Lockers	24
Lunch and Snacks	24
How Lunch Builds Citizens	25
Free or Reduced Lunch	25
Snacks	25
Birthdays and Celebrations	25
Food Incentives	25
School Hours	26
Student Fees	26
Student Supply Lists	26
Technology	26
Toileting	27
Uniform and Grooming	27
Uniform Dress Code	27
Non-Uniform Dress Code for School-Sponsored Events	29
Uniform and Financial Assistance	29
Lost and Found	29
Used Uniform Store	29
<b>Academic Policies</b>	<b>30</b>
Educational Priorities	30
Curriculum	30
Homework and Reading	31
Grading Policy	32
Semester Grade Composition (Grades 7-12)	34
Late Work	34
Extra Credit	34
Promotion and Retention	34
Attendance	35
Elementary School Promotion Criteria	35

Literacy:	35
Kindergarten:	35
Grades 1-2:	35
Grades 3-6:	35
Upper School Promotion Criteria	35
Grades 7-8:	35
Grades 9-12:	36
Graduation Requirements	36
Additional Academic Policies	37
Cheating	37
Class Placement	38
Multiple-Tiered System of Supports	38
Plagiarism	38
Schedule Changes	39
Teacher Conferences	39
Teaching Controversial Issues	39
Teaching Evolution	39
Role of Parents and School in Relation to Human Sexuality	40
Teaching Human Sexuality	40
Video Viewing Policy	41
<b>Guidelines for Student Behavior</b>	<b>42</b>
Honor Code	42
Understanding the Code	42
Virtues	42
A Person of Integrity	43
Plagiarism and Cheating	44
School-wide expectations	44
Public Displays of Affection	45
Non-Discrimination, Non-Harassment, and Non-Bullying Policy	45
Discrimination	45
Harassment and Bullying	45
Bus Behavior Policy	47
Bus Safety Rules	47
<b>Student Formation and Discipline</b>	<b>48</b>
The Purpose of Discipline	48
General Discipline Philosophy	48
Disciplinary Referral	49
Disciplinary Referral Process	49

Consequences	49
Detention	50
Suspension and Expulsion	51
<b>Health and Medicine</b>	<b>52</b>
General	52
Medical Records and Enrollment	52
Illness - When Should a Student Stay Home?	52
Medicine	53
Medicine Administration (Including Self-Administration by Students)	53
Self-Administration of Prescriptions	53
Universal Precautions	54
Other Prescription Medications	54
Non-Prescription (Over-The-Counter) Medications	54
Additional Guidelines	54
Operations	55
Student Medical Records	55
Food Allergies	56
<b>Parents and Community</b>	<b>56</b>
Parent Teacher Community Association (PTCA)	56
Volunteers and Requirements for Volunteers	56
Background Checks	56
Training	57
General Rules for Volunteers	57
Mission Support Team (MST)	57
<b>Communication</b>	<b>58</b>
General	58
Parent Communication with Leadership, Faculty, and Staff	58
Scheduling Parent-Teacher Meetings	59
Mass Communication Policy	59
Guardian Authorization Form	59
Parent Grievances	59
Grievance Related to the Classroom	59
Grievance Related to a School Leader	60
Other Grievances	60
Importance of Following the Chain of Communication	60
<b>School Operations</b>	<b>60</b>
Bus Transportation	61
Enrollment	61

Facilities and Supplies	62
Material Posting and Distribution	63
Parking- Designated Spaces	63
Safety	63
Emergency Operations Chart	63
Search	64
Video Surveillance	64
Student Involvement in School Operations	64
Student Organizations	64
Student Publications Policy	65
Travel	65
Field Trips	65
Extended Field Trips	65
Off-Site Activities	65
Visitors	66

# The Promise of Valor Classical Academy

Valor Classical Academy (VCA) is guided by the core elements presented here, and it is our promise to remain true to them.

## Vision Statement

The vision of Valor Classical Academy is to form future citizens who uphold the ideals of our country's founding and promote the continuation of our American experiment—through a classical, great-books curriculum designed to engage the student in the highest matters and the deepest questions of truth, justice, virtue, and beauty.

## Mission Statement

The mission of Valor Classical Academy is to train the minds and improve the hearts of students through a classical, content-rich curriculum that emphasizes virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility.

## Pledge

I will learn the true, I will do the good, I will love the beautiful.

## Motto

Virtus, Scientia, Felicitas

*virtue, knowledge, happiness*

## Virtues

COURAGE - Be Brave

COURTESY - Be Kind and Respectful

HONESTY - Always Tell the Truth

PERSEVERANCE - Never Give Up

SELF-GOVERNMENT - Practice Self-Control

SERVICE - Help Others

## Curriculum

Hillsdale K-12 Program Guide

## School Culture

- Our school culture is defined by a seriousness of purpose, joyful engagement, order, and emphasis on character.
- Our Faculty and school community will model and encourage students to uphold the School's virtues: courage, courtesy, honesty, perseverance, self-government, and service.
- VCA is an open-enrollment school with no enrollment criteria outside of statutory and contractual requirements.
- VCA's educational philosophy requires a small, closed-campus K-12 environment. This conscious choice ensures that all students are known and educated by caring adults. The Head of School is accountable for the well-being of every student. Faculty members personally know each of their students as well as others.
- Students wear a school-specific uniform, and employees adhere to a dress code.
- Discipline policies are designed to prevent interruptions to teaching and learning and to reinforce core virtues.

## Academic Ethos

- Valor Classical Academy provides a broad, rigorous, and well-rounded course of study, including literature, mathematics, history, science, fine arts, Latin, and physical education.
- This education prepares students for a fulfilling life, teaching them to be smart, good, and hardworking American citizens.
- Tried-and-true methods drive instruction in our classrooms. These time-tested approaches are structured and effective, cultivating both skill and appreciation for the material. Teacher-led classrooms, explicit phonics program for literacy, recitations of poems and historical documents, mathematics taught conceptually, employment of the Socratic method of discussion, etc.
- Mastery of core subjects always takes priority. Valor Classical Academy resists grade inflation and social promotion. Standardized tests do not drive the curriculum.
- Student services provide support to all students with academic and behavioral needs. Interventions utilized to achieve VCA's expectations are targeted and specific to each individual student.
- Valor Classical Academy is a Hillsdale-supported founding effort and soon-to-be Member School, a relationship that offers our school ongoing access to curriculum, training, and resources. For more information on Hillsdale K-12 Education, visit [k12.hillsdale.edu](https://k12.hillsdale.edu)

# Roles and Responsibilities

The success of Valor Classical Academy relies on a partnership in which parents, students, faculty, and school leadership each embrace their distinct roles in the educational journey. When every member of this community understands and honors their specific responsibilities, the school moves with a unified purpose toward fulfilling its mission and vision.

## Parents

Parents' support of the School's academic and moral mission is essential. Parents are encouraged to learn more about the School's philosophy and curriculum to better support and guide their students.

We acknowledge that parents are the child's first and primary teacher. Our goal is to be the best partner you could hope for in the process of raising citizens of knowledge and virtue. We believe that student success begins at home and recognize our responsibility to serve families in a manner that honors and strengthens their vital role in the life of children and communities.

Valor Classical Academy is a community you are joining, not a service you are purchasing. As a member of this community, every parent plays an active role in supporting our mission, fostering a positive learning environment, and modeling the virtues we hope to instill in our students. With that in mind, we ask that all Valor parents commit to the following expectations:

The School expects parents to:

- Model good character and insist that their children cultivate good habits and virtues.
- Hold high expectations for both effort and character, recognizing that disciplined effort and measured struggle form the habits necessary for a life of flourishing.
- Ensure punctual arrival and consistent attendance by their student(s), recognizing that academic and virtue development require regular in-person participation. Families will plan vacations and travel around the school calendar, treating school attendance as a priority.
- Help their children develop effective study skills by providing a structured and consistent schedule for the completion of homework, studying, and the development of academic skills
- Read to their children, especially those in the early grades (see [Suggested Reading List](#)).
- Stimulate discussion and exploration of ideas and events with students.

- Monitor their child’s progress by reviewing character cards (grades K–2), checking grades at least weekly, and attending meetings with faculty and staff, such as IEP/504 meetings and parent-teacher conferences.
- Communicate questions and concerns expeditiously with their child’s teacher to build relationships and foster transparency.
- Be active participants in our school community.
- Support the orderly environment established by school leadership and faculty to ensure our collective efforts strengthen, rather than disrupt, the learning environment. Collective order protects the individual student’s ability to learn. A predictable and orderly environment is essential for children to thrive.

## Students

Students are expected to demonstrate the virtue of **courage** by engaging deeply with challenging material. This intellectual bravery allows students to approach their studies with curiosity and determination, even when the subject matter is unfamiliar or demanding.

Students are expected to demonstrate the virtue of **courtesy** by being consistently polite, attentive, and respectful toward faculty and peers. This goes beyond mere manners; it is a recognition of the inherent dignity of others. By practicing kindness and decorum, students help create a refined environment conducive to learning.

Students are expected to demonstrate the virtue of **honesty** through a steadfast commitment to truthfulness in both word and deed. This integrity is the foundation of our school community, requiring students to take full responsibility for their work and to speak with sincerity and candor.

Students are expected to demonstrate the virtue of **perseverance** by showing a strong work ethic and a steadfast willingness to learn, even when faced with challenges. Academic growth requires the endurance to stay the course through rigorous study and complex ideas.

Students are expected to demonstrate the virtue of **self-government** by exercising discipline over their impulses and taking ownership of their conduct. In the classical tradition, true freedom is found in the ability to do what is right rather than what is merely convenient. By maintaining order in their speech and actions, students contribute to a peaceful classroom and develop the inner strength necessary for a life of maturity and responsibility.

Students are expected to demonstrate the virtue of **service** by looking beyond their own needs to contribute to the well-being of the school community. This involves a readiness to assist peers, care for their physical surroundings, and lead through humble action.

## Faculty

Faculty play a pivotal role in guiding and inspiring students, modeling the virtues they seek to instill. Faculty provide rigorous instruction and foster a strong work ethic, encouraging students to engage deeply with challenging material and approach their studies with curiosity, determination, and perseverance. Faculty regularly communicate and provide feedback on student progress and behavior, and aim to foster a partnership with parents to support student success. Together, students, parents, and faculty contribute to a vibrant learning community dedicated to the lifelong pursuit of wisdom and virtue.

Faculty are expected to:

- Model the School's vision, mission, and core virtues.
- Create a respectful, focused, and positive classroom environment.
- Assess student growth regularly and provide timely feedback to students and parents.
- Communicate openly with parents about student progress and classroom activities.
- Set clear homework expectations, promoting consistency and accountability.
- Participate in professional development to stay current in teaching practices.
- Collaborate with colleagues to support school goals and unified efforts.

## School Leadership

The school leadership team holds primary responsibility for guiding the academic program, fostering virtue formation in every student, maintaining an orderly and safe learning environment, and ensuring the school fulfills its promise to parents.

### Head of School

The Head of School, while chiefly the academic leader, is also responsible for the School's discipline, moral culture, operations, and financial priorities.

In addition, the Head of School:

- Implements a traditional, classical, liberal arts and science curriculum.
- Employs teachers based on their mastery of an academic discipline, their ability to convey knowledge to young people, and their capacity to maintain order and decorum in the classroom.

- Oversees and guides strategic plans and policy for the School; coordinates with key stakeholders in order to promote growth; and works to create public and private partnerships for the long-term well-being of the School.
- Oversees the Assistant Head of School, Student Services Coordinator, Literacy Coordinator, faculty, and all academic support personnel.

## Assistant Head of School

The Assistant Head of School’s main duties include overseeing student culture and discipline, including:

- Overseeing all non-academic, non-student affairs, and day-to-day operations of the School.
- Duties include overseeing and supervising the following major areas: student behavior; the front office team; emergency operations; registration and enrollment; information technology management; food service operations; school bus services; facilities management; communication systems; event planning; and coordination with key partners for back-office services.
- Overseeing the Office staff, Transportation Coordinator, Food Service Manager, and Bus Drivers.

## Board of Directors

The Board is the governing body of the School and is responsible for overseeing the effective, faithful execution of the mission.

The School is governed by the Board of Directors of American Classical Schools of Idaho (“ACSI” or “Board”). The Board operates in accordance with its bylaws and using the principles of policy governance. The Board has entered into a Charter Agreement with the Idaho Public Charter School Commission. The bylaws and Charter Agreement are available on the School’s website. The Board consists of representatives from each ACSI school, including one representative from the VCA community.

