

ELITE ACADEMY - HANDBOOK

OUR PHILOSOPHY

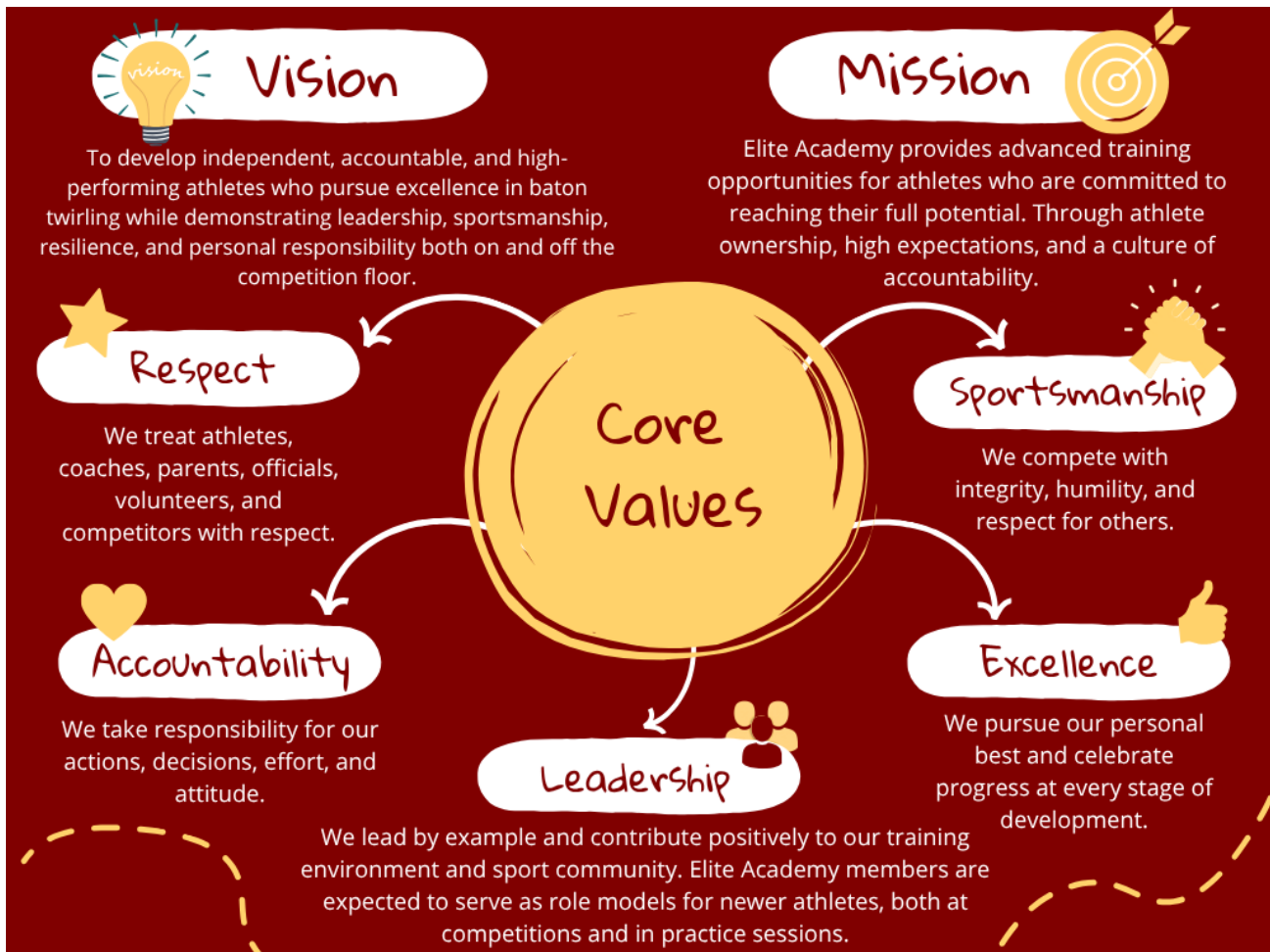
Elite Academy is an invitation-only training environment designed for athletes who have demonstrated exceptional commitment, coachability, work ethic, and competitive achievement.

Our goal is not simply to develop successful baton athletes. We strive to develop confident, resilient, accountable young people who take ownership of their development and understand that success is earned through consistent effort, discipline, and personal responsibility.

We believe athlete development is a partnership between athletes, coaches, board and families.

- **Coaches** provide instruction, guidance, opportunities, and expertise.
- **The Board of Directors** provides leadership, governance, operational oversight, and the resources necessary to support a successful and sustainable club.
- **Parents** provide support, encouragement, transportation, financial support, and a stable foundation.
- **Athletes** are responsible for their effort, attitude, preparation, communication, and commitment to improvement

Elite Academy athletes are expected to take increasing ownership of their training and development. Elite Academy exists for athletes who are prepared to actively invest in their own success.



