**Team Rules & Expectations**

The Valhalla Gymnastics Program’s rules and expectations are determined by the coaching staff in alignment with School, Conference, League, and CIF rules. These rules pertain to ALL members of the gymnastics program. Please refer to the Valhalla Parent/Athlete Handbook for rules and expectations pertaining to all Valhalla athletes, parents, and coaches.

1. **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, competition and how to win and lose gracefully are integral parts of the Valhalla Gymnastics program, and all gymnasts, parents, and coaches are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. If a coach feels that a gymnast is not conducting themselves in a sportsman-like manner (during meets, practices, school, on the internet, or in the community), it will be left to the discretion of

the coaching staff as to what measures shall be taken. Depending on the severity of the offense, this may include ineligibility to compete in one or more meets, or potential dismissal from the team.

Remember, losing as well as winning is a part of the game. Be gracious in defeat, modest in victory, and a team player in all that you do!

1. **ELIGIBILITY**
   1. Athlete clearance: Any student wishing to participate in a spring sport MUST complete the following clearance requirements PRIOR to the first day of practice. Students missing either requirement will NOT be permitted to join the team. **For the necessary forms and instructions, please visit** <https://sites.google.com/guhsd.net/valhallaathleticclearance>
      1. **Online athletic clearance** – A copy of your signed confirmation email MUST be presented to the coach on the first day of practice.
      2. **Physical** – Required ANNUALLY and must be valid throughout the ENTIRE season of your sport. Physicals must be obtained through a licensed physician. Valhalla will be offering onsite physicals for interested students in early February (date TBD) at $20/physical. A copy of your signed physical form MUST be presented to the coach on the first day of tryouts.
   2. Tryouts: Any student is welcome to join the gymnastics team, regardless of experience. All interested gymnasts MUST be present for the first week of practice: **Tuesday, February 19** and **Thursday, February 21, 2018**. Level placements (JV, Varsity Compulsory, or Varsity Optional) will be made based on evaluations of skill set, strength, flexibility, attitude and work ethic across all four events.
      1. Students with a conflict due to an academic activity (impacting a grade) or participation in an ongoing winter sport may contact the coaches PRIOR to the first practice to make alternative arrangements.
      2. While the coaches welcome all interested students to join the team, certain circumstances may warrant a gymnast to be cut, and no one (including previous team members) is guaranteed a spot. Any decisions regarding the team roster are made at the coaches’ discretion and are considered FINAL.
   3. Academic eligibility: As stated in the Valhalla Athlete/Parent Handbook, each gymnast must meet the following academic requirements to be eligible for competition. Failure to meet these requirements at any point in the season may result in removal from competition and/or the team:
      1. Must be enrolled in **at least 4.5 (5 credit) classes**.
      2. Must be passing **at least 4 (5 credit) classes**.
      3. Maintain at least a **2.0 GPA** on a 4.0 scale (Unweighted).
      4. Have **no more than one “U”** in conduct.
      5. **Academic appeals**: Students, in the 9th grade only, may apply for an appeal of academic ineligibility, for one grading period (6 weeks) through the Asst. Principal’s Office. No academic appeals for students in the 10th, 11th, and 12th Grades. You may appeal for more than one “U” in conduct one time per school year.
   4. PE credit: As stated in the Valhalla Athlete/Parent Handbook, a student may earn an exemption for their second year of P.E. by completing two seasons of sport during their Sophomore and/or Junior Year. (One Season equals One Semester). Gymnasts must attend at least 95% of team practices and complete the ENTIRE season (no ineligibility) in order to earn exemption.
   5. Lettering requirements: Varsity letter requirements are based on participation, attitude, and work ethic; letters are NOT achievement-based. In order to letter, a gymnast must compete varsity in at least TWO meets, receive positive marks from the coaches in attitude and work ethic evaluations, and complete the ENTIRE season with the team.
   6. Club gymnastics participation: According to CIF regulations, unlimited outside practice and competition with a gymnastics club team is permitted during the season for San Diego gymnasts, provided they enter all non-high school competitions as an “ALL STAR”. Additionally, a gymnast’s individual scores cannot count towards a team score in ANY outside competition.
      1. Club gymnasts must participate in AT LEAST one Valhalla practice per week and must attend ALL meets with the team.
      2. Club gymnasts MUST participate in AT LEAST 3 practices with the team before competing for Valhalla, and must be eligible to compete by the midpoint of the season (March 31, 2018).
2. **PRACTICES**
   1. Attendance: Each gymnast is expected to attend and be on time to every practice. Absences will be excused only IF the gymnast communicates the conflict to the coaches PRIOR to the start of practice.
      1. **Routine choreography clinics (beam/floor)**: All JV and Varsity Compulsory gymnasts will be required to attend their designated clinic. This is true even if the gymnast has learned the routines in a previous season.
      2. **Pre-meet practices**: To be eligible for competition in a meet, the Gymnast MUST attend the last practice prior to the meet.