The Board oversees budgeting and spending, community outreach, charter fidelity, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, advocacy, school leader support and development to support the program. More specific responsibilities of the Board include but are not limited to these outlined below:

## Fiscal Accountability

- Participating in the budgeting process each year, providing advice and feedback to the Head of School.
- Monitoring the management of financial resources by approving the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place.
- Financial reporting of the Treasurer to the Board as required in the bylaws to ensure the Board is “hands-on” as it relates to fiscal controls and responsibility.
- Our budgeting philosophy is conservative. The Board does not expend uncollected funds. When budgeting, priority is given to instructional materials, then faculty salaries, then other areas of the School deemed important by the Head of School and the Board.

## Law and Charter Agreement

The Board will adhere to federal, state, and local laws identified explicitly or implicitly in the Charter Agreement. In most instances, when the Board has been granted autonomy through its full-flexibility waiver, the Board will develop its own policy.

Monitoring and ensuring compliance with the Idaho Department of Education regulatory statutes and other local, state, and federal laws by regularly reviewing school policies, programs, and practices.

Reviewing school data against charter and charter goals to ensure compliance with the vision, strategies, and objectives identified herein.

## Policy Making

The Board shall operate according to the policy governance model. The Board shall be solely responsible for adopting, repealing, or amending governance policies for the School. The Head of School shall be solely responsible for reasonably interpreting those policies and executing them. The Head of School shall be responsible for maintaining all school-level operating procedures, policies, and manuals.

## Board Meetings

The Board will adhere to the Idaho Open Meetings laws as outlined [Idaho Statute 74-204](#). Additional information can be found in the [Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual](#).

## Community Comments at Public Meetings

The Board welcomes public comments at each Board meeting. Community comments are limited to two minutes. To ensure accurate representation of the comments in the Board's meeting minutes and to ensure that the Board can accurately address the issues presented, it is requested that these comments also be submitted in writing.

If a non-Board member would like to make a comment, offer information, or has a question, he/she should raise his/her hand to indicate a desire to speak. Comments must be relevant and not reflect information about a specific student, faculty member, or personally identifying situation. Such interjections will be recognized at the discretion of the Board Chair.

The ACSI Board of Directors welcomes input from members of the school community. To ensure meetings are efficient, respectful, and focused on governance, the following guidelines apply:

- Time Limit: Each speaker will have up to two (2) minutes to address the Board. The chair may limit total comment time as needed.
- Board Role: The Board's role is to govern—to set policy, ensure financial oversight, and hold the school accountable to its mission and charter.
- School Leader Role: School leaders are responsible for interpreting, executing, and applying policy, and for managing day-to-day operations.
- Topics: To protect privacy, the Board does not hear comments regarding individual students or staff members in open session. Such concerns should be directed to school leadership through established procedures.
- Civility: Comments should be addressed to the Board as a whole, not to individual members or staff. The Board expects all participants to maintain a respectful and constructive tone.
- Response to Comments: The Board may take comments under advisement but typically will not respond or engage in dialogue during the meeting. Follow-up may occur through appropriate channels.

## Official Posting Place for Communications

Committee meeting times and agendas are visibly posted in the front office and on the School website. Board of Directors' meeting agendas are posted in the same manner.

## Open Records Act of Idaho

The Board shall be subject to the [Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\)/Open Records Act of Idaho](#).

# Conflict of Interest Policy

Board Members will confirm annually that they have no inappropriate conflicts that would preclude them from faithfully serving the School. Board Members shall keep on file and update at least annually the Conflict of Interest disclosure forms as required by the Idaho Department of Education.

# Daily School Life

The daily life of a classical school is structured to provide an environment of order, beauty, and focused study. The following section outlines the standards, routines, and expectations that allow our community to function. By adhering to these shared standards, students and families help maintain the practical foundations necessary for the pursuit of wisdom and the cultivation of virtue.

## Arrival and Dismissal

Procedures for drop-off, pick-up, and pedestrian/cyclist arrival and departure prioritize the safety and security of all students. Parents/guardians are expected to cooperate fully to ensure that the process is safe and orderly.

The School will release students only to parents, legal guardians, adult designees, or upper school siblings. Transportation plans must be arranged by the parent or legal guardian and on file with the Front Office in advance of dismissal. Third-party pick-ups are not permitted (individuals who are unknown to the School and not pre-authorized).

Adults driving through the carpool line are expected to serve as role models by always exhibiting courteous behavior. Please share these policies and procedures with anyone who will pick up your student, as everyone in the car line is expected to know and follow them.

K-3 students will enter the building through the east door into the multi-purpose room; 4-6 students will meet outside in the Semiquincentennial Plaza and enter through the main entrance; and upper school students (7th and above) will enter through the west entrance.

## School Arrival

### Buses

Buses will arrive at the back of the building using the bus entrance off Honor Avenue. Students will walk along the sidewalk to arrive at the front of the building and enter through their designated entrance. The rear fenced-in area and entrances are closed to student entry during arrival.

### Walk/Bike

Students will enter school property via Honor Avenue. Students should dismount bikes, scooters, skateboards, etc. on the Honor sidewalk, walk their equipment onto school property and stow it at the bike racks. Skateboards and equipment unable to be locked at the bike racks must be stored in the student's cubby or locker. If the equipment does not fit in either their cubby or their

locker, the school will attempt to find a place to store items, but if one is unavailable, students will be asked to find an alternative means of transportation.

### Carline

In order to be good neighbors and avoid traffic buildup within the Valor community, parents should arrive at school using Five Mile Road and not the subdivision entrance off Cloverdale Road. Parents and visitor vehicles should only enter the school parking area via the front entrance off Tiercel Drive. Students may not be dropped off on Tiercel Drive or Honor Avenue. Parents may not use the bus entrance at the back of school to drop off students.

No earlier than 8:00 am, upon entering the school parking area:

If you are dropping off your child.

1. Remain in the right drop off lane as you enter the VCA parking area, and follow that lane until they arrive at the front of the building.
2. Proceed in a slow and orderly fashion to the designated drop-off area. Put vehicles in park.
3. Children may only exit a vehicle if the vehicle is parked within the designated area. Only the curb lane will be used for drop-off. Children should exit the vehicle on the curb side.
4. As directed by Traffic Controller, vehicles will exit through the middle drive lane.

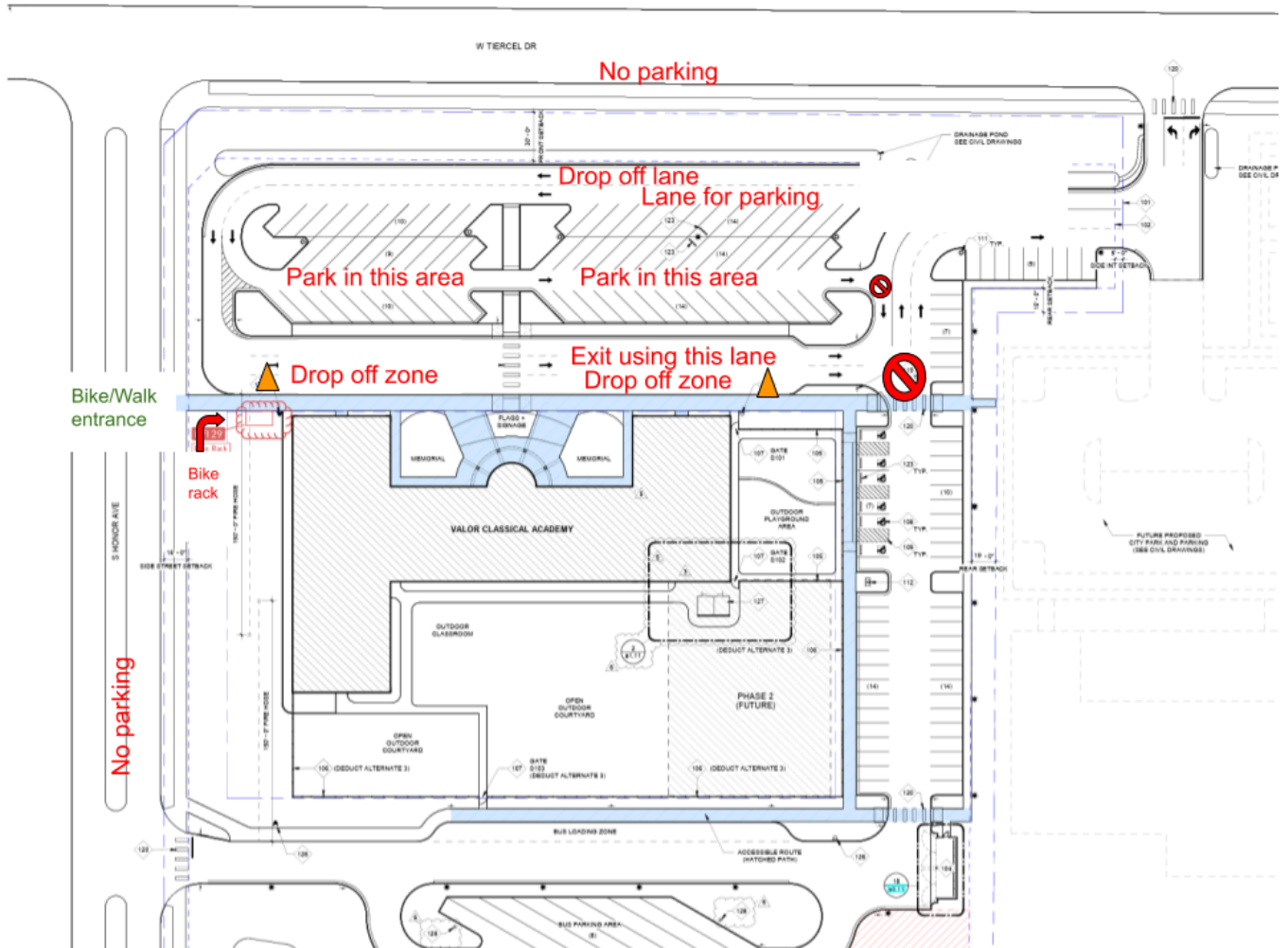
If you are parking and walking your child up to the school.

1. Follow the left parking lane as you enter VCA parking area, and follow that lane until it loops back into the parking lot
2. Process in a slow and orderly fashion to the visitor parking area at the front of the school.
3. Park your vehicle and exit the parking lot. Cross the drop-off lanes at the center crosswalk only.

### Late Arrivals

Exterior school doors will be locked at 8:30 am. Any students not entirely inside the building by 8:30 am will need to enter through the main entrance and check in at the front desk by their parent or guardian.

# School Arrival Diagram



# School Dismissal

## Buses

Buses will line up at the back of the building to exit via Honor Avenue. Students will load onto buses at the back of the building.

## Walk/Bike

Students will exit the building through the front door and follow the sidewalk west to Honor Avenue. Students may only begin riding their bikes, scooters, skateboards, etc., once they are on the Honor Avenue sidewalk.

## Carline

Students will exit the building through the front door and wait in the Semiquincentennial Plaza for their parents to arrive. Parent vehicles should enter the neighborhood via Five Mile Road to avoid causing neighborhood traffic/congestion. Parents and visitor vehicles should only enter the school parking area via the front entrance off of Tiercel Drive.