INVITATION AND CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP

Elite Academy is an invitation-only program. Initial invitations and continued membership are determined annually by the coaching staff and are based on the overall needs of the program and the athlete's alignment with the values and expectations of Elite Academy. Membership is not based solely on competitive results or athletic ability. Factors considered may include:

- Work Ethic
- Leadership
- Coachability
- Sportsmanship
- Attitude
- Attendance and Commitment
- Respect for teammates, coaches, officials, and volunteers
- Willingness to accept feedback and implement corrections
- Athlete ownership and accountability
- Contribute to a positive training environment
- Alignment with the culture and values of the program

Athletes are expected to demonstrate consistent commitment both during and outside of scheduled training sessions. Participation in Elite Academy is considered a privilege rather than an entitlement. Athletes who no longer demonstrate the commitment, behavior, effort, or attitude expected within the program may be placed on probation, have their membership reviewed, or may not be invited to return for future seasons.

Likewise, athletes who demonstrate exceptional commitment, leadership, coachability, and growth may be offered expanded opportunities within the program.

The goal of this policy is not to exclude athletes, but to protect the culture, standards, and training environment that allow all athletes within Elite Academy to thrive.

ATHLETE OWNERSHIP

Athletes are expected to play an active role in their development. As athletes mature, they are expected to take increasing responsibility for:

- Goal setting
- Training plans
- Practice habits
- Competition preparation
- Seeking feedback
- Tracking corrections and improvements
- Time Management
- Accountability for commitments

Athletes are expected to become the primary communicator regarding their training and development. Parents remain an important part of the athlete's support system. However, parents are expected to support the athlete's development rather than manage it.

One of the primary goals of Elite Academy is to prepare athletes for future success in sport, coaching, education, employment, and life through the development of strong communication skills, self-discipline, leadership, and personal responsibility.

ATHLETE COMMITMENT AND WORK ETHIC

Elite Academy is built on the understanding that excellence requires effort beyond scheduled class time. Athlete development does not occur only during scheduled class time. Athletes are expected to:

- Arrive prepared and ready to work.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude.
- Accept feedback respectfully.
- Practice skills outside of class.
- Take initiative in their development.
- Set goals and actively work toward achieving them.
- Follow through on commitments and goals.
- Maintain personal fitness and flexibility requirements.

Coaches are committed to supporting every athlete. However, athlete growth ultimately depends upon athlete effort. Coaches will invest their time, energy, and expertise where athletes demonstrate a willingness to invest in themselves.

Athletes who consistently demonstrate commitment, effort, and accountability are more likely to benefit from additional opportunities, advanced training, leadership opportunities, and expanded responsibilities.

ATTENDANCE AND COMMITMENT

Consistent attendance is essential for athlete development and team success. Athletes are expected to attend:

- Scheduled classes
- Team practices
- Choreography sessions
- Competitions
- Performances
- Other mandatory Club activities

Families are expected to communicate absences as early as possible.

Repeated absences or failure to meet commitment expectations may affect participation, team placement, competition opportunities, or future placement within the Club.

COMMUNICATION POLICY

The Club is committed to open, respectful, and professional communication.

- Questions regarding training and athlete development are to be directed to the coaches
- Questions regarding club operations and complaint resolution are to be directed to the Board.
- Members are expected to always communicate respectfully.
- Gossip, public criticism, social media disputes, or conduct that damages the reputation of athletes, coaches, volunteers, or the Club is not acceptable.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The success of the Club depends on a clear understanding of the roles played by athletes, coaches, parents, and the Board of Directors.

Coaches

Coaches are responsible for all athlete training and development decisions, including but not limited to:

- Training plans
- Athlete development pathways
- Routine construction and choreography
- Team and group placements
- Competition preparation
- Competition recommendations
- Skill progression
- Athlete evaluations
- Training expectations

Coaches are the technical experts within the organization and are entrusted with making decisions that support athlete development and long-term success.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for the administration and operation of the Club, including:

- Financial management
- Budgeting
- Registration
- Governance and policy
- Volunteer coordination
- Fundraising
- Facility bookings
- Risk management
- Club communications
- Strategic planning

The Board exists to support the operation and sustainability of the Club and to provide coaches with the resources required to effectively develop athletes.

Working Relationship

The Board and coaches work collaboratively while maintaining clearly defined responsibilities. The Board does not direct athlete training decisions, and coaches do not direct Board governance decisions.

