



I N F L U E N C E   T H R O U G H   E X C E L L E N C E

# VALOR CULTURE DOCUMENT

PREPARING TOMORROW'S LEADERS TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD FOR CHRIST

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## **Valor Christian High School Culture Document**

Valor Christian High School aspires to some very lofty goals. We want our school to be the very best high school in the nation. We believe we can achieve this by investing in the limitless potential of our youth through the power of Christ-centered faith.

In order for Valor to be truly successful in achieving our Vision and pursuing our Mission, we must attract and develop gifted and committed faculty and staff and foster an exceptional work environment that few academic institutions can match. The foundation of this environment is our ‘culture’. Therefore, it is critical that we are intentional about both advancing and protecting this culture.

Our culture is the glue that helps bind our organization together. On this foundation we can build the extraordinary school we envision. If we ever allow ourselves to abandon our intent and become ordinary, we will falter. As a developing organization, we may be prone to drift. However, the cultivation of a positive, God-centered culture will ensure we stay on course toward achieving these high ideals.

## **Our Vision, Our Mission, Our Motto and Our Distinctives**

**Our Vision** is to prepare tomorrow's leaders to transform the world for Christ.

**Our Mission** is to provide a rigorous and comprehensive college preparatory program that makes the most of students' unique gifts and abilities, in a vibrant, Christ-centered environment, enhanced by state-of-the-art facilities, and led by highly-skilled, innovative faculty, in partnership with committed parents.

**Our Motto** is influence through excellence. In all we do, we are pursuing excellence and we expect success as the result.

Together, our Vision, our Mission and our Motto articulate our goals, strategies and ambitions.

### **Valor Distinctives**

#### **Excellence in All**

Valor is pursuing excellence in all. From the gym to the classroom, the stage to the athletic field, in the community and through the home; we call our students, parents, faculty and staff to a consistent and vigilant pursuit of excellence. As each student is encouraged to pursue excellence in all we expect the result to be outstanding leadership skill development which will advance future opportunities to influence the world for Christ.

#### **Decidedly Christian**

At Valor, 'decidedly Christian' is a community and an ethos that honors Jesus Christ in all that it does and all that it is, to the glory of God. From the founding mission, to staff appointments, to admissions criteria, to all decision making; we seek first and foremost to please God, bring praise to his name and fulfill the vision he has placed before us.

#### **Preparing Leaders**

Through the pursuit of excellence and being educated by means of a biblical worldview, Valor students will be prepared to influence our surrounding culture. Wherever our graduates go, and

to whatever vocation or service they aspire, they will understand excellence and seek to attain it. By doing so, they will have a platform from which to guide, influence and lead those around them.

## **Dead Center**

At Valor, we use a specific vocabulary; a nomenclature that is unique to us. We describe the unique aspects, what we call “distinctives” of our school, when we talk about pursuing excellence, being decidedly Christian, and preparing leaders. We have another term we use to describe the laser-beam focus of our attention – “Dead Center”. Our vision is critical; it guides and directs all we pursue. Our distinctives are essential because they uniquely identify our focus. “Dead Center” provides the guardrails that keep us fixed on our mission and vision.

What does “Dead Center” look like at Valor Christian High School?

- Believing and behaving according to Valor’s Statement of Faith
- Focused and committed to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ
- A Christ-centered, authentic community comprising the qualities as found in the Valor Culture Document
- In all matters, the Christ-centered pursuit of excellence (“perfection”)

In the appendix to this document you will find a “Dead Center” definition for each of our primary educational and co-curricular programs.

## **Our Heritage**

Before describing our culture to you, it is important for you to have the context of our history. In brief, our history can be described as “God-breathed.” With a simple vision that could not be denied, Valor’s founding is a great example of God’s word that: *Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails. Proverbs 19:21*

The history of Valor Christian High School is detailed in *Our Heritage*, a companion document.

## **Our Culture**

An organization's vision and mission remain words on paper until people make the lofty ideals come to life. As we whole-heartedly pursue the vision and embody the mission, in turn, our culture comes to life in each of us as individuals and as a community overall.

Each and every member of our staff should think of their position at Valor as not 'just as a job', but also as a stimulating, gratifying and enjoyable part of their lives. They should recognize the potential they have for positively and profoundly impacting the lives of each and every student for Jesus Christ. They should share our passion for the success of our school, for our day-to-day work, and for our relationships with God and with each other.