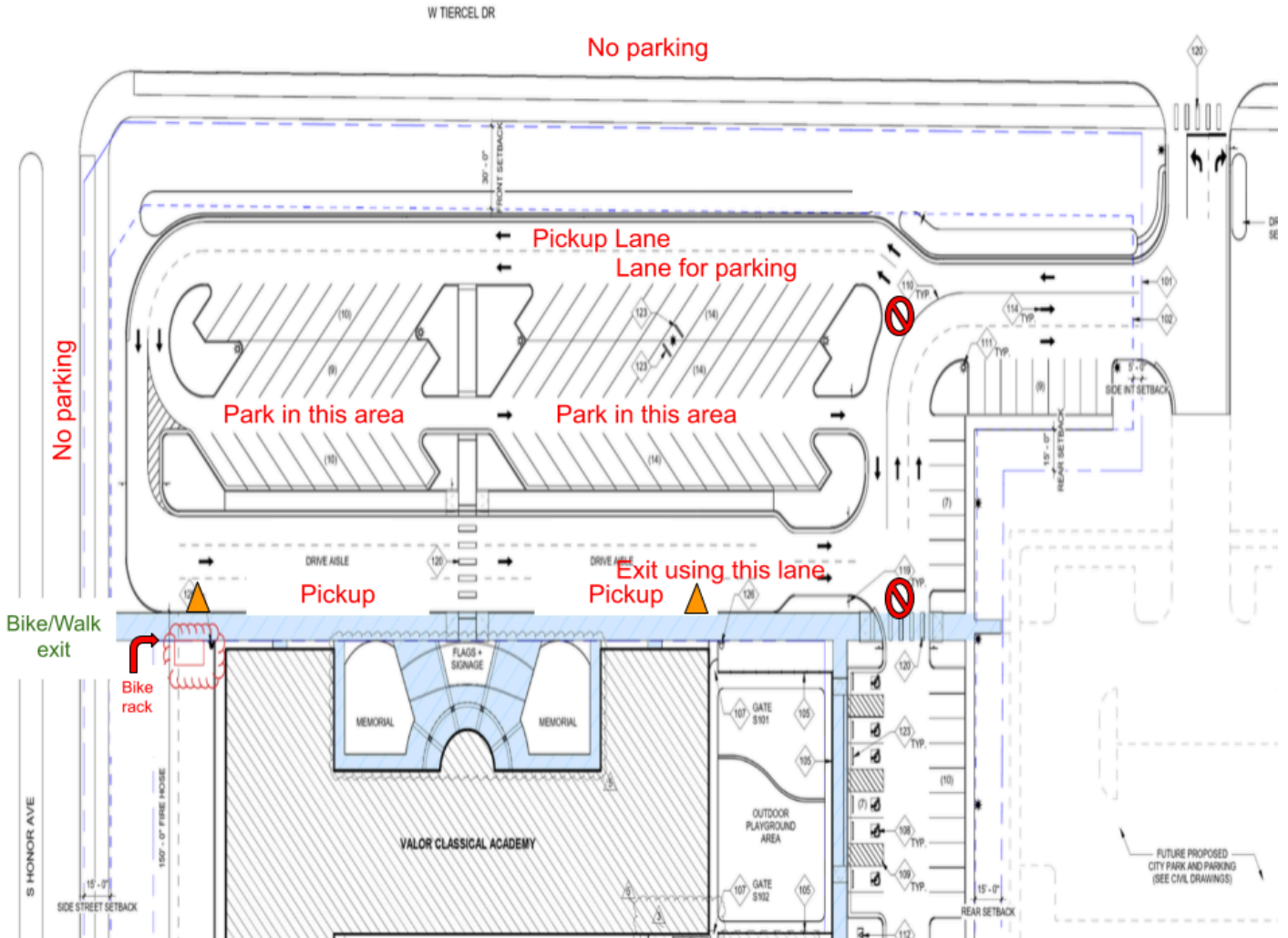
No earlier than 3:00 pm, upon entering the school parking area

1. Use the far right lane to approach the front of the building.
2. Enter the designated pick-up area (curb lane) at the front of the building.
3. Pull all the way up in your designated area. **Place vehicle in PARK.**
4. Students will be dismissed to find their parents' vehicle.
  - a. Do not attempt to retrieve your child earlier than our official retrieval, as other vehicles may be moving.
  - b. Parents must remain in their vehicle. Your student will find you.
  - c. Parents not in the designated pick up lane will not retrieve their students at this time.
5. Secure your student(s) and remain parked until you are signaled to begin exit procedures. Following Traffic Controllers directions, vehicles will exit through the middle drive lane.
6. Parents may be asked to loop back around if they are delaying others.

If you are parking and picking your child up at the school.

1. Follow the left parking lane as you enter VCA parking area, and follow that lane until it loops back into the parking lot
2. Process in a slow and orderly fashion to the visitor parking area at the front of the school.
3. Park your vehicle and exit the parking lot. Cross the drop-off lanes at the center crosswalk only.

# School Dismissal Diagram



# Attendance

Simply put, regular school attendance is important. Our universal objective as a community should be to strive for perfect attendance.

Classical education is highly interactive and requires consistent and punctual attendance. Because the classical approach relies heavily on classroom discussion between students and teachers, most in-class work cannot be made up if a student is absent. For this reason, parents should exercise prudence and make every reasonable effort to ensure students do not miss class, including limiting family trips to the allotted school breaks.

## 95% Expectation

The expectation is that students attend school regularly with a daily attendance rate of 95% at a minimum. All absences, verified or unverified, count towards a student's record for compliance with 95% attendance. Our 95% attendance policy fosters **perseverance** by building grit in students, encourages **self-government** as students take ownership of their commitments and obligations, and shows **courtesy** by honoring the collective pursuit of wisdom alongside faculty and peers.

Any absences from class, whether verified or unverified, will be included in the calculation of the daily attendance percentage. The **ONLY** absences that **WILL NOT** be used in calculating the attendance % record are:

1. Those that occur due to school-sponsored activities.
2. Bereavement in the immediate family (grandmother, grandfather, father, mother, sister, brother). Any extended bereavement may be reviewed by the Head of School;
3. Subpoenas to appear in court or court-ordered placements for special services;

Documentation for absences for any of these reasons may be required by the Head of School.

## Attendance Committee

The Attendance Committee will consist of the Assistant Head of School, Enrollment and Operations Coordinator, and the student's teacher.

- Upon occurrence of the fourth absence or when a student risks falling below the 95% attendance expectation, the student and parents will meet with the Attendance Committee to see if any interventions need to take place.

- The Attendance Committee intervenes by regularly monitoring attendance and collaborating with parents to enhance both attendance and academic performance.
- The Attendance Committee will make recommendations for interventions and determine if promotion or credit will be denied. Absence from class for any reason, verified or unverified, will be considered when making denial of promotion or credit and habitual truancy determinations. The Attendance Committee may also consider extenuating circumstances when making a decision and recommendation.

## Verified vs Unverified Absence

All absences, verified or unverified, count towards a student's record for compliance with 95% attendance. Students will be allowed to make up work after a verified absence, only.

Absences will only be verified if the school is notified on the day that the student was absent. Unverified absences will not be converted to verified absences retroactively.

For all verified absences, students will have one day for every day absent after coming back to school to make up the work missed. The only exception to this policy is absences due to bereavement, which will receive a longer grace period at the discretion of the Head of School.

The following will be considered verified absences:

- Absences for medical reasons (a doctor's note is required after the third day in a row);
- Absences for religious holidays;
- Pre-arranged absences of an educational nature that are approved by the Head of School (e.g., visits to colleges for high-school students; scheduled, performance-related activities);
- Court appearance that is verified by official documentation
- Professional appointments that could not be scheduled outside of the regular school day
- Attendance at any school-sponsored activity;
- Significant family event approved by Head of School or Assistant Head of School. Any absence not pre-approved at least 24 hours in advance will be considered an unverified absence. Note that routine family events like vacations, non-urgent trips, hunting trips, or general "family time" will not be approved and are unverified absences
- Bereavement (please notify the School if absence will extend beyond three days);

All other absences will be considered unverified absences. Students will not receive credit for academic work missed during unverified absences.

Students who have accumulated 5 unverified absences at any time throughout the school year may not be permitted to:

- Participate in school field trips
- Attend school dances
- Receive honors or titles
- Serve on student government
- Participate in extracurricular activities and programs
- Participate in school sports

## Additional Attendance Policies

Students who arrive after 11:00 a.m. will be considered absent for the day. Students who depart before 1:00 p.m. will be considered absent.

When appointments (e.g., doctor or dentist) during the school day are unavoidable, students are responsible for making up missed schoolwork. Students will have one day to make up the work missed. Assignments that are not made up in time will receive no credit. It is helpful to both the student and the teacher to make prior arrangements to meet this requirement.

## Tardiness

Students who arrive after the beginning of the school day will be considered tardy. Students must make it not only to school but to class on time to avoid being tardy. Students who are either tardy or returning to school from an appointment must be signed in at the front desk by a parent. At three unverified tardies, whether to school or class, the attendance committee will intervene to include converting unverified tardies to unverified absences.

## Chronic Absenteeism

Students who have accumulated five (5) unverified absences anytime throughout the school year will be considered chronically absent and will be considered habitually truant pursuant to Idaho Code §33-208(1)(a).

Students who are chronically absent may be referred to the Board of Directors for discussion of appropriate action that could include denying promotion to the next grade or expulsion for habitual truancy. Any action to expel for habitual truancy will follow the processes outlined in Idaho Code §33-205.

If an upper school student accumulates six (6) unverified absences in a course, they will receive a failing grade in that course and will have to re-take it.

## Hall Passes

Each teacher will establish a procedure for using the restroom or conducting other business outside of the classroom while class is in session. The teacher will provide students with a hall pass that identifies which classroom the student departed from. Upper school faculty will also maintain a check out/check in form that students complete when exiting or entering the room during the class period. No more than one student may be out of the class at a time.

## Lockers

Valor Classical Academy provides lockers (as available) for students in 7th grade and higher. The lockers and locks are school property. Student lockers have combination dials built in.

Valor Classical Academy has the authority to search lockers when deemed necessary.

Valor Classical Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Valuables are NOT to be brought to school. Problems with lockers should be reported to the office.

Students must observe the following rules:

- Students are not allowed to decorate the inside of lockers with posters, pictures, or anything else which advertises sex, drugs, suicide, cults, alcohol, or promotes other negative or derogatory messages as determined by the Head of School. Only items that are easily removable and will not damage interior locker surfaces are allowed.
- Lockers must be kept neat and orderly at all times. Lockers are the property of the school, and routine checks will occur throughout the year.
- Food may not be stored in lockers overnight.
- Lockers must be kept closed when not in use to maintain the integrity of the fire corridors and avoid careless accidents. Items left outside lockers or on the floor may be removed or disposed of.
- We strongly discourage students from sharing their locker combinations with others, as that may lead to conflicts should items go missing.

## Lunch and Snacks

Lunchtime provides an opportunity to relax, play, and restore the body and mind. Students must talk quietly and behave calmly during lunch.

## How Lunch Builds Citizens

It is important for us, as we build our Valor student community, to encourage students to engage in dialogue and create shared experiences that bridge their differences and create a unified student body in pursuit of the ideals of our country's founding. One of the ways in which we pursue this at Valor is by assigning seats to elementary students at lunch.. When we seat students with different peers over a period of weeks and months, we are creating opportunities for them to build a broader base of friendships, which supports the formation of a healthy community. Uniting the student body and encouraging the creation of many friendships is of such great importance that it completely transcends individual seating preferences. This is direct preparation for participation as a citizen in the civic life of our nation.

## Free or Reduced Lunch

Applications for free or reduced meals are available in the front office.

## Snacks

We understand that young students require snacks to keep them going during the day, and young students will be allowed to enjoy snacks during recess. Parents are responsible for sending students to school with a small, healthy snack that can be eaten in a couple of minutes. We ask that students bring things that can be eaten without utensils and without creating a mess. Avoid snack foods that stain fingers, as they can leave residue on shared school property and distract from the neatness and order of the learning environment. With the exception of water bottles, food and drink are not permitted in the classrooms. Students may not chew gum.

## Birthdays and Celebrations

Valor Classical Academy recognizes that birthdays are a special day for our students. We must also ensure that parties and celebrations do not disrupt the instructional day or interfere with the health and safety of all our students. Parents, visitors, staff, and students may not bring food into the school to share with students, with the exception of two parties per year: a Christmas party and an end-of-the-year party.

To clarify, parents and visitors may not bring in birthday cupcakes, donuts, or other treats to share with children on their child's birthday. Parents are encouraged to eat lunch with their child on his/her birthday and to read a book to their child's class in honor of the birthday.

## Food Incentives

Neither the school, faculty, nor PTCA will use food or beverages as rewards or incentives for academic performance, good behavior, or goal attainment.

## School Hours

The typical school week is Monday through Friday.

	School Day Start Time:	School Day End Time:
Elementary (K-6):	8:30 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
Upper School (7-12):	8:15 a.m.	3:20 p.m.

Elementary students are encouraged to arrive by 8:00 a.m. to participate in Story Time (K-3) and Morning Forum (4-6) before class begins. During this time, school leaders read stories to the student body and use them to teach moral virtue.

Students who arrive after 11:00 a.m. will be considered absent for the day. Students who depart before 1:00 p.m. will be considered absent.

## Student Fees

From time to time the School may charge fees to its families to fund expenses related to athletics, extracurricular clubs, field trips, etc. All charges and fees must be authorized by the Head of School.

## Student Supply Lists

Students are responsible for bringing their own classroom supplies as listed in the Student Supply Lists. If any student is unable to obtain certain items, please inform the school administration, and the School will ensure these supplies are provided.

## Technology

Cell phones and all other personal electronic devices will be turned off and stored in the students' lockers or other appropriate place. A cell phone or personal electronic device used during the school day will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the day, at which time a parent must pick up the device. Confiscated devices will only be available for pickup during normal school operating hours (7:45 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.). Due to the potential harms of unrestricted internet access, we discourage parents from providing their children with an internet-capable device to be used without supervision.

