

Mansfield ISD High School Cheerleader and Mascot Constitution

Purpose

The purpose of cheerleading is to: promote and uphold school spirit; to develop a sense of good sportsmanship among students; to improve the student morale; to build better relationships between competing schools; and, to establish the high personal ideals and good character expected of a high school cheerleader in the Mansfield Independent School District

Objectives

1. To promote the type of sportsmanship that will help students acquire the basic attributes of good citizenship.
2. To develop a wholesome school spirit.
3. To develop school loyalty.
4. To promote a cooperative spirit among the student body, the faculty, administration, and other spirit organizations.
5. To help the school achieve the objectives of its interscholastic athletic activities.
6. To promote competitions in which the school participates.

Article I: Required Qualifications to Tryout

Section 1: Grade Level

At the time of the tryout, the candidate must be enrolled in Mansfield ISD (MISD) and trying out at the school where the student is approved to attend for the next school year. A candidate may try out at only one MISD School.

Cheerleader

- Eligibility for the Varsity squad shall be limited to boys and girls of current sophomore or junior standing.
- Eligibility for the Junior Varsity squad shall be limited to boys and girls of current freshman standing.
- Eligibility for the Freshman squad shall be limited to boys and girls of current eighth grade standing

Mascot

- Only one (1) person may hold this position.

Section 2: Academic Standing

Cheerleader candidates must:

- Be on credit schedule to meet MISD graduation requirements. Freshmen must have at least 2 ½ credits. Sophomores must have at least 7 ½ credits, and Juniors must have at least 12 ½ credits.

Section 3: Physical Examination

Candidates must present proof of a physical examination by a health care professional using a District approved form prior to the clinic and tryout dates.

Essential physical functions of a cheerleader are:

- Perform jumps and other physical moves that are part of cheerleader routines.
- Perform stunts that may involve climbing, balance, agility, and upper body strength.
- Exhibit rhythm and coordination in performing cheerleader routines.
- Demonstrate stamina in performing regular physical activities that involve physical endurance and fitness.
- Perform routines in both indoor and outdoor setting, in heat and cold weather.
- Demonstrate clear diction and strong vocal qualities.

Section 4: Attendance

- Students must be present before the judges in order to be eligible for selection.

Section 5: Pre-Tryout Clinic

Candidates are expected to attend all training clinics at the times designated by Mansfield ISD.

- Each pre-tryout clinic acquaints candidates with the format of tryouts and offers instruction in the routines/skills to be evaluated by judges during the cheerleader selection process.
- Should a candidate not be present at a clinic session, he/she is responsible for learning any missed material on his/her own time

Section 6: Parent Meeting

A parent/legal guardian is expected to attend an organizational meeting scheduled by Mansfield ISD.

- Any parent/guardian who is unable to attend this meeting should contact the Cheerleader Sponsor prior to the date of this orientation to receive information regarding the cheerleading selection process.

Section 7: Documents

Candidates must submit all required documents by the designated deadline.

- Application with enrollment confirmation
- UIL Concussion Acknowledgement Form
- UIL Rules and Regulations
- MISD Emergency Information Card
- Pre-participation Physical Evaluation and Examination

Article II: Selection Process

A judging panel will score all Squad Member candidates.

- The judging panel will consist of at least three impartial, professional judges assigned by NCA, ACA, UCA, or the equivalent. The sponsor is responsible for ensuring that the judges are from outside the school district. An ethnically diverse panel of judges is preferred.
- All candidates will appear before the judging panel in the designated uniform:
 - white shirt, with no visible logos
 - black short
 - any type of white athletic shoe.
- Hair of candidates must be pulled away from the face.
- Candidates, school representatives and judges are the only persons allowed into the clinic sessions and tryouts. Parents, relatives, friends or other visitors are not allowed into the clinics or tryouts.
- The size of each cheerleading squad is determined through the use of a "break-point" system.
 - At the completion of the tryouts, the "break-point" in scoring will be mutually agreed upon by the campus administrator and squad sponsor. This will be the official "break point" for determining the final squad size.
 - The squad size will be at least 4 but not more than 30.
 - All candidates must receive at least 50% of the possible points in order to be considered for the squad.

Section 1: Cheerleading Tryout Activities

Cheerleader candidates will perform the following:

- one compulsory cheer
- three jumps
- a tumbling series
- a compulsory dance

Mascot candidates will perform the following:

- a two-minute routine consisting of mime, pantomime, and dance

All routines must conform to standards of behavior as set forth within the MISD Student Code of Conduct.