Faculty, staff and leadership at Valor contribute to the culture in a way that is only possible while pursuing an exceptional educational mission strengthened by a Christian foundation. Each person's teaching, guidance, counsel, patience, empathy, passion and empowerment are the keys to bringing out the best in our youth. We recognize your strengths and the vital role you play in helping us realize our goals.

## **Great Organizations Have Great Cultures**

### **What is Culture?**

In essence, culture is the personality of the organization. Culture is comprised of the assumptions, values, norms and tangible signs (artifacts) of the organization, its members, and their actions and behaviors. In practice, a culture is how you go about things, how you treat people and how you can expect to be treated. It defines what we care about collectively and individually, determines the traditions we hold on to as important and gives us the guidelines to improve and change as time goes on. In addition, as a decidedly Christian organization, our culture is rooted in and flows from how we love and serve God.

### **Every Organization Develops a Culture**

The police department, the hardware store, the local church, the art museum, a neighborhood school, Wal-Mart and Bank of America have a corporate culture. Whether intentional or by happenstance, well-conceived or ill-conceived, knowingly or unknowingly, through strong leadership or weak leadership: every organization has a corporate culture - a spirit and style that affects how the organization operates its business. Despite executive egos and myths to the contrary, *the corporate culture, not the corporate management, runs the organization 95% of the time; management runs the place 5% of the time.*

However, few organizations and even fewer schools specifically attempt to define their culture. In fact, this may be the first work experience where you were specifically informed about the culture. At Valor, we care a great deal about it and seek with intention to define and refine it.

### **Our Culture is Unconditional**

As the saying goes, “you can’t hit what you are not aiming at.” Therefore, we are being deliberate about “taking aim.” Through this document we seek to be completely clear about what we are “aiming at” regarding the Valor culture. The beauty in having a formal Culture Document is that it helps us make a careful determination as to whether someone will be a good fit before they are appointed to our team. On the other hand, it allows future employees to get a snapshot of

who we are and what we are about. In addition, this document keeps us in check, ensuring that we continue to own and embrace the culture of Valor and its ongoing advancement.

## **Culture Elements**

Our culture consists of three important elements:

**Our Core Values:** the guiding principles that direct our decision making and ultimately embody the “heart” of our school.

**Our Work Environment:** the policies, attitudes, and subtle understandings that form the basis of our positive work environment as well as those that challenge to undermine all we seek.

**Our Characteristics:** the visible corporate characteristics, the individual attributes, the behaviors and actions that define and reinforce our culture.

## **Our Core Values**

Like all businesses and academic institutions, Valor will constantly face difficult choices. To provide direction for our decision-making, we have defined a clear set of values — the “lofty goals” toward which we strive. We don’t pretend that these values are easy to attain, but, in our effort to achieve them, we refine our decision-making and sharpen our resolve.

## **Honor Jesus in Everything We Do**

The foundation for all of our programs and decisions is the Bible. We value faith that is based on a personal, intimate and authentic relationship with Jesus Christ. We will not compromise our Christian values as found in the Bible and reflected in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Therefore, our highest ideal is to honor Jesus in all our decisions and actions.

*Jesus replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” Matthew 22:37, 38*

## **Students First**

We will make our decisions based on two criteria: if it honors Jesus and if it is in the best interest of our students. We are committed, in everything we do, to help students succeed academically, artistically and athletically; to develop leadership skills; and to grow into a

mature relationship with Jesus Christ. Being “student-centric” means we first and foremost consider the student in making decisions about programs and policies that affect them.

*Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped; but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant. Philippians 2:4-7*

### **Champion the Valor Culture**

Our culture is what truly makes us different. It fosters the harmonious educational environment within which we can achieve our goals. The culture is upheld when we stay aligned with the vision, hold to high standards, speak the truth in love and model Jesus. If we do not strive to preserve our culture, we might as well work somewhere else.

*...then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Philippians 2:2*

### **Attract and Retain Outstanding Christian Faculty and Staff**

Faculty and staff are our most valuable assets. They will exhibit maturity in their faith. They will model a relationship with Jesus. They will actively mentor students toward Christian maturity and develop leaders who will serve God, their families, and positively impact their communities and the world. We encourage intelligent, industrious people who cherish integrity and believe in the Valor educational ideals to join and stay with our organization.