On bus routes, cell phones and other personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored in students' backpacks.

At school events outside school hours and on bus rides to athletic events or upper-school field trips, cell phones and other personal electronic devices may be approved for use by supervising faculty or staff for specified purposes and/or periods of time.

## Toileting

All students of Valor Classical Academy must be independent in toileting. On occasion students may have “accidents.” When an “accident” occurs, it is the responsibility of the parent to assist the child and to provide clean clothing.

If there are repeated “accidents,” a meeting with the parents, the teacher, and the Head of School will be held to evaluate the situation. Appropriate action will be taken based on what is in the best interest of all students and the School.

## Uniform and Grooming

At VCA, students wear uniforms to eliminate distractions, to level the playing field, and to remind ourselves that learning is important work. The spirit of the uniform policy is that students will dress and groom themselves in a manner that is traditional, not distracting, and not obstructive. The School uniform and dress code policy is in effect during the school day and at school-sponsored activities (at home and away).

### Uniform Dress Code

Students must be in uniform to attend class. Students not in uniform will be sent to the office and must call a parent or guardian. Parents will either bring acceptable attire, or students will be sent home. These absences are unverified.

The uniform and dress code policy requires students to dress in accordance with the mandatory and optional items listed on the School-approved “uniform boards” for boys and girls, respectively. For students in grades 9-12, formal uniforms must be worn on Wednesdays. Additional standards are listed below:

- Students may wear their own outerwear (coats, sweaters, vests) to school and on the playground. This outerwear should be removed prior to entering the classroom. If they are cold in the classroom, they should wear one of the uniform outerwear items.
- When inclement weather occurs or is forecasted, students may wear weather-appropriate non-uniform footwear to and from school and for outdoor recess. Upon entering the building, students must change promptly into approved uniform shoes. The transition must not disrupt or delay academic instruction. The school reserves the right to determine whether footwear or transition time meets the intent of this policy.
- Boots of any kind (e.g., work, ankle, fashion, UGG, cowboy, and others) may not be worn indoors with the uniform.
- Skirts shall fall no higher than 2 inches above the knee when the student is standing.

- Tights should be free from rips and tears. Fleece-lined or sweater tights may be worn in the winter.
- Uniform pants must be of sufficient length to overlap the uniform sock without a gap between the two items, regardless of standing or sitting.
- Girls may wear gym uniform shorts underneath their skirts on physical education days.
- All uniform pieces should be labeled with the students' first initial and last name.
- Students may use any backpack if it is clean, tasteful, not distracting, and aligns with the culture of the school.
- Hair must be clean, neat, and styled traditionally. No unusual or radical hairstyles are permitted. Hairstyles associated with a religious tradition are not considered unusual or radical. Only natural colors are allowed. Hair accessories must be modest and match or complement uniform colors.
- All girls' and boys' polo shirts may have the top button unbuttoned. All other buttons must be buttoned.
- Modest jewelry is allowed. An object that has a purpose other than jewelry cannot be worn as jewelry (i.e., chains or collars). No more than one necklace of reasonable length and one bracelet may be worn.
- Girls in grades K-6 may wear one stud earring per ear on the earlobe, and it must not be larger than a quarter. No hoop, dangling, or drop-style earrings are allowed. Girls in grades 7-12 may wear an additional stud-type earring in the earlobe. No stretched piercings (gauge) or holes may be visible. Nose, eyebrow, septum, tongue, or other non-traditional piercings may not be worn at school. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.
- Jewelry items not expressly permitted in this handbook are not allowed.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times. Students may not wear visible temporary tattoos or have drawings or writing visible on their skin.
- Makeup must look natural. Students must maintain clean, neatly trimmed fingernails kept at a short, natural length (not extending beyond the fingertip). Upper school girls may wear nail polish that is not distracting.
- No hats, visors, bandanas, or sunglasses are permitted to be worn inside the building (religious headgear is authorized).
- K-4th grade students will not change out for gym classes, including shoes. 5-12th grade students will dress according to the approved uniform boards posted on the School website.

- Good personal hygiene is required. This includes wearing neat, clean clothing and daily use of deodorant (for grades 5 and up). Strong/offensive body odors or excessive use of perfumes or cologne are inappropriate and distracting.

## Non-Uniform Dress Code for School-Sponsored Events

Students are welcome to wear regular uniforms to most school-sponsored events and encouraged to wear house wear.

The Uniform Dress Code rules listed above concerning hair, jewelry, piercings, tattoos, and girls' skirt length apply at school-sponsored events where uniforms are not required.

The following items are not permitted at school-sponsored events:

- Tank tops, spaghetti straps, crop tops
- Ripped jeans, sweats, sweat suits, jeggings, pajamas
- Shoes with lights, heels, or wheels
- PE or other gym shorts
- Clothing with lettering or commercial messaging (brand logos are acceptable)

## Uniform and Financial Assistance

The School will not allow financial need to limit access to Valor Classical Academy, and this includes access to uniforms. At minimum, the School will fund one complete uniform set for children whose families qualify for financial assistance. Parents requesting financial assistance for uniforms should contact the Head of School for more information.

### Lost and Found

The student Lost and Found is near the front office. Students are responsible for retrieving misplaced items. Due to limited space, all unclaimed items will automatically be donated to either Idaho Youth Ranch or the school uniform store on the last school day of the month.

### Used Uniform Store

The School will maintain a Used Uniform Store, which allows families to purchase “experienced” items at a significant discount. The store will be opened with prior announcement, typically coinciding with school events throughout the year, and accepts donations of gently used items during open times.

# Academic Policies

## Educational Priorities

The Board desires that all students receive a classical liberal arts and science education. To this end the Board has determined the following educational priorities.

- Basic cognitive skills and academic fundamentals: reading/writing/mathematics;
- Core subjects: English language and literature; history, geography, and government; physical and biological sciences; mathematics;
- Other classical subjects: music; art; Latin;
- Auxiliary subjects: foreign languages, physical education, performing arts, other social sciences;
- Extracurricular activities as defined by the Head of School.

## Curriculum

The School receives detailed curricular guidance for the entire K-12 Scope and Sequence from the Hillsdale College Office of K-12 Education. Changes to the curriculum will not be made by the Head of School without coordinating those changes with Hillsdale K-12 staff.

K-8: The K-8 content area curriculum is inspired by the Core Knowledge Sequence. Occasionally, the School will diverge from the Core Knowledge Sequence to raise the standards in teaching a particular skill or subject. The Board and Head of School will determine these instances. The Head of School will ensure that all skill areas in the K-8 Core Knowledge Sequence are taught at some point in grades K-8.

9-12: Grades 9-12 in the upper school will feature a liberal arts and sciences curriculum. The objective of the high school curriculum is to explore issues and texts intensively rather than to offer a superficial “covering.” The humanities program will be centered on a coordinated Western Civilization sequence. In all humanities courses, priority will be given to original sources and great works as opposed to textbooks. Mathematics and the sciences will offer rigorous training in the fundamentals and theories of these disciplines. Students will receive extensive training in analytical thinking and the scientific method. In all subjects, textbooks will be used as a resource, not as the basis of the curriculum.

Teachers must develop their courses under the direction of the Head of School, who is the chief academic leader and accountable to the Board.

# Homework and Reading

Homework is an important aspect of classical education because it reinforces classroom learning, builds the virtue of **self-government**, and ensures students engage deeply with content like literature, math problems, and historical texts. The amount of homework varies by grade. In elementary school, homework may focus on practicing foundational skills while in older grades, it may include longer reading assignments and essays to develop comprehension and critical thinking skills. Teachers aim to balance workload with age-appropriate expectations, but parents noticing excessive homework should discuss it with the school to ensure it aligns with the classical model's goals.

Homework's immediate educational purpose is:

- to reinforce skills and concepts and knowledge learned in class;
- to develop good skills and habits of study;
- to practice skills and reinforce knowledge in ways that are not readily accomplished in the classroom;
- to work on assignments, such as the writing of papers, and prepare for exams that require a great deal of sustained, individual attention;
- to prepare for the following day's work so that the most can be made of class time;
- to inform parents of what is being taught in the classroom.

In addition to regular classroom assignments, we would like each younger child to read, or be read to, at least three times a week and preferably every day. Reading to a child encourages the child's growth and elevates conversation within the family. In the upper grades, the extra reading time (roughly half an hour) allows for the increasing length of great works of literature.

The expected homework time allotment for each grade is as follows:

Kindergarten	10 minutes plus family reading time
Grade 1	10 minutes plus family reading time
Grade 2	20 minutes plus reading time
Grade 3	30 minutes plus reading time
Grade 4	40 minutes plus reading time
Grade 5	50 minutes plus reading time
Grade 6	60 minutes plus reading time

Grade 7	70 minutes plus reading time
Grade 8	80 minutes plus reading time
Grades 9 -12	90-120 minutes plus reading time

The designated times serve as guidelines and may vary depending on the work assigned on a given day, the schedule, the student's organizational skills and study habits, the varying abilities of the students, and the nature of the assignments. Students are expected to learn how to use their time effectively to complete the required work at each grade level. Parents are expected to support their children in this endeavor. Advanced classes may require additional homework time. It is generally understood that writing papers and studying for exams take more time than regular classroom assignments. For that reason, the end of a term does result in increased homework load. Nonetheless, teachers will make every effort to give assignments well in advance, and students will be encouraged to work on those longer assignments steadily, so that students are able to manage their homework along with other activities and adequate sleep. In the upper school, students will have the opportunity to take Studium. The word "studium" is a Latin word meaning to study with zeal and determination. During Studium, students diligently work on their assignments during the school day, functionally reducing the amount of time at home that must be devoted to homework.

Teachers may require students to redo poorly done or incomplete work that was submitted on time. Whether such work is given any credit is left to the discretion of the teacher. Students are expected to complete all their homework.

## Grading Policy

Grading is not the be-all and end-all of education. If anything, some students put more emphasis on grades than their teachers do. The grade a student receives in a class is subordinate to the knowledge the student acquires. Still, grades are a useful tool to evaluate the extent to which a student has mastered a particular subject. Therefore, grades will be assigned in all classes and subjects. Valor Classical Academy will assign grades to accurately reflect the range between true mastery and insufficient knowledge of a subject, as well as completion of assigned work.

Grade inflation will be discouraged. In relation to the student's performance, the following letter grades have these meanings:

- A     Mastery
- B     Proficiency
- C     Satisfactory
- D     Sufficiency
- F     Failing

In addition to these general parameters, Valor Classical Academy uses a 4.0 grading scale. The letter and numerical grades for this system are listed below:

A	94-100%	4.0
A-	90-93	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	84-86	3.0
B-	80-83	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	74-76	2.0
C-	70-73	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	64-66	1.0
D-	60-63	0.7
F	0-59	0.0

The grading scale as defined above is utilized for all students except for kindergarten through second grade, where the scale will reflect Beginning (B), Intermediate (I), Proficient (P), Mastery (M) in specific skill sets.

Incompletes will only be given under special circumstances and must be approved by the Head of School.

Parents and students should be regularly informed of the student's progress and should access the PowerSchool Parent Portal regularly for classwork information and completion.

Students in grades 3-12 will also be graded on the development of good character. We call these citizenship grades. Each teacher will assign a grade in the six school virtues (courage, courtesy, honesty, perseverance, self-government, and service) to students at the end of the quarter. The grading scale for citizenship grades is as follows:

H	Honorable
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

K-2 students will receive weekly character cards in lieu of citizenship grades. Character cards will be sent home with the student each week and reflect their progress within each virtue. Parents will be required to sign the character card and send it back to school at the beginning of the next week.

In summary, report cards for K-2 students will include skill grades. Students in grades 3-12 will receive letter grades and citizenship scores. Additionally, grade-level teachers will provide a comment for each student (limited to 1-2 sentences) describing their progress in each course and/or subject area.

## Semester Grade Composition (Grades 7-12)

For the Upper School (grades 7-12), the semester grade composition is as follows:

Semester Grade Composition	Grades 7-8	Grades 9-12
Final Exam	10%	20%
Major Graded Items	40%	50%
Minor Graded Items	40%	20%
Homework	10%	10%

Examples of major graded items include a test or essay. Examples of minor graded items include a quiz or classwork assignment.

Parents can expect PowerSchool Gradebooks to reflect a minimum of three graded assignments per course, per week.

## Late Work

Students are expected to turn in their assignments on time. Only work turned in on time will be eligible for full credit. For homework and minor graded items, failure to complete them on time will result in zero credit. For major graded items such as tests and essays, students who fail to meet deadlines will be penalized 30% for turning in their work up to one day late. After that, they will receive zero credit.