         1. *Exception*: if the last practice prior to the meet is NOT adjacent to the day of the meet, (i.e. Monday practice, Wednesday meet with no Tuesday practice) and the practice is missed due to ILLNESS, the gymnast would be eligible to participate in the meet ONLY if she were in attendance at school on the day of the meet. This is assuming that the gymnast is well enough to compete without undue risk. Final decisions in these cases will be made by the coaches on the day of competition.
   2. Spring break: Any practices scheduled during spring break are considered ‘attendance optional’. However, gymnasts are strongly encouraged to attend to ensure continued skill development and adequate preparation for the second half of the season.
   3. Unexcused absences: Any absence not cleared with the coaches PRIOR to practice is considered unexcused. Unexplained tardiness to TWO practices equals ONE unexcused absence. Gymnasts with more than THREE unexcused absences will no longer be permitted to participate on the team.
   4. Equipment set-up: Active and consistent participation in both set-up and tear-down of gymnastics equipment during practice and for home meets is mandatory for all gymnasts. This is a very important part of our sport!
3. **COMPETITION**
   1. Level placement: At the start of the season gymnasts will be placed on either the Junior Varsity, Varsity Compulsory, or Varsity Optional team. Placement is based on predetermined minimum event requirements and is the sole discretion of the coaches. Gymnasts will receive ability assessments throughout the season, and level advancement may take place at any point in the regular season IF minimum level requirements are met (at coach’s discretion).
   2. Meet line-ups: Making the gymnastics team does NOT guarantee competition, either in All-Around or in any individual events. Competitors will be selected each week based on a combination of skill set, quality of routine execution, attitude, and work ethic as demonstrated in practice. Meet line-ups are made at the sole discretion of the coaches, and all decisions are FINAL.
      1. **Communications**: The line-up for each meet will be communicated by the coaches at the conclusion of the associated pre-meet practice. However, ALL gymnasts are expected to attend all meets and be prepared to compete at all times.
      2. **Substitutions**: In the event of illness or injury, the coaching staff may make line-up substitutions prior to, or during, competition.
   3. CIF playoff qualifications (Varsity): A gymnast must compete in at least SEVEN meets—including at least ONE meet prior to the season midpoint— to be eligible for championships.
4. **TEAM CAPTAINS**
   1. Selection process: Gymnasts may run for the following leadership positions at the start of the season. Additional information on the responsibilities of each position will be shared with interested gymnasts. Candidates will be required to prepare a letter describing their reasoning and qualifications for the desired position. The candidates will present their letters to the team at a predesignated practice, followed by a team vote to elect the captains.
      1. **Team Captain (Varsity)**: Must be a Varsity Compulsory or Optional gymnast. The Captain serves as the designated team leader, representing team interests to the coaching staff.
      2. **Co-Captain (any level)**: The Co-Captain serves as the designated communication liaison between team members and coaching staff.
5. **TEAM RESOURCES**
   1. Valhalla athletic site: <https://govalhalla.org>
      1. Athletic department resources (Athlete/Parent Handbook, Athletic Clearance process, etc.)
   2. Team website: <https://vhsgymnastics.weebly.com>
      1. Primary access to team policies, calendar, schedules, technical resources, and announcements.
   3. Team Instagram: vhsgymnastics
      1. Team photos, announcements, and updates
6. **ATTIRE** 
   1. Practice attire:
      1. Leotard or a form-fitting shirt with form-fitting shorts or tights. Loose-fitting apparel poses a safety hazard in gymnastics and is NOT permitted.
      2. Grips (if used).
      3. Hair must be pulled up off the neck and away from the face.
      4. No jewelry (post earrings ok).
      5. No footwear or socks during workout (authorized beam shoes ok).
      6. Water bottle (proper hydration is critical!) and a snack (optional).
   2. Meet attire (as mandated by national high school gymnastics regulations):
      1. Valhalla competition leotard with matching or nude-colored briefs. Bra must not be visible.
      2. Grips (if used).
      3. Hair pulled back neatly away from the face.
      4. No jewelry (medical or religious medals ok).
      5. Gymnastics footwear, if worn, must be a neutral color.
      6. Any braces must be unaltered from the manufacturer’s original design/production.
      7. Water bottle and optional snack.
7. **DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING\***
   1. Team uniforms: The school’s athletic budget covers some, but not all, of the expenses for the Valhalla Gymnastics program each season. While no financial contributions are required to participate on the team, we do ask that each gymnast cover the cost of her own competition leotard and warm-up shorts, if able. The combined cost is approximately $100.
   2. Donations: In an effort to raise additional funds for the program, we kindly ask our gymnastics families to provide a seasonal donation, if able. Any amount helps, and the funds raised will go towards critical program needs including league expenses, chalk, first aid supplies, and updated equipment, as well as awards for home meets and team banquet. All donations are placed in the school’s gymnastics trust account.
   3. Fundraising: To further supplement the program budget, Valhalla Gymnastics will engage in various fundraisers throughout the season. All fundraising activities will be determined by the team and approved by the head coach and by the school. All team members are expected to participate in fundraising events. Any funds raised are placed in the school’s gymnastics trust account.