- Questions regarding athlete training, routines, placements, skill development, competition preparation, or coaching decisions should be directed to the coaching staff.
- Questions regarding registration, finances, policies, governance, volunteering, fundraising, or club operations should be directed to the Board.

This structure allows coaches to focus on athlete development while allowing the Board to focus on operating a successful and sustainable organization.

ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

Athletes are expected to:

- Demonstrate respect for teammates, coaches, officials, volunteers, and competitors.
- Follow all club, facility, and competition rules.
- Display good sportsmanship in both victory and defeat.
- Arrive prepared and on time.
- Use appropriate language and behavior.
- Maintain a safe training environment.
- Represent the Club positively both in person and online.
- Refrain from bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, or exclusionary behavior.

Athletes are expected to contribute positively to the culture and reputation of the Club.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents and guardians are important members of the athlete support team. Parents are expected to:

- Treat all athletes, coaches, volunteers, officials, and families with respect.
- Support coaches in their role as technical experts.
- Encourage effort, learning, resilience, and sportsmanship.
- Allow athletes to take increasing ownership of communication and development.
- Communicate concerns through the appropriate channels.
- Support Club volunteer and fundraising initiatives.
- Model positive behavior and sportsmanship.

Parents acknowledge that athlete development decisions, including training plans, routine assignments, placements, competition recommendations, and skill progression, are the responsibility of the coaching staff. Parents shall not engage in abusive, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, or disrespectful behavior.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

Elite Academy is committed to addressing concerns in a respectful, fair, and constructive manner. Members are asked to observe a **24-hour reflection period** before raising concerns related to practices, competitions, team placements, coaching decisions, or other emotionally charged situations.

All formal concerns must be submitted to the Board of Directors rather than directly to coaches or other club members. This ensures concerns are handled consistently, documented appropriately, and directed to the appropriate individual while allowing coaches to remain focused on athlete development.

The complaint process is as follows:

Step 1 – Reflection Period

Allow a minimum of 24 hours following the incident or concern before submitting a complaint unless the matter involves athlete safety, abuse, harassment, discrimination, or another issue requiring immediate attention.

Step 2 – Submit the Concern

Submit the concern in writing to the Board of Directors. The concern should include:

- A factual description of the situation
- Relevant dates and individuals involved
- Any supporting information
- The desired outcome or resolution, if applicable

Step 3 – Board Review

The Board will acknowledge receipt of the concern and determine the most appropriate next steps. Depending on the nature of the concern, the Board may:

- Refer the matter to the appropriate coach for discussion or resolution.
- Gather additional information from those involved.
- Facilitate a meeting between the appropriate parties.
- Review the matter directly if it relates to governance, policy, or club operations.
- Appoint a review committee when appropriate.

Step 4 – Resolution

The Board will communicate the outcome, recommendations, or next steps to the appropriate parties in a timely manner. The Board's role is to ensure concerns are handled fairly, consistently, and respectfully while maintaining the distinct responsibilities of the coaching staff and the Board of Directors.

SAFE SPORT

The Club is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, abuse, retaliation, and misconduct will not be tolerated.

The Club will comply with all applicable Safe Sport requirements and governing body policies.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Violations of Club policies may result in disciplinary action. Depending on the severity of the situation, disciplinary measures may include:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Parent and athlete meeting
- Temporary suspension from activities
- Removal from specific events
- Removal from the Club

The Club reserves the right to bypass progressive discipline in situations involving athlete safety, bullying, harassment, abuse, discrimination, or serious misconduct.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Written notice must be provided for withdrawal from the Club. Any applicable refund policies will be communicated during registration and outlined in annual registration materials.

FINANCIAL POLICY

The Board establishes fees annually. Families are responsible for all applicable registration fees, membership fees, competition fees, costume costs, travel costs, and other approved program expenses.

- Payment schedules will be communicated prior to registration.
- Accounts must remain in good standing.
- The Club reserves the right to suspend participation when accounts become significantly overdue.

VOLUNTEERING AND FUNDRAISING

Elite Academy is a volunteer-supported organization. Volunteer and fundraising expectations will be communicated as they become available and may vary by program.

Families are expected to contribute positively to the operation and growth of the Club through volunteering, fundraising, committee participation, or event support.

Specific requirements will be outlined annually.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Members are ambassadors of the Club. Athletes, parents, coaches, volunteers, and Board members are expected to communicate respectfully online.

Members shall not post content that is abusive, harassing, defamatory, discriminatory, or harmful to the reputation of athletes, coaches, volunteers, or the Club.

Bullying or harassment through electronic means may result in disciplinary action.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Elite Academy Club Handbook and agree to abide by the policies and expectations contained within it.

Athlete Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____