## Extra Credit

“Extra credit,” whether to make up for work not turned in on time or to increase a student’s grade, is not permitted at Valor Classical Academy.

## Promotion and Retention

It is our goal for parents, teachers, and students to work together during the year to ensure that students are developing responsible work habits and attaining a sufficient level of understanding in their courses.

## Attendance

Valor Classical Academy may consider a student's absences when determining course grades and/or promotion or retention for the next school year.

## Elementary School Promotion Criteria

Literacy:

Solid literacy is the foundation of all learning. Without the ability to read well, a student cannot advance in English, history, the sciences, the arts, and even mathematics. Since language is the basis of all human interaction, a person cannot thrive independently in the world when possessed of only a halting literacy. The ability to read, particularly in the early elementary grades, will therefore be a requirement for promotion. The School will follow the criteria of reading competency set forth in the Access Literacy Phonics program.

Kindergarten:

The student must be recommended for promotion by the classroom teacher and Head of School based on satisfactory classroom performance. Satisfactory classroom performance will be determined based on student progress in the Literacy Essentials Phonics Curriculum, behavior, and maturity level.

Grades 1-2:

The student must be recommended for promotion by the classroom teacher and Head of School based on satisfactory classroom performance. Satisfactory classroom performance refers to mastery of academic skills and will be determined based on classroom and standardized assessments, especially the Literacy Essentials Phonics Curriculum and the Measure of Academic Progress.

Grades 3-6:

The student must be recommended for promotion by the classroom teacher and Head of School based on satisfactory classroom performance. Satisfactory classroom performance includes grades on the student report card and performance on standardized assessments, especially the Measure of Academic Progress.

## Upper School Promotion Criteria

Grades 7-8:

- The student must be recommended for promotion by the classroom teacher and Head of School based on satisfactory classroom performance.

- If a student fails two or more courses, they will be automatically retained.
- If a student fails a mathematics or Latin course, they will be required to remediate the course before moving on to the next level.

Grades 9-12:

- Freshmen must earn 12.5 credits to be considered Sophomores
- Sophomores must earn 25 credits to be considered Juniors
- Juniors must earn 37.5 credits to be considered Seniors
- Seniors must earn 50 credits to graduate
- Except for semester courses, subjects in the high school are taken as yearlong courses. Each semester of a yearlong course carries 1 credit.
- Grades between A-D will earn 1 credit per semester. No credit is awarded for an F. Failing a non-elective course will require the student to retake the class.
- Students are not permitted to take makeup courses through a summer program other than those recommended by Valor Classical Academy.

## Graduation Requirements

The following are required to earn a high school diploma:

- 50 credits (per the graduation pathways detailed below)
- Cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- 100 documented community service hours

Detailed Credit Requirements

- 6 credits of mathematics
- 8 credits of science
- 8 credits of literature
- 8 credits of history
- 6 credits of civics
- 4 credits of reading, writing, and speaking
- 6 foreign language credits (2 must be Latin)

- 2 fine arts credits
- 2 physical education credits (including 1 credit of health)

Students must maintain a full course load (having no free periods) in grades 9-12. Credit bearing on-site internships may be available to 12th grade students. Carrying a reduced course load, starting school late, or leaving school early will not be permitted.

Note: A diploma may be awarded to students with disabilities assigned to a special education program who have not completed all the requirements for a high school diploma but who have completed modified curriculum identified in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Students may earn a diploma with honors by accomplishing the following:

- Fulfillment of all credit requirements
- Completion of 56 credits
- Completion of eight credits in mathematics, including Trigonometry/Pre-Calculus OR 200 documented community service hours
- Cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale

Students may earn a diploma with high honors by accomplishing the following:

- Fulfillment of all credit requirements
- Completion of 56 credits
- Completion of eight credits in mathematics, including Calculus, and science through Astronomy (or equivalent advanced science), OR 300 documented community service hours
- Cumulative GPA of 3.7 or higher on a 4.0 scale

## Additional Academic Policies

### Cheating

Like plagiarism, cheating will not be tolerated by any teacher in any subject. Cheating occurs when a student uses someone else's work or a prohibited source of information in order to gain an unfair advantage on a test or an assignment and to avoid doing his own work. Cheating comes in many forms. One student copying off another, using a "cheat sheet" to answer questions on a test, and trying to pass off another student's work as his own are examples of cheating. The same process outlined for plagiarism will be followed for instances of cheating. A student who allows others to copy his work will also be held accountable in the same fashion.

## Class Placement

Valor Classical Academy has full confidence in the ability of every teacher we employ to make the school year successful and rewarding for every student, no matter what challenges any student may face; we would not employ a teacher in whom we lacked this confidence.

Class placements for grades 1-6 take into consideration academic data and teacher testimony per student. In making class placements, school leadership will aim for balanced classes in terms of student academic ability levels and behavioral needs. Teacher assignments are made available to students and parents at the Open House in August.

Valor does not make class placements based on parent requests.

## Multiple-Tiered System of Supports

While the mission of the School relies on providing a rigorous and content-rich curriculum, it may be determined that some students would benefit from additional supports in reading, writing, and math. The School uses a Multiple-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model to ensure that each student's academic needs are met through analysis of assessment data collected throughout the year. Students identified as needing additional support may participate in small flexible groups using targeted intervention resources. Some students may require more intensive academic support and/or specialized services. The MTSS process is as follows:

**Tier 1:** Universal supports are used as best practices during initial direct instruction and practice. All students are periodically assessed to ensure proficiency in the core curriculum. The data is analyzed by the student's teacher and used to determine the need for additional supports.

**Tier 2:** Students benefiting from additional targeted interventions are routinely monitored for progress and modifications or adjustments are made.

**Tier 3:** Students needing intensive intervention may require the support of specialized staff and an Individual Education Plan may be put in place.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated by any teacher in any subject. The entire system of assessment rests on the assumption that the work a student turns in is his or her own. Plagiarism compromises this system, is unfair to other students in the class who do their own work and constitutes a form of theft of others' ideas and labor. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of another's ideas or words in order to present them as one's own. Utilizing artificial intelligence to generate an essay is also an example of plagiarism. An instance of plagiarism can be as long as a term paper or as short as a sentence. Simply rephrasing an author's words can also constitute plagiarism. The words of authors can only be used when properly quoted and cited. Teachers will

provide the guidelines of acceptable citation. When in doubt, the student has the responsibility to ask how an author should be used in an assignment.

Note: the use of artificial intelligence (AI) platforms or applications in student work constitutes plagiarism and will be treated as such.

## Schedule Changes

There will be no class schedule changes during the semester unless it is deemed in the student's best interest by the Head of School.

## Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring semesters. There will be no school on parent/teacher conference days. Conferences will occur between 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Parents are encouraged to schedule a conference with their child's teacher(s) in advance, but walk-ins are also allowed. Scheduled conferences will always take precedence over walk-ins.

Arrangements for additional conferences outside of scheduled parent/teacher conference days may be made with your child's teacher.

## Teaching Controversial Issues

Controversial issues are defined as contemporary problems, subjects, or questions of a political or social nature where there are entrenched differences of opinion and passions run high. Controversial issues will be explored only when emanating from some part of the curriculum in grades 9 through 12. When these subjects come up, teachers will present an impartial view of both sides of the issue without proselytizing. Contemporary controversial issues will not be discussed in the elementary school without Head of School approval. No part of the curriculum will be used to undermine the nobility of America's experiment in liberty and self-government under the rule of law.

## Teaching Evolution

Valor Classical Academy embraces a rigorous program in the natural sciences. In biology, the School will teach the theory of evolution as found in the standard high-school biology textbooks and as also taught at the college level in both secular and religious colleges. The theory of evolution is largely misunderstood today by the general public. Much of what constitutes the teaching of evolution concerns adaptation of species to their environments and change over time. A great many of these phenomena are observable. A very small percentage of evolutionary theory deals with the more controversial issue of the origins of life. This latter aspect of evolution, to the extent it is taught, will be introduced to students briefly with a great deal of circumspection; it is not a central part of the theory. Furthermore, the study of science will be confined to the investigation of the physical world. It is not the place of science to make

metaphysical claims nor to confirm or deny the validity of religion or the existence of God. Valor Classical Academy recognizes a clear distinction between science and scientism. Science is the continued research into the natural world in order to find the most plausible explanations for natural phenomena. Scientism is the belief—and it is a belief—that science is the only means of understanding our world, thus excluding other ways of interpreting the world, such as through literature or religion.

Keeping in mind this distinction, the teachers at Valor Classical Academy will leave matters of faith up to students and their parents. The role of a teacher in a public school is neither that of preacher nor of skeptic. Rather, teachers of history, when called upon by the curriculum, will teach the history of religion without either advocating or undermining religion in general or any specific faith. Likewise, science teachers will teach science, without comment on religion. Teachers, students, and parents must realize that a biology class has a particular purpose and is not the proper venue for a philosophical or theological discussion on the existence of God or claims relating to the activity of God or absence thereof in the natural world.

## Role of Parents and School in Relation to Human Sexuality

We believe parents own the fundamental responsibility for their children’s education, which includes the areas of morality and sexuality. The School’s role, at most, should be viewed as a supportive one. It is apparent that sexuality is more than biology and physiology. It also encompasses morality, spirituality, and emotions. Because it is a part of the whole human experience, it must be taught with circumspection and sensitivity.

We believe children are naturally modest concerning their bodies and are not ready to learn everything at once. They are naturally curious, however, and need to get answers to their questions in a way appropriate to their stage of development. In teaching this topic, we want to minimize the embarrassment associated with it for both children and parents.

## Teaching Human Sexuality

Valor Classical Academy does not engage in family life or sex education, out of a firm belief that both topics are the domain of the family. We encourage families to address these topics in accordance with developmental milestones and the culture and values of their household.

Our curriculum does include instruction in human anatomy and physiology. Information about the reproductive system is taught in fifth grade science and ninth grade biology. Sexual intercourse will only be presented as a reproductive act between a male and a female.

The fifth grade unit is brief, lasting approximately 2-3 days, and addresses information that is relevant to students beginning puberty, including the reproductive organs, human growth and development, reproduction, and the menstrual cycle. This unit of study is taught in a gender-separated environment. Parents will have the opportunity to preview the materials used to teach this unit and meet with the teachers prior to any related materials being taught.

Students learn about the reproductive system again in ninth grade Biology as part of a comprehensive unit on the systems that make up the human body.

In the upper school, themes that deal with human sexuality may emerge from the reading of a serious text, such as *Anna Karenina*, *Brave New World*, or *The Scarlet Letter*. When these topics do emerge from the curriculum itself, teachers will engage the material in a serious way and only address the content insofar as it relates to the literature.

Per Idaho Code, any content that addresses human sexuality, including the anatomy and physiology of reproduction, will be opt-in only. Families must be presented with a physical (not digital) permission form at least two weeks in advance of instruction. Students whose parents do not opt-in by returning the written permission form on time will be provided with an alternate option.

High school health classes consist of instruction and practice in nutrition and fitness and will not include family life or sex education.

Character education is an integral part of our program. Sexuality involves serious moral decision-making. It is important to help children build the capacity to make and abide by sound moral choices. We would like our teaching of human reproduction to be a springboard to initiate and facilitate discussions between parents and children on this sensitive subject.

Employees will not discuss their personal lives on matters pertaining to human sexuality with students.

## Video Viewing Policy

From time-to-time videos or other media may be used to support the lesson. To be used in class they must meet a specific curricular objective and will not have profane language or sexually explicit material. Teachers must receive prior approval from the Head of School to show a video. Teachers are responsible for previewing videos to ensure that they are appropriate.

# Guidelines for Student Behavior

## Honor Code

Valor Classical Academy was founded to develop students in both mind and character. The School's virtues are the guiding principles used to cultivate and nurture character: courage, courtesy, honesty, perseverance, self-government, and service. Students are expected to conduct themselves honorably in word and deed, to strive to live by the virtues, and to encourage others to do so as well.

The Valor Classical Academy Honor Code is as follows:

*Valor Classical Academy students strive to be virtuous in conduct, seek to grow in scholarship and learning, and pursue a commitment toward civic responsibility.*

## Understanding the Code

Valor Classical Academy expects all students to follow our Honor Code. VCA was founded to develop students in both mind and character. The School's virtues are the guiding principles used to cultivate and nurture character: courage, courtesy, honesty, perseverance, self-government, and service. Students are expected to conduct themselves honorably in word and deed, to strive to live by the virtues, and to encourage others to do so as well.