*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 2 Corinthians 6:14*

### **Relentlessly Provide Exceptional Academics, Programs and Resources**

We provide extraordinary college preparatory and co-curricular programs that attract outstanding students who will serve as leaders in their future professions, across our nation and the world. Our programs create the most effective paradigm for learning in any given subject. We are determined to avoid sacrificing quality for short-term expediency. Academic and co-curricular programs of excellence require a commitment to exceptional resources. Our teachers have the equipment, supplies, curriculum and technology necessary to do their jobs

at the highest level. We will be good stewards with a spirit of innovation and creativity. We will use what has been proven to meet our high standards. When necessary, we will build and create from scratch.

*Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 3:13*

### **Build Our Vision on a Solid Business Foundation**

We will build our school and manage our resources on a solid business foundation that seeks to balance revenue and expenses with Godly stewardship. We will invest with intelligence and conservatism; we will seek value in every financial decision; we will be very careful not to waste, while still assuring provision of the best resources for the job at hand.

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Colossians 3:23, 24*

### **Partner with Parents**

Under God's plan, we believe that parents are the primary educators of their children. We believe our task is to partner with them. Therefore, we will seek to be transparent with our parents, to listen and consider their input, to communicate with them and to be available to them. Excellent relationships with our students' parents are critical to our success.

*Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10.*

## **Work Environment**

It is critical that the work environment is aligned with our culture. A quality work environment is an important part of our successful long-term strategy and it is one of the keys to employee satisfaction and long-term productivity. To build an outstanding school, we must support, encourage and build upon outstanding people.

Many elements of culture can affect a school's success in creating a work environment. There are both positive elements and negative elements that define this environment. At Valor, we seek to be intentional about enhancing positive elements that fill us up and expunging negative elements which rob us of our joy in serving.

### ***Positive Elements We Seek To Enhance***

#### **Character / Integrity**

Dishonesty is extremely stressful and destructive and is therefore not tolerated in our community. In addition, we should strive to be honest with ourselves by admitting our mistakes, accepting failure and working hard to prevent recurring errors. Good character that is beyond reproach, strong ethics and high moral standards create a firm foundation for a quality work environment.

*Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:48 - 6:1*

#### **Work Ethic**

We believe that a person's success is 85 percent attitude and 15 percent ability. Nothing reflects a good attitude more than the willingness to work hard. Valor asks that every employee provide a genuine, honest day's work every day. We expect exceptional productivity however this is accomplished for each individual.

*All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty. Proverbs 14:23*

#### **Realistic Expectations**

We know that success is tied to realistic expectations. When expectations are impractical and improbable, failure looms. In our desire to make an impression, we should avoid the tendency to say "yes" too quickly without thoughtfully considering all the factors

involved. Saying “no” or “let me think on it” is acceptable, at the very least, communicating that you are honest. We strive to do what we say we will do and realistic expectations allow this to be the reality.

*Do you see a man who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him. Proverbs 29:20*

### **Long-Term Outlook**

We place higher priority on success in the long term than in the short term. We prefer careful and thoughtful evaluation to hasty decision-making that has no substance. We believe that a long-term view of success reduces stress.

*But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations. Psalm 33:11*

### **Believing in One Another**

We believe in Valor and we believe in one another. Our first assumption should always be that another person’s heart is pure and their actions are properly motivated. Accountability takes place when we are all pulling in the same direction and seeking to serve one another in love.

*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24*

### **Sensitive Language and Behavior**

We believe in a sensitive, caring and respectful attitude toward others. Sensitivity is an aspect of professionalism. An exemplary way to show sensitivity is in the use of our language in all forms - written, verbal or visual. We believe that having fun and enjoying one another can take place without sarcasm, poking fun or being a cynic. Words of encouragement, support and praise are always preferred.

*With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers this should not be. James 3:9, 10*

## **Positive Attitude**

We believe a positive attitude and a positive approach to problem solving should be our modus operandi. Positive attitudes alleviate anxiety and undo stress.

*You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:22-24*

## **Innovation and Creativity**

We bring a fresh perspective to each new challenge. We do not allow ourselves to become constrained by the past. Instead, we encourage an environment that supports, fosters and rewards the creativity and judicious risk taking that contributes to the success of our vision and mission.