*\* Financial contributions are NOT a requirement for participation in the gymnastics program. Loaner apparel will be available for gymnasts who are unable to purchase team uniforms, and donations are entirely optional. Financial contributions will in NO WAY influence a student’s ability to participate on the team.*

**TRAVEL**

* 1. Practice transportation: Students are expected to arrange their own transportation to/from weekly practices. Practice dates and times will be clearly posted on the team website, and any changes will be communicated by the coaches ahead of time.
  2. Meet day transportation: For meets where school bus transportation is arranged, gymnasts are expected to ride on the bus unless parents provide a signed request for exemption. The request must be approved by the coach and submitted to Asst. Principal Lance Yocum at least 48 hours in advance. Parents must complete a *Use of Private Vehicle* Form if they will be transporting students other than their own students to events. These forms are available in the Asst. Principal’s office.
  3. Early release**:** Throughout the season, the timing of certain meets may require early release from class. It is the responsibility of the gymnast to communicate with teachers before departing for a meet and to make up any and all work or tests missed due to early release. It is an athlete’s privilege to leave early and a teacher’s choice to release a student.

1. **RISK OF INJURY**

By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes risk of injury. While coaches make every attempt to provide a safe environment to prevent injuries, it is impossible to eliminate the risk. An athletic trainer is available for consultation when on campus, and the coaches are First Aid/CPR trained. The athletes can and have the responsibility to help reduce the chance of injury by obeying all safety rules, reporting any physical problems to the coaches, following a proper conditioning program, and inspecting their own equipment daily.

1. **DRUGS & ALCOHOL**

Valhalla Gymnastics has a **zero tolerance policy** for drugs and alcohol. As stated in the Valhalla Athlete/Parent Handbook, any student involved in possession, use, sale, furnishing, or if found under the influence of any drugs or alcohol will be removed from the team for at least the remainder of the season.