Guided by faculty, staff, and parents, students should seek to exhibit the School's virtues and live by the School pledge: I will learn the true, I will do the good, I will love the beautiful.

## Virtues

**Courage** is the state of mind that enables one to face danger or fear with confidence. Aristotle tells us that a courageous person will fear things but will endure them for the sake of the noble. In the face of danger or challenge, courage is a firm conviction—with appropriate levels of fear and confidence—that compels one to accomplish and pursue that which is noble and worthy.

\_\_\_ *Be Brave* \_\_\_

**Courtesy** is both demonstrating good manners and displaying a willingness or generosity to show kindness and respect toward others. Courtesy contributes to a culture of civility on campus. George Washington famously kept a copy of 110 "Rules of Civility in Conversations Amongst Men." Many of the rules served as practical guidelines for courteous living. Washington emphasized that our actions ought to portray a sign of respect for others around us, regardless of their standing, rank, or position.

\_\_\_ *Be Kind and Respectful* \_\_\_

**Honesty** is derived from the Latin formulation *integritas*. *Integritas* literally means “intact”—or the state of being whole and undivided—in other words, the truth and nothing but the whole truth. Aristotle wrote that an ethical person should not only be honest, but should be a lover of truth. Such a person would be truthful in situations in which being honest would make no immediate difference. In other words, as C.S. Lewis once said, “Integrity is doing the right thing, even if nobody is watching.”

\_\_\_ *Always Tell the Truth* \_\_\_

**Perseverance** means to steadfastly pursue a course of action or a purpose, often in the face of obstacles or discouragement. As the well-known poem reminds us, *if at first you don't succeed, try, try again...if you will persevere, you will conquer, never fear...try, try again!* In 1771, Samuel Adams exhorted his fellow patriots: “Instead of sitting down satisfied with the efforts we have already made...the necessity of the times, more than ever, calls for our utmost circumspection, deliberation, fortitude, and perseverance.”

\_\_\_ *Never Give Up* \_\_\_

**Self-government** is the ability to “rule over oneself.” As Socrates states in the Platonic dialogues, a man should be temperate and a master of himself, and ruler of his own pleasures and passions. Aristotle described a self-restrained person as someone who, on account of reason, does not follow their base desires. It takes education and practice to develop the characteristics of self-government—self-control, moderation, prudence, and restraint. Effective self-governance promotes a civil and orderly culture and leads to an increase in liberty for both individuals and societies alike.

\_\_\_ *Practice Self-Control* \_\_\_

**Service** is an active disposition toward assisting in the needs of, or promoting the welfare of others. It is a willingness to stand with others in their need and to provide help to the point of self-sacrifice. One of the most enduring examples of service is that of the good Samaritan, who not only rendered first aid to a wounded stranger, but also paid for his restorative care. The good Samaritan represents a model of selfless and sacrificial generosity to a person in need.

\_\_\_ *Help Others* \_\_\_

## A Person of Integrity

Valor Classical Academy students are expected to act honorably and with integrity. This means they will not lie, cheat, or steal—and will discourage others from doing so. Honesty is the foundation of one’s character. To lie, cheat, or steal is to seriously breach one’s integrity. While it is only human to make mistakes or to show lapses in judgment, students are expected to own up to their actions. Lying, cheating, or stealing to cover things up is far worse than making the original mistake, and undermines trust in both peer-to-peer and student-to-teacher relationships.

# Plagiarism and Cheating

In academics and scholarship, students must always do their own work, represent themselves truthfully, and only claim what is their own. Plagiarism is a serious violation of the honor code—and is defined as the use of someone else’s words or ideas without proper acknowledgment. Plagiarism is deceptive and is cheating in that it is an attempt to gain an unfair advantage by appropriating someone else’s work or ideas.

## School-wide expectations

Each student will be responsible for providing a positive and healthy environment for others by maintaining order and **self-government**, and demonstrating **courtesy** by having consideration for the rights and property of others. Each student will bear the responsibility for his or her own conduct.

Therefore, students will:

1. Be polite and attentive both in and outside of class.
2. Communicate with teachers and school staff using their title (e.g. Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr., or Colonel) and last name.
3. Students are to be collectively addressed as “ladies, gentleman, or students”
4. Attend school consistently, be punctual, and take responsibility for making up any work promptly when absent.
5. Be prepared for class and follow directions.
6. Follow requests made by staff members with a positive attitude, and show respect for self, others, and property.
7. Communicate in an appropriate tone of voice and use respectful language, avoiding swear words, offensive remarks, or inappropriate laughter.
8. Follow lunchroom, playground, field trip, lab, and individual classroom rules.
9. Adhere to the uniform policy.
10. Not use threats or intimidation against any other person.
11. Respect the health and safety of others by following safety rules and refraining from bringing tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal substances to school.
12. Be dismissed by the teacher, not the bell or the clock.

13. Keep all internet-capable electronic devices (smart phones, smart watches, etc.) stowed away.
14. Not bring anything to school that could be used to harm another or that is illegal.
15. Not bring soda, energy drinks, or beverages high in sugar or caffeine to school.
16. Not bring items to sell or trade items with others.
17. Meals will not be ordered or delivered from restaurants.

## Public Displays of Affection

Students are reminded that the school is a place of education and that should be their priority. Inappropriate public displays of affection may make observers uncomfortable and are not appropriate in the school setting, at any time on the School campus or at a school function. Examples of inappropriate behavior are kissing, excessive hugging, sitting on laps and “hanging” on each other.

## Non-Discrimination, Non-Harassment, and Non-Bullying Policy

The School is committed to providing a safe and positive learning environment for all. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, and cyberbullying by students, staff, or third parties are strictly prohibited. These behaviors are subject to disciplinary action if they occur on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, or off-campus when they may disrupt the educational environment.

All are covered by and expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur.

The School’s policies follow all applicable federal, state, and local anti-discrimination and harassment laws and regulations.

### Discrimination

The School does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, marital status, service member status, or any category protected by law.

### Harassment and Bullying

The School prohibits harassment, including sexual harassment or bullying, of any kind. At a minimum, the term “harassment” as used in this policy includes:

1. Offensive remarks, comments, jokes, slurs, or verbal conduct pertaining to an individual's race, color, religion, genetic information, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, citizenship status, service member status, or any other category protected by law.
1. Bullying, which includes repeated physical, verbal, or cyber actions intended to harm or intimidate others based on characteristics like age, race, religion, sex, disability, or socioeconomic status.
2. Cyberbullying involves using electronic devices to harm or intimidate others.
3. Offensive pictures, drawings, photographs, figurines, or other graphic images, conduct, or communications, including web-based products, and copies pertaining to an individual's race, color, religion, genetic information, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, citizenship status, service member status, or any other category protected law.
4. Unsolicited and unwelcome sexual remarks, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
5. Offensive physical conduct, including touching and gestures.

A student, staff member, or family member who experiences or observes discrimination, harassment, bullying, or retaliation should report it immediately according to the guidelines listed below.

1. If you have any concerns that the Non-discrimination, Non-harassment, and Non-Bullying Policy may have been violated by anyone, you must immediately report the matter. Due to the very serious nature of harassment, discrimination and retaliation, you must report your concerns by filling out the Harassment Reporting Form and to one of the following individuals: the Head of School and Title IX Coordinator. You should report any actions that you believe may violate our policy no matter how slight the actions may seem.
2. The School will investigate the report and then take prompt, appropriate remedial action. The School will protect the confidentiality of students reporting suspected violations of this or any other School policy to the extent possible consistent with our investigation. However, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
3. You will not be penalized or retaliated against for truthfully reporting improper conduct, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or other actions that you believe may violate this policy.
4. The School absolutely prohibits retaliation, which includes threatening an individual or taking any adverse action against an individual for (1) reporting a possible violation of this policy, or (2) participating in an investigation conducted under this policy. An individual who retaliates against someone who has reported a concern in good faith is subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

# Bus Behavior Policy

For students who ride buses to school, the school day begins when they set foot on the bus in the morning and ends when they step off the bus in the afternoon. VCA's high expectations for student behavior apply on the bus just as they do at school. Of VCA's virtues, courtesy and self-government are of special relevance to bus rides. Students are expected to practice these virtues and will be held accountable for failing to do so. Students must show bus drivers the same respect as they are expected to show their teachers and school staff.

## Bus Safety Rules

1. Parents and drivers must confer and designate a safe, convenient place where students are to stand as they wait for the bus.
1. Students must wait until the bus comes to a complete stop, the doors open, and the driver gives them the go-ahead to approach and step aboard.
2. Students must always exercise caution when crossing the street. Students must always cross the street in front of a stopped bus and never behind it.
3. Parents, students, and drivers must take note of any dangers or difficulties presented by specific bus stops and proceed accordingly.
4. Students are not allowed to eat, drink (except water), or get out of their seats while on the bus.
5. Parents are strongly advised to wait with students at the bus stop for the first few days of school.
6. Parents must review these bus behavior and safety rules with students, affirm the importance of these rules, and exhort students to take responsibility for their own behavior and safety.

# Student Formation and Discipline

## The Purpose of Discipline

The main purpose of all discipline is student formation by teaching moral and intellectual virtue. Self-discipline arises from a desire for virtue, and without that desire, a student will falter when laws and rules are silent.

A secondary purpose is to foster an orderly and disciplined environment in which all students can learn and develop friendships. Order and discipline are the foundation for a thriving school culture.

## General Discipline Philosophy

The activity of learning requires students to be attentive and polite. Students are expected to adhere to the School's high expectations for behavior and core virtues lest they compromise their own learning and interfere with the learning of others. Minor infractions or disruptions will largely be handled in the classroom in a way suitable to the age of the student. Whenever a student misbehaves repeatedly or flagrantly, the consequences for the infraction will be immediate, relevant, and effectual. Rather than allow misbehavior to fester in the classroom, teachers will send disruptive students to the office. Moderate, level two violations will be addressed by the Assistant Head of School. When violations become severe and endanger self, others, or the culture of the school, we refer to them as level three violations. In general, level three violations will be addressed by the Head of School.

Valor Classical Academy has high expectations for student behavior. We view virtuous behavior as an essential component of human flourishing and a strong school culture. The spirit of our discipline policy is that the student and parent must take full responsibility for the child's behavior. Many of the consequences identified in the policy are structured to ensure that when negative behavior persists, home life is refocused on teaching virtuous conduct, improving the individual, and participating as an equal partner in the educational process. Since the parent is the child's first and primary teacher, the strongest efforts to improve a child's behavior occur at home.

Any departure from proper decorum is liable to disciplinary action. Because not all students respond to the same arguments, incentives, or punishments, any discipline policy must be at once equal to all students and consistently applied, and also fitted to both the nature of each individual student and the circumstances in which any misbehavior occurs.

Students' misbehavior will not be used to "teach" the class a lesson.

At no time will a student's disciplinary record be discussed with another student or parent. However, other students or parents may be consulted regarding an incident to discern the truth.

# Disciplinary Referral

Valor Classical Academy categorizes behavior violations according to three levels, including:

Level 1: Level one violations are minor classroom behaviors. These will be addressed by faculty as the need arises. Teachers are empowered to establish and implement consequences for level one behaviors. Repeated level one violations will result in referral to the Assistant Head of School of School.

Level 2: Level two violations are moderate behaviors. These will be addressed by the Assistant Head of School of School and may include a range of consequences determined by the behavior and number of prior violations.

Level 3: Level three violations are severe behaviors. These will be addressed by the Head of School and include significant consequences determined by the behavior and number of prior violations. Some level three violations may result in expulsion.

School leaders may increase the severity of a consequence, if necessary, but they may not reduce them.

## Disciplinary Referral Process

If a student is sent out of a classroom and to the office for disciplinary purposes, the teacher will call and notify the administrative assistant that the student is on their way. The administrative assistant will ensure that the child arrives in the main office. If the student does not immediately arrive, the Assistant Head of School of School or Head of School will be notified. The employee referring a student to the office must then promptly complete a disciplinary referral form. These forms are digital and can be accessed online by school employees.

The Assistant Head of School of School or Head of School will act on office referrals in a timely manner and will communicate action taken to the referring employee within 24 business hours of a disciplinary decision.

## Consequences

Consequences for misconduct include but are not limited to:

1. Expulsion
2. Suspension
3. Detention
4. Clean-up duty
5. Writing assignments specific to the behavior

6. Loss of student privileges
7. Loss of bus privileges
8. Notification to juvenile authorities and/or police
9. Restitution for damages to school property
10. Warning
11. Conference with teacher or school leader
12. Letter or call to parents
13. Parent conference
14. Fines may be levied on students for vandalism or theft committed. Students may be required to help repair damaged property.
15. Students may be put on a daily or weekly Virtue Card to track their behavior and communicate with parents their progress.
16. Parents may be required to attend school with their child.