*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7*

## **Having Fun**

We work at Valor because we enjoy our jobs and care for our students. We hope to encourage the concept that work can be as much fun...as fun. Our staff should bring a spirit of enjoyment into their daily activities. Laughter is one of the most effective stress relievers and a smile communicates goodwill.

*But may the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; may they be happy and joyful. Psalm 68:3*

## **Grace, Mercy and Forgiveness**

Valor will seek to acquire the best and the brightest people from across the nation. As a result, our diversity will require that we are tolerant and considerate in accepting one another's viewpoints. In addition, Valor is an organization of judicious risk-takers. Our entrepreneurial tendencies will occasionally result in failure, but we must exercise grace,

mercy and forgiveness in those times. Occasional failure is the small price to pay for greatness. It is unfair to judge an individual by a single event.

*Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.*

*Matthew 7:1-2*

## **Empowerment**

Armed with a thorough understanding of our vision and mission, and given the appropriate resources, individuals have the freedom to explore and execute within established boundaries – freedom with responsibility.

*If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."*  
*Mark 9:23*

## **The Grass is Greener ... Here**

Because our people are critical to our vision and mission, we will make every effort to avoid turnover by offering competitive benefits and salaries and providing a stimulating, professional working environment. We endeavor to retain our employees because they are fulfilled and because they believe that they already work on the greener side of the fence.

*Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work-- this is a gift of God.*

*Ecclesiastes 5:19*

## **Professionalism**

Valor should always be a first-class organization as evident in our individual and collective work, actions, communications and appearance. Acting first-class doesn't mean we spend money carelessly or try to impress people with our success; it simply means we are professional. We expect our employees to dress professionally and act professionally at all times while exhibiting excellent customer service to all in which they come in contact.

*Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. 1 Peter 2:17*

## **Advancement**

Advancement will be approached in the same manner as hiring to fill new positions. Valor will select the best person for the job based on competence, character and chemistry. Since we are committed to encourage every employee to grow to his or her maximum potential, we will consider internal options whenever possible.

## ***Negative Elements We Seek To Expunge***

### **Negative Stress**

Research shows that some stress works to our advantage in promoting constructive and positive results. For instance, a deadline you establish for your own task or project results in positive stress. On the other hand, negative stress can rob us of our joy and drain us emotionally. Therefore, we will strive to acknowledge our people for their accomplishments and suggest improvement, when needed, in a positive, uplifting manner. We will attempt to be sensitive to our employees' needs and assure that short-term expedience is the exception and long-term success the rule.

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15*

### **Change Avoidance**

We are better served when we look at change as an opportunity, rather than viewing it with trepidation. Our productivity is enhanced when we are motivated by challenge and opportunity rather than frozen by fear and avoidance. We must drive change within the organization instead of wasting energy avoiding it.

*Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. Colossians 3:2*

### **Drive Out Fear**

We must drive fear out of the organization. Fear inhibits us from working effectively and adds to negative stress. Employees must feel secure or they will not ask questions and request help. By operating in a supportive, blame-free environment, we break down the barriers that inhibit improvement.

*Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid , do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9*

### **Hidden Agendas**

Valor is exceedingly open in our communication. We expect all Valor employees to adopt an attitude of honesty and openness. Keeping secrets and creating “hidden agendas” causes political intrigue, miscommunication, silos and confusion. It also destroys trust and distracts us from achieving our goals.

*Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. Ephesians 5:11-14*

### **No Surprises**

It is a bad idea to surprise your supervisor, subordinates or co-workers. Problems, especially big problems, don't just spring up. They fester and grow over time. Surprises create an environment of uncertainty and destroy trust. Reveal problems and concerns as soon as they are on your radar allowing ample time for solutions.

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6*

### **Organizational Politics**

We strive to have a working environment devoid of politics. We are not so naïve to believe that we are completely free of internal politics, but we are not afraid to take a stand when they jeopardize our peaceful, productive working environment. It is important, however, to make a distinction between politics and diplomacy. While we discourage stressful, non-productive office politics, we encourage the kind of diplomacy that reduces stress by solving sensitive problems with concern and discretion.

*Stay away from a foolish man, for you will not find knowledge on his lips. The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception. Proverbs 14:7-8*

### **Anonymous Communication**

Anonymity conflicts with our culture, demonstrates a lack of commitment and breaks down trust. If you have an idea, issue, criticism, or something important to discuss, rest assured that it will be addressed confidentially and appropriately. We encourage you to stand up for your convictions and express them with full disclosure. Anonymous communications will simply be ignored.

*Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one. Matthew 5:37*

### **Cultural Corruption**

Experience shows that the greatest risk/damage to our culture will not come from circumstances or incidents but will come from people – those who express commitment to our culture but were never aligned; and those whose alignment has changed over time. It is everyone's responsibility to spot these inconsistencies and encourage alignment.

*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-- think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me-- put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4:8-9*

### **Culture Characteristics and Attributes of our Leadership, Faculty and Staff**

Our faculty and staff share a most common and rare attribute in comparison to most other schools – 100% of our team are committed followers of Jesus Christ! This is the essential ingredient, the *sine quo non* – there is no Christian school without a Christian faculty/staff team. Because you are a follower of Christ and we base our school and our culture on God's word, we can also claim and expect the following attributes from our leadership, faculty and staff.

## **Culture Characteristics**

### **Above All – Model Jesus**

The most important thing for EVERY individual on Valor’s team is to model the character of Jesus Christ with an investment in an increasing and vibrant personal relationship with Jesus. While we encourage you to model all attributes of Jesus, pay special attention and model those essentials of service to others, dying to self, forgiveness, humility, grace and mercy.

Our leaders have a specific obligation to model Jesus because they are role models for their staff and are examples for their colleagues. As a leader, when you model the character of Jesus, you show alignment with our vision, mission and values. Above all, you set a good example for your peers.

*Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:1, 2*

### **Integrate Your Faith with Your Instruction and Your Interactions**

Just as your faith is central to your life, it should also be central to your daily instruction and your interactions with students, their parents and your co-workers. All truth is God’s truth and so we need to find and communicate his order, his character, his creativity and his purposes in all we teach. God gave the command to parents in Deuteronomy 6 that their instruction of their children in Godly ways was to be an ever-present lifestyle. Your faith should also be an ever-present part of your lifestyle and so it should permeate your interactions each day.

*My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:2- 3*

## **Pursue Excellence in Who You Are and All That You Do**

The sum of all the characteristics above is the recipe for pursuing Valor's goal of excellence. These behaviors, attitudes and recommendations are practical ideas. When acted upon, they become profound.

*Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*2 Peter 1:5-8*

## **Establish Goals and Objectives**

Our people need to be clear about what is expected of them, their objectives and their priorities. Therefore:

- Individual goals and objectives will be set by the Supervisor in collaboration with the Employee;
- Area Goals and Objectives will be set by the Department Head in collaboration with their team; and
- Corporate Goals and Objectives will be set by the Board in collaboration with the Head of School.

We will be decisive, consistent and timely in our decisions and actions.

*Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.*

*Proverbs 16:3*

## **Create a Clear Vision**

The vision for Valor is established – *to prepare tomorrow's leaders to transform the world for Christ*. The issue is really our interpretation of what it means to prepare; how we define excellence; how we are going to maintain “dead center”, and what means and methods will be used to judge our effectiveness and results. Our leaders will keep this

vision in view and our paths aligned and our faculty and staff will expect clear communication for appropriate follow-through and implementation.

### **Be Accessible and Accommodating**

We maintain an “open door policy.” Everyone needs to be available and helpful. Our faculty and staff have the right and responsibility to be heard; to bring concerns, ideas, observations and suggestions forward. In return, our leaders should strive to support, encourage and have a teachable heart.

*Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge.*

*Proverbs 23:12*

### **Be a Good Student**

A good student is teachable and therefore this is one of the most important characteristics we look for in Valor team members. Remaining teachable is critical to your personal success and our school-wide success. Good students also have good habits that we feel are equally important for all. So, we expect the following evidence from you as a “good student” in our school, no matter your role:

- Follow instructions, be prepared, be timely
- Be accountable, disciplined and committed
- Practice good personal and good work habits
- Master concepts and be a lifelong learner
- Be dedicated, focused and persevere
- Maintain an absolute focus on presentation skills (writing, speaking, leading discussions)
- Be absolutely clear, timely and conclusive in your communications
- Collaborate and cooperate

*I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws.*

*Psalms 119:7*

## **Drive Your Own Growth**

We expect you to constantly learn so that you can constantly improve. You should regularly test your beliefs about your job, your profession, your craft and instruction, your techniques, and your biases and opinions. You should invite your colleagues into your space and your dialogue. When you know things work – and work well – you should stick with them, and be willing to share them. When you hear about other ways that work, you should explore them.