Section 2: Size of Squad and Special Positions

The size of each cheerleading squad is determined through the use of a "break-point" system.

- At the completion of the tryouts, the "break-point" in scoring will be mutually agreed upon by the campus administrator and squad sponsor. This will be the official "break point" for determining the final squad size.
- The squad size will be at least 4 but not more than 30.

- All candidates must receive at least 50% of the possible points in order to be considered for the squad.

Mascot

- Only one (1) person may hold this position.

Article III: Squad Member Requirements

Section 1: Term

The term for cheerleader participation begins once the results of the tryouts are published and continues until new cheerleaders are selected the following year.

Section 2: Cheerleading Class

- All Squad Members must enroll in and attend cheerleading class.
- All Squad Members are expected to participate in all class activities. Any student absence will be considered unexcused unless the sponsor is given prior notification or an excuse from a health care professional is presented prior to the activity.
- All Squad Members must be dressed and ready to begin each day on time. Designated officers may have earlier reporting times as designated by the sponsor.
- Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action.
- For the 2016-2017 school year – special arrangements may be necessary due to A/B Block. See sponsor if needed.

Section 3: Practice

- All Squad Members are expected to attend all practices, including those scheduled at an off-campus gym or alternate location. Any student absence will be considered unexcused unless the sponsor is given prior notification or an excuse from a health care professional is presented prior to the activity.
- All Squad Members will be required to attend a professionally run cheerleader camp that will be designated by the sponsor. Failure to attend the camp may result in dismissal from the squad.
- Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action.

Section 4: Activities/Performances

- All Squad Members are expected to participate in all events. Any student absence will be considered unexcused unless the sponsor is given prior notification or an excuse from a health care professional is presented prior to the activity. The varsity squad and mascot will cheer at all varsity games designated by the sponsor. The sub-varsity squads will cheer at all sub-varsity games designated by the sponsor. Exceptions may be made for sub-varsity cheerleaders to cheer at play-off games as determined by the sponsor.
- All Squad Members will be required to attend pep rallies, special performances, fundraisers and competitions as designated by the sponsor. All of these events are mandatory unless otherwise stated by the sponsor.

- C. All Squad Members must be at all events on time.
- D. Due to the year-round nature of the activity, participation in other school teams, squads, or other nonacademic groups is not allowed without the prior approval of the sponsor. Limited exceptions are possible on an individual basis. While participation on competition cheerleading squads is allowed, Squad Members involved in these activities must place high school cheerleading as their top priority. Scheduling conflicts will not be excused. Squad Members will not be allowed to participate with another squad at camp and will be required to abide by all sponsor-designated schedules/rules at competitions.
- E. All Squad Members must ride school transportation to any out-of-district school-sanctioned activity. Rare exceptions may be made at the sponsor's discretion.
- F. Pregnant Squad Members must present written proof from a health care professional as evidence of physical ability to participate in squad activities.
- G. Each Squad Member will be expected to cheer with maximum effort unless a note from a health care professional has been submitted to the sponsor prior to the activity or event.
- H. If a Squad Member expects to be absent from a practice or activity, the sponsor must be given prior notification. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.
- I. Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action.

Section 5: Conduct

Cheerleaders are expected to maintain high standards in academic performance and behavior and to serve as positive role models for the student body. Cheerleaders who do not meet these standards are subject to school disciplinary consequences and cheerleading consequences including probation and dismissal.

Cheerleaders representing themselves, or their organization, in an unfavorable, questionable, or illegal manner through electronic media (i.e. websites, personal home pages, blogs, text messages, chat rooms, or similar website/files accessible through a server or Internet) or using electronic communication devices in such a way as to bring discredit, dishonor, or disgrace on their organization or members of any other school organization including themselves (i.e. camera phones, digital photos, electronic descriptions) will be subject to the disciplinary actions determined by appropriate school officials and/or organization sponsors/directors/coaches, including probation or dismissal.

A. Academic Probation:

- A Squad Member will receive 3-week probation if he/she does not meet the UIL academic guidelines for eligibility (No Pass/No Play).
- During academic probation, squad members are required to participate fully in class time practices and activities.
- Squad Members are not allowed to participate outside of class during this academic probation.

B. Disciplinary Probation

- All Squad Members are expected to follow all school policies and to exhibit good sportsmanship.