A student's past discipline records, individual circumstances and severity of a particular incident will determine the specific nature of the consequences. The school administration reserves the right to determine the level of disciplinary action taken.

Consequences will be given and carried out as soon as possible following the behavior.

All enforcement of rules should be conducted with the intent to help the student develop a good character and moral virtue.

No School employee or person engaged by the School may inflict or cause corporal punishment on a student. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force school personnel are permitted to use as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or other persons or for the purpose of self-defense.

## Detention

At times, and with a view toward promoting orderly school culture and encouraging virtuous behavior, after school detention will be used to remediate poor student behavior. Although the Student Discipline Policy includes a couple instances where administrative detention may be applied, most detentions will be assigned and monitored by teachers in accordance with their classroom rules and consequences.

Rules for assigning detention to students at Valor Classical Academy are as follows:

- Detentions may only occur after school. Recess and lunch detentions will not be utilized.
- Parents will be notified by telephone every time a detention is assigned.
- Parents will be fully responsible for arranging transportation home for a student after detention is over. Students must be picked up promptly at the conclusion of their detention.
- Detentions will occur on the day after parents are notified by telephone so that adequate time is available to arrange transportation.
- Detentions will not be held on faculty meeting days. If a detention would occur on a faculty meeting day, it will instead be scheduled for the following day.
- If the student is absent on the day that their detention was scheduled, they should plan to serve that detention on the next day that they attend school.
- Detentions will last no longer than one hour.

Teachers are encouraged to utilize detentions to discuss behavior, expectations, and moral virtue with the student.

## Suspension and Expulsion

The Head of School has the authority to suspend students up to 10 days. All suspensions will require a re-entry conference between the parent(s) and the Assistant Head of School or Head of School. The conference will occur before the student is re-admitted to class. Suspensions are not verified absences and students may not make up assignments missed during their suspension. However, suspensions do not count toward truancy violations or attendance-based course failure. The loss of class time due to repeated suspensions may be grounds for retaining a student at the current grade level for the following year.

If expulsion becomes necessary, the Head of School will refer the case and all pertinent details to the Board for review and consideration.

The School will follow all pertinent laws and regulations related to student discipline, including but not limited to the suspension and expulsion requirements outlined in Idaho Code 33 § 205.

# Health and Medicine

## General

Parents will ensure that the School has updated medical information on file. It is the parents' responsibility to keep this information updated.

Parents will notify the office if a child has been injured at home and may need special considerations at school.

Parents will notify the School if there is a change of address or phone number throughout the course of the year. The name of emergency contacts also needs to be kept current.

## Medical Records and Enrollment

In order to complete the enrollment process, parents must submit the following:

- Immunization Records (or an appropriate waiver);
- [Administration of Medication/Medical Procedures form](#) (if applicable); and
- [Emergency Action Plan](#) (if applicable).

## Illness - When Should a Student Stay Home?

Sick children should not be in school. Any child who has a fever or is contagious (e.g., with pink eye, strep, the flu, or other typical viral symptoms) must be kept home.

Students displaying the following symptoms at school will be sent home:

- A fever >100 °F
- Vomiting
- A known or suspected contagious condition
- Generalized pain

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will be contacted if a student presents with:

- Loss of consciousness
- Respiratory or cardiac issues
- Acute pain (e.g., open fracture)
- Severe allergic reaction and after administration of an EpiPen

# Medicine

## Medicine Administration (Including Self-Administration by Students)

In accordance with Idaho Code 33-520, Valor Classical Academy recognizes that students may be required to take medication while at school or school sponsored activities, either on a short-term or daily basis. The School will provide an appropriate place for storing the medication and will supervise the dispensing of the medication for all students.

### Self-Administration of Prescriptions

1. For the purposes of this section of the policy, “self-administration” means a student’s use of medication pursuant to prescription or written direction from a physician.
2. Any student for whom a physician or other authorized medical professional has prescribed:
  - a metered-dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler for treatment of asthma or other potentially life-threatening respiratory illness;
  - an epinephrine auto-injector for severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis);
  - insulin;
  - blood glucose monitoring supplies will be permitted to self-administer such medication, as prescribed by a physician during the school day and at school-sponsored activities.
3. A student who is permitted to self-administer medication consistent with this policy is permitted to possess and use a prescribed inhaler, epinephrine auto-injector, insulin, or blood glucose monitoring supplies at all times as prescribed by their physician during the school day and at school-sponsored activities.
4. The student’s parent/guardian must annually submit an [Administration of Medication/Medical Procedures form](#). For children with emergency medications (such as Epi Pens or rescue inhalers), parents must also fill out an [Emergency Action Plan](#).
5. The parent/guardian may be requested to sign a release to allow school staff to communicate directly with the health care provider.
6. The parent/guardian is responsible for notifying the School of any changes to the student’s medical condition that would impact the self-administration of medication.
7. A student who is self-administering medication consistent with this policy may be required to maintain a current duplicate of the prescription medication with the School office personnel.

8. If a student requires blood glucose testing or insulin injections during the school day or at school-sponsored activities, the following policy applies: Students with diabetes may self-administer blood glucose testing and insulin injections as prescribed by their physician. In practicing self-administration, students are required to practice universal precautions for the disposal of waste.

## Universal Precautions

Universal precautions for the disposal of waste will be posted in the School and students and staff are required to comply with the guidelines. Any accidental pricks or punctures must be reported and appropriate medical response accessed.

## Other Prescription Medications

1. The student's parent/guardian must annually submit an [Administration of Medication/Medical Procedures form](#). For children with emergency medications (such as Epi Pens or rescue inhalers), parents must also fill out an [Emergency Action Plan](#).
2. The medication must be in its original container.
3. The student's name, prescription number, prescribing doctor, and directions for administering the medication must be clearly set forth on the container.

## Non-Prescription (Over-The-Counter) Medications

1. The student's parent/guardian must annually submit an [Administration of Medication/Medical Procedures form](#). Specific directions for administering the medication and the parent's/guardian's signature must be received before any medication will be given to the student.
2. The medication must be in the original container and the student's name and directions for administering the medication must be written on the container.
3. Non-prescription medications, such as Ibuprofen or Tylenol, may be provided to students with parent/guardian written permission via email. Email must include the student's name, medication name, and dosage approved. Parents are welcomed to provide over the counter medications for their student's individual use. These medications will be tagged with the student's name and kept securely in the office.

## Additional Guidelines

1. Generally, medications should be dispensed to students before and/or after school hours under the supervision of the parent/guardian. Medications should only be dispensed at school when necessary to meet the health needs of the student.

2. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the School, in writing, that the student requires medication on a regular or emergency basis and supplying the medications and instructions for dispensing the medications.

3. Valor Classical Academy may require that the student's health care provider annually submit a current treatment plan, identifying the medication, dosage, frequency of use, and side effects. The parent may be requested to sign a release to allow school staff to communicate with the health care provider.

A school staff member may administer auto-injectable epinephrine to students upon the occurrence of an actual or perceived anaphylactic adverse (allergic) reaction by the student, whether or not such student has a prescription for epinephrine. Any school employee who in good faith administers or chooses not to administer auto-injectable epinephrine to a student in such circumstances shall be immune from civil liability, pursuant to Idaho statute.

## Operations

Valor Classical Academy will:

- Require all faculty and staff to be trained and proficient in medical response operations, including essential first aid, "Stop the Bleed" training, CPR, AED, and medication administration procedures.
- Maintain adequate emergency medical response supplies on hand (including first aid supplies, emergency medications, trauma kits, and AED units) to render initial medical assistance prior to the arrival of emergency medical responders.

Parents will be informed when a student reports to the office with a fever or injury. If a parent cannot be reached, school personnel will determine what action needs to be taken. Any child with a fever will not be allowed to remain in the classroom and must be picked up by a parent or designee. If a head injury is sustained, or any injury requiring medical attention, the parent will be asked to come to school and determine what action should be taken. In case of more serious injuries, or in case the parent cannot be contacted, the School will immediately call 9-1-1 for emergency assistance.

## Student Medical Records

Student health records will be maintained in locked or password-protected files in order to maintain confidentiality. All health records will be managed by the attendance and enrollment coordinator and any appropriate, designated staff, and will only be released to service providers as allowed and dictated by state regulations.

## Food Allergies

Valor Classical Academy is not a peanut-free school. The School will, however, establish a peanut-free zone at the end of tables in the cafeteria, and teachers/monitors will ensure that this peanut-free zone is enforced.

Meal accommodations will be made when a doctor's note documenting the particular food allergy is on file with the School. Anecdotal information or child preference will not dictate menu change.

## Parents and Community

### Parent Teacher Community Association (PTCA)

Valor Classical Academy establishes the PTCA to support the School's mission. PTCA teams and activities will be designed to help the School flourish in and beyond the classroom. Largely, the PTCA consists of a series of task-oriented teams whose purpose is to marshal parent volunteerism in achieving defined goals that improve the School. As such the PTCA plans, coordinates, and executes activities related to teacher appreciation and student support, culture reinforcement, and community building events, as well as general and evergreen fundraising initiatives.

The PTCA is led by two parent co-chairs, who are selected by the Head of School, and who serve staggered two-year terms. All parents, adult family members, teachers, staff, and community members are encouraged to volunteer on a team and attend regular PTCA meetings.

The PTCA may conduct fundraising on behalf of the School, but it will not be a stand-alone, tax exempt, non-profit organization, since Valor Classical Academy is itself a non-profit organization with 501(c)3 status

The Head of School reserves the right to create, remove, or dissolve PTCA teams and leadership in accordance with immediate priorities and the long-term flourishing of the School.

### Volunteers and Requirements for Volunteers

The School will maintain accurate records to confirm that the following requirements are met.

#### Background Checks

Volunteers who work with students will submit to background checks in the same way that school employees are required to do so. These background checks will be at the volunteer's expense.

## Training

Volunteers will be required to complete training related to Idaho's Mandatory Reporting Requirements. The Head of School may require volunteers to complete additional training before serving in the classroom.

## General Rules for Volunteers

Volunteers often inadvertently have access to sensitive information. Any information about students, grades, faculty, etc. is to remain confidential. Volunteers may observe situations of a sensitive nature. These are also to remain confidential.

If a volunteer has a concern involving something that is witnessed, observed, or overheard, he or she should address the concern with a faculty or staff member, the Head of School, or a member of the board—in that order. If a volunteer disregards this policy, the privilege of volunteering may be revoked.

Any grievance or concern a volunteer has with a classroom or a teacher will be handled by the procedures defined in the applicable section of this handbook. Under no circumstance is it ever acceptable for a volunteer to confront a teacher about an issue when students are present.

## Mission Support Team (MST)

The Mission Support Team (MST) serves as the School's improvement engine and mission-driven consultative body. The team consists of approximately eight to ten members and is led by the Head of School. The MST is comprised of the following members: School leadership team, PTCA co-chairs, ACSI board member representing the School, upper school faculty member, elementary school faculty member, upper school parent-at-large, and elementary school parent-at-large. Depending on the need, other members may be added to the team (e.g. student government representatives, etc.).

The MST meets as needed and at the request of School leadership and the PTCA co-chairs. School leadership and the PTCA co-chairs are responsible for collaborating to fill MST positions. With the exception of the School leadership and the ACSI board member, MST membership is typically a two-year term. Tasks typically (though not exclusively) accomplished by the MST are listed below:

- Assist school leadership with school improvement planning.
- Oversee annual school surveys (short mid-year and long end-of-year).
- Host school-wide parent town halls.
- Assist school leadership with re-charter and accreditation efforts.

# Communication

## General

Valor Classical Academy has the following communication tools in place for students and families:

- A running list of “Events” is maintained and updated on the school’s website.
- A monthly electronic newsletter is sent via email to all families, faculty, and staff. It contains information on upcoming academic events, extra-curricular events, sporting events, fundraising, volunteer opportunities, etc. This school newsletter will be emailed on the first Friday of each month. The PTCA newsletter will be emailed on the third Friday of each month.
- Parent reminders and emergency notices are sent via email and text message to the main email and phone contacts on the registration paperwork.
- The School’s official Facebook and Instagram accounts are also sources of communication for school related events.

## Parent Communication with Leadership, Faculty, and Staff

Valor Classical Academy values the conversation that takes place between parents and teachers about the education of children. Nonetheless, this conversation must follow certain guidelines in order to be fruitful and to allow teachers to devote themselves to their classes during the day. Parents may use any of the following ways to contact or communicate with the Head of School, Assistant Head of School of School, Student Services Coordinator, faculty, and staff of Valor Classical Academy:

- Scheduled face-to-face meeting
- Scheduled phone call
- Message (with the front office)
- Voice Mail
- Email (provided in classroom newsletters)

Valor Classical Academy employees will not use social media to communicate with parents or students about student specific issues.