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Colossians 3:23-24*

## **Prayer**

Prayer demonstrates our dependence upon the power and sovereignty of God. It aligns our heart and therefore our actions, with His purposes and plans. It allows Him to direct us and our lives toward the fulfillment of his purposes. Therefore, prayer is foundational and will be a primary element in all our planning and practice.

*The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous.  
Proverbs 15:29*

## **Personal Attributes**

There are certain attributes that we aspire to be inherent in our people and therefore in our culture. These attributes, demonstrated through individual behaviors and actions, will make our culture unique and our school successful.

## **Humility**

A humble person is unpretentious and modest, someone who does not think that he or she is better or more important than others. A humble person is free from pride and not ruled by arrogance, therefore teachable. Humility is a recognition that all we have and are comes from God. We will strive towards approaching our daily lives with this recognition, therefore being free to consider others first.

*The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor.  
Proverbs 15:33*

## **Trust**

We believe in one another; we promote an environment of trust. Trust must flow between one another at every level of this organization. Every person at Valor must make a commitment to promote honesty and confidence – hence trust – in the organization.

## **Service**

Valor is a Christ-centered community of committed believers. Therefore, as Christ modeled, one of our hallmarks is service – to each other, to our students, to the community and to the greater vision of preparing tomorrow’s leaders. We care about one another’s families and life circumstances. As much as we can, we adopt an attitude of service, self-sacrifice and a “one-another” approach.

*...bear one other’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2*

## **Respect**

We have three simple rules for order and peace: respect people, respect property and preserve the learning environment. We respect the resources God has blessed us with and we take care of our facilities and our assets. We also respect why we are here and what we’re called to do and we keep it in the forefront at all times.

*Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. 1 Peter 2:17*

## **Fruits of the Spirit**

We believe that the fruits of the spirit as described in Galatians 5 - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control - characterize all who truly walk in step with the Holy Spirit. These are the physical manifestations of a Christian’s transformed life. Although we are not perfect, we expect that everyone will make every effort to allow the Spirit to produce such ‘fruit’ in their lives and in their role at Valor.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control... Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23; 25*

## **Conclusion**

Our culture is what sets us apart from any other school. It is up to each of us to pursue the vision and prevent Valor from becoming ordinary. Every person who is appointed to our team must believe and trust in the value of the words in this document. Your commitment to our culture is our insurance for success.

*Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude 1:24-25*

## Appendix A

### Valor Statement of Faith

**God:** We believe that there is one true God. He is the Creator (Gen 1:1). He is Sovereign (Ps 135:6, Dan 4:34-35). He is the Lord who sustains, rules, and by grace, redeems (Ps. 54:4, Ps 103:19, Ps 34:22). We believe that God eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19, Luke 3:22). We believe that God is love (1 John 4:8) and that He is passionate about His relationship with people (Ex 34:14).

**Jesus Christ:** We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He became flesh (John 1:14); born of a virgin (Matt 1:23) and conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:31,35). He lived a life on earth holy and perfect, without sin (1 Peter 2:22). He died a sacrificial death on a cross for our sins (2 Cor. 5:21). On the third day, by the power of God, He rose from the dead (Luke 24:39, 1 Cor. 6:14). He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God (Acts 2:33).

**Holy Spirit:** We believe the Holy Spirit continues the work of spiritual growth begun at the time of salvation. The Holy Spirit dwells within our hearts (Rom 8:25) and produces in us the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22-23).

**The Bible:** We believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God. The Bible is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness (2 Tim 3:15-17).

**Salvation:** We believe that salvation is by God's grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ (Eph 2:8). We believe that whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom 10:13).

**Prayer:** We believe that prayer is an intimate (Matt 6:6) and essential part of a person's growing and maturing relationship with Christ (James 5:16b).

**Servant Leaders:** We believe that as followers of Jesus Christ we are called to serve God through serving others. We believe that whoever wishes to become great among men shall be a servant of men (Matt 20:26) and that we should model our lives after the life of Christ, in that the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve (Matt 20:28).

**Heaven:** We believe that heaven is the everlasting reward and eternal home for all believers. We believe that every person has a choice to accept Christ and spend eternity with Him in heaven, or to reject Him and spend eternity apart from Him. "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." (1 Cor. 15:58).