- Any Squad Member who misses more than one practice in a week, whether excused or unexcused, may be benched for one activity or event.
- Any Squad Member who receives a disciplinary consequence from a campus administration of suspension (In-School or Out-of-School) will receive 1 week of probation.
- Each campus sponsor will utilize a Demerit/Merit system. Campus documents describe the demerit/merit system. Accumulation of a specified number of demerits can lead to probation or dismissal from the cheer squad.

Disciplinary Probation Process:

- Each disciplinary probation period will be 1 week in duration. The sponsor will determine the week the probation is served.
- Squad Members will not be allowed to actively participate in any contest, game, activity, or pep rally.
- Squad Members are required to participate fully in all practices
- Squad Members are required to attend all activities and events in full uniform
- The cheer sponsor shall make every effort to hold a conference with a parent/guardian and the student anytime a disciplinary probation is assigned.
- Any disciplinary action taken by the cheerleader sponsor may be appealed to the campus principal or designee. Because cheerleading is an extracurricular activity, the decision of the campus administrator is final and may not be appealed beyond the campus level.

C. Disciplinary Dismissal

- A Squad Member may be dismissed from the squad if he/she accumulates 3 probations, academic and/or disciplinary, during the term of participation.
- Any Squad Member who receives a disciplinary consequence of Expulsion or removal to DAEP (BIC) will be dismissed from the squad.
- Any Squad Member found in possession, transmittal, sale, attempted sale, using, or under the influence of a controlled substance, dangerous drugs, or alcohol will be subject to dismissal from the squad.
- Any Squad Member found smoking, using, or possessing tobacco products – including e-cigs and personal vaporizers - on any school property, at any school function, or while representing the school may be dismissed from the squad.
- Any Squad Member engaging in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct may result in dismissal from the squad.
- Any Squad Member will be automatically dismissed if he/she organizes or is involved in a hazing incident.
 - “The term hazing means any assumption of authority by a student whereby another student suffers or is exposed to any cruelty, intimidation, humiliation, embarrassment, hardship or oppression, is required to perform exercises to excess, to become sleep deprived, to commit dangerous activities, to curry favor from those in power, to submit to physical assaults, to consume offensive foods or alcohol, or the threat of bodily harm or death, or the deprivation or abridgement of any right.”(Section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965).

Section 6: Finances

- A. Squad Members must meet the financial requirements outlined by the sponsor. Installment due dates will be set by the sponsors. Fees must be paid in a timely manner. All Squad Members are responsible for all uniforms, clothing, supplies and camp costs immediately after an order is placed. No refunds will be made for any reason. Supplies will not be distributed until all moneys are received and the Squad Member will not attend camp without full payment of his/her balance. Failure to comply may result in removal from the squad.
- B. A system of financial assistance is discretely made available to any Squad Member needing such assistance. The expenses related to participation will not preclude any candidate from trying out for cheerleader. Please contact the sponsor prior to tryouts for this information.
- C. All Squad Members must attend fundraising functions and participate in team fundraisers as designated by the sponsor.

Section 7: Jackets

All Squad Members may purchase a letter jacket during the first full year as a Varsity Squad Member. All violations resulting in removal from the squad may prohibit Squad Members from being able to display or wear their awards.

Section 8: Uniforms and Personal Appearance

- A. All uniforms for Squad Members must be laundered and cleaned prior to wearing.
- B. All Squad Members must wear a designated uniform and have designated supplies. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.
- C. Each Squad Member is responsible for immediately replacing any item that is damaged or lost.
- D. If removed from the squad, school issued uniforms and supplies must be immediately returned to the sponsor. Squad Members will be held financially responsible for these items.
- E. All Squad Members are subject to specific grooming and personal hygiene guidelines set by the sponsor. Visible tattoos must be covered and body-piercings, specifically tongue and facial rings, must not be worn during cheerleading activities. Other guidelines of this nature will be determined and explained by the sponsor.
- F. Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action.

Section 9: Replacement

If a Squad Member is permanently dismissed from the squad, the sponsor and the principal will determine whether or not to fill the position. If the position is to be filled, then the candidate with the next highest tryout score will fill the vacant position.

Section 10: Competition

- A. An additional selection process to comprise a competition team may be implemented by the sponsors.

- B. If a competition team is implemented, all Squad Members selected will have the opportunity to try out for the school competitive team that will be selected at a later date. Information about a competitive team will be distributed at a later date.

Article IV: Compliance and the Cheerleading Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

- A. Failure to comply with any of the policies, practices, and procedures as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action ranging from probation to permanent dismissal from the squad.
- B. The Cheerleading Code of Conduct will be announced and distributed prior to tryouts.