During the school day and both immediately before and after school, teachers have their minds on teaching or impending meetings and extracurricular activities. Parents should schedule in

advance a phone call or meeting with a teacher rather than try to communicate through an impromptu chat. Parents who are in the building for another reason should not use their access to faculty to circumvent the normal means of contacting a teacher unless that teacher clearly invites such a conversation. This policy applies to parents who are themselves teachers or other employees at the School.

Valor Classical Academy teachers and staff will respond to parents as quickly as possible. In general, parents should expect to hear from a teacher or from School leadership within twenty-four hours of contacting the School, barring weekends and holidays. While a teacher's schedule may not permit an actual meeting within that time, the teacher will attempt to make contact in some way.

It is essential that the School is able to contact parents and communicate with them about their child's academic progress and behavior. If the School is unable to make telephonic or email contact with a family for an extended period of time, school leader(s) may make a home visit.

### Scheduling Parent-Teacher Meetings

Teachers are not available for unscheduled meetings during class time. If a parent wishes to set up a meeting they will need to contact the teacher in advance to arrange a suitable time.

### Mass Communication Policy

The Head of School must approve all letters and bulletins, including e-mail (excluding class assignments or bulletins by teachers to their classes) from teachers or parents or other parties to the entire School community.

### Guardian Authorization Form

If the parent or legal guardian cannot, by nature of work schedule or other situation, participate in school meetings, conferences, or volunteer activities, that parent or legal guardian may authorize another adult to serve or communicate in these capacities with the School. The Authorized Guardian will be communicated with as directed by the Parent/Legal Guardian. They will also be subject to background checks and training prior to volunteer assignments, as are all volunteers. Parents need to complete the [Guardian Authorization form](#) for this to take effect.

## Parent Grievances

### Grievance Related to the Classroom

This School firmly believes that adults must be models of good character even in the most difficult situations. Should a parent have a grievance concerning a particular class or the leadership of the School, that grievance should be resolved using the following chain of

command. Issues that arise in a particular classroom should always be addressed to the teacher first since the teacher always has more direct knowledge of the student and situation.

1. The Teacher: Parents should schedule a meeting with the teacher by emailing the teacher directly. Under no circumstance is it ever acceptable for a parent to confront a teacher about an issue with students present, including his/her own.
2. The School Leadership: If the grievance cannot be resolved with the teacher, the parent should discuss the matter with the Head of School.
3. The Board: If the grievance cannot be resolved with the Head of School, the parent should refer the matter to the Board.

Parental concerns and grievances may also be raised during the community comments portion of the Board of Directors meeting. The concern or grievance must be submitted in writing, and no more than two minutes will be granted. Grievances or discussions involving specific personnel will not be entertained at a public meeting. It is recommended that the concern or grievance be addressed through one of the aforementioned steps before using this option.

## Grievance Related to a School Leader

Grievances regarding a school leader should be directed to the individual first. If the grievance remains unresolved, it should then be elevated to the Head of School. If necessary, it may be elevated in writing to the Board.

## Other Grievances

A concern or grievance unrelated to the classroom or school leader (e.g. regarding academics, overarching policy or philosophy, facilities, etc.) should be addressed to the Head of School.

## Importance of Following the Chain of Communication

VCA understands that parents will have questions, opinions, and comments that need to be expressed concerning their children's education. Such communication can be very helpful to the running of the School.

The reason for this chain of communication is that the teacher invariably has the most direct knowledge of the child and can usually do more to remedy or ameliorate a situation than can the Head of School or a board member. The School understands that some parents are "conflict averse" and do not want to bring up potentially difficult issues with a teacher. Nonetheless, the teachers are eager to help each child in whatever way possible.

Some situations, admittedly, seem by their very nature to warrant a discussion with the Head of School initially. For example, parents may have questions about student safety or the overall academic program. As a result, it is sometimes appropriate to speak to the Head of School first.

# School Operations

## Bus Transportation

Parents needing to sign up their child to ride the bus or update the pick-up location due to a recent move should contact the Transportation Coordinator directly. For daily changes, such as switching from being picked up to riding the bus, parents must inform the school office one hour before the end of school to ensure the change is processed in time.

## Enrollment

Valor Classical Academy is an open enrollment, tuition-free, public charter school that will grow one grade each year to become a K-12 school. All students within Idaho are eligible to attend, with seats filled through a random lottery system. As per Idaho Code, all prospective students will be given the opportunity to enroll regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, socio-economic status, or special needs. Parents interested in enrolling their student must submit a lottery application by creating an account with PowerSchool Enrollment.

With regard to enrollment and the lottery procedures, the School will abide by the requirements of IDAPA 08.02.04 Section 203 (Admissions Procedures).

VCA grants enrollment preferences in accordance with Section 33-5206, Idaho Code. These preferences in order include the following:

1. Returning student.
2. Student of a founder or full-time VCA employee.
3. Sibling enrolled in VCA.
4. Transfer agreement with an existing ACSI charter school.
5. Residency in the primary attendance area.
6. All other students.

## Admissions During the Current School Year

The School will maintain a waitlist for each grade, as required. If the Head of School chooses to fill a vacant seat or expanding seating, he/she will draw from the first name on the waitlist, moving down the wait list until the position is filled. If there is no wait list, vacant seats will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

On the date of the lottery, the wait list for the current school year will terminate and a new waitlist created based on lottery draw results.

## Registration

Once a seat is accepted, the Enrollment and Operations Coordinator will send emails via PowerSchool Enrollment that give registration instructions and deadlines. Seats are not confirmed until a student's registration is complete, including having required documents uploaded. If there is a waitlist, registrations that have not been completed by the given deadline will be placed on the waitlist and the seat will be offered to the next student.

The Enrollment and Operations Coordinator will verify Registration information for accuracy and completion. They will contact parents via phone once a student's seat is confirmed and notify them of any upcoming events, such as Kindergarten Skills Testing or new family orientations.

## Grade Level Placement of Newly Enrolled Students

For students to thrive in school, they must master the fundamentals. The grade level placement policy is designed to promote educational excellence and fairness by placing students at the most appropriate level for instruction. If students new to the School are found to be reading significantly behind their existing peer group, they may be required to enroll in the grade level deemed appropriate by the School. If the parent insists that the student be placed at a grade level higher than the one recommended, the School must approve and a signed document of this choice will become part of the student's permanent file.

## Re-admittance

Students who have left the School due to retention in a grade and later choose to re-enroll, will be readmitted (assuming the student is otherwise in line for the next available seat) based on the retention, not on the record from another school.

## Kindergarten Skills Test

In late May or early June, incoming kindergarten students will be required to participate in a skills assessment to gauge kindergarten readiness. Kindergarten teachers will administer a series of screening measures to assess early reading, writing, verbal, and motor skills. The results of these assessments will be used to ensure balanced and equitable placement of students across the three kindergarten classes.

# Facilities and Supplies

## Utilization of Facility

The Head of School will be the approving authority for all outside uses of the School building, fields, and facilities.

## Academic Textbooks and Supplies

Students will receive a variety of books and materials. All books will have a VCA barcode. The Resource Center will use two different barcodes. The first barcode will start with a “TB” (textbook) followed by 6 digits. These items should be returned to the School at the end of the year. Other books, mainly literature and workbooks, will be labeled with a barcode that begins with “SB” (student book). Once checked out to the individual student, SBs become the property of the child (meaning that our students will be building their own collection of the classics).

Students are responsible for these materials, so if these materials are lost or damaged the student must pay for any needed replacement. In the case that reimbursement has not been made to VCA for lost or damaged materials, no further materials will be issued to that student until the past due fees are paid.

## Material Posting and Distribution

All informational or other materials posted or distributed must receive prior approval from the Head of School. In certain cases, the school may permit non-school materials to be posted or distributed if they align with the school's mission. These materials must also be reviewed and approved by the head school.

A list of school supplies will be posted annually for parents to purchase for their child in preparation for the upcoming school year.

## Parking- Designated Spaces

Parents and students should park in the front parking lot. Parking is not permitted along Tiercel Drive or Honor Avenue. Parking along the east side of the building is reserved for faculty, staff, handicapped parking, and delivery vehicles. Parents should never access the building via the Bus entrance or use the bus parking lot.

## Safety

### Emergency Operations Chart

In case of an emergency or practicing for a potential emergency, all students and staff must follow procedures related to the safety concern.

The School maintains a stand-alone Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP is not available for public consumption due to the sensitive nature of emergency response. However, this plan includes measures for school security and response to emergencies including, but not limited to, fire, active shooter, and natural disasters.

Each classroom displays the general Emergency Action Chart, which students, staff, and visitors should be familiar with and able to follow.

## Search

The School may exercise its right to inspect all backpacks, packages, parcels, and closed containers entering and leaving the premises. School lockers are school property and may be subjected to searches at any time, with or without cause.

## Video Surveillance

Video cameras will be in use on School property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to School property and to safeguard School buildings, grounds, and equipment.

# Student Involvement in School Operations

## Cleaning

To promote **self-government** and **service**, students will regularly help maintain a clean and welcoming school environment. Staff supervised activities include:

- Vacuuming classrooms and common areas.
- Sweeping floors.
- Wiping down desks, counter spaces, door handles, and light switches.
- Picking up trash around the classroom, hallways, and campus.
- Remove trash to the hallway for pickup.
- Straighten desks and tables.

Students will not use hazardous chemicals or tools. All tasks will be age-appropriate and supervised.

## Student Organizations

All curricular student clubs or organizations must be approved by the Head of School.

Bylaws and rules of curricular student clubs or organizations must not be contrary to School policy or to administrative rules and regulations.

Procedures in curricular student clubs or organizations must follow generally accepted democratic practices in the acceptance of members and nomination and election of officers.

# Student Publications Policy

Student publications must uphold Valor Classical Academy's mission, philosophy, core virtues, and policies. The purpose of such publications is to inform the Valor Classical Academy community of school-related events, achievements, and business. In addition, student publications are a way for students to learn and to practice responsible writing and journalism. Student editorials are permitted subject to prior review by the Head of School. Employees of the School or parents may not use student media to proselytize their own views on controversial issues. The Head of School acts as the final editor in all cases.

## Travel

### Field Trips

Field trips should be directly tied to the curriculum and add to the instructional environment by conveying knowledge or an experience that supports the curriculum. Field trips must be approved by the Head of School a minimum of two weeks prior to planned execution. The field trip planner will work with school leadership and staff to ensure that all procedures are followed.

### Extended Field Trips

An "extended field trip" is defined as a trip of three nights or more and 400 miles from the School. The following must be followed:

1. Extended field trips require Board approval.
2. Students attending the field trip must have the approval of the VCA administrators.
3. Extended field trips must have liability insurance protecting the trip attendees and the School. Any liability insurance not covered by the School's policy must be paid for by the fees charged to trip participants.
4. Any increases in the costs of extended field trips (due to inflation, changes in exchange rates, etc.) must be paid for by increases in fees of trip participants.
5. All adults attending the field trip are required to be currently registered volunteers.
6. The field trip planner will work with the school leadership and staff to ensure that all procedures are followed.

### Off-Site Activities

The logistics of all of VCA's off-site activities must be approved by the Head of School. All adults helping with these activities must be registered VCA volunteers.

## Visitors

The School values the presence of parents and visitors at the School and aims to ensure that all visits are both beneficial and safe. Please review and follow the guidelines below to help the School protect the educational environment and ensure the safety of all.

- Check In: All visitors must present a driver's license or state ID at the front office
- Visitor's Badge: After checking in, visitors will receive a Visitor's Badge with the current date, which must be worn visibly at all times while on school grounds.
- (For Unfamiliar Visitors) If visitors are a new or unfamiliar visitor, the visitor will be required to meet with a school leader before proceeding with a visit.
- No Unsupervised Access: Visitors are not allowed to be left alone with students. A staff member must accompany visitors when interacting with students or moving around the school.
- Signing Out: Before leaving, all visitors must return to the front office to return their visitor's badge and check out.

### Additional Guidelines:

- Authorized Areas: Visitors may only visit areas authorized by school personnel.
- Safety and Security Compliance: Visitors are required to comply with all school safety and security policies, procedures, and protocols.
- Dropping Off Items: Parents may drop off items or notes for their children at the front office. Students will be called to the office to pick up the items at a convenient time to minimize classroom disruptions.