

Cheerleading Constitution

2019-2020

**Philosophy / Purpose**

Being a cheerleader is an honor and special privilege. Cheerleaders and spirit groups exist to promote good sportsmanship, good citizenship, wholesome enthusiastic school spirit, and are first and foremost representatives of their school. Cheerleaders should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their position and in accordance with the rules as stated in the Parish Student Code of Conduct. Members of these groups have a fundamental responsibility to play a leadership role in building teamwork and helping the school achieve its goals and objectives. Because of these responsibilities, members of the cheerleading squad will be expected to maintain a higher standard of behavior both on and off campus and academic achievement than that of their peers.

**Objectives**

Cheerleaders are expected to be physically and mentally skilled in learning and remembering cheers. They are expected to be able to publicly demonstrate a skill level suitable for the team position and the timing necessary for group performance. Off the field, they are to enthusiastically support all athletic teams through advertisement, personal attitude, and attendance at events chosen by the Athletic Director.

**Commitment**

Candidates selected to be a member of the cheerleading squad, are expected to make a commitment to the activity for the full cheerleading year. Any cheerleader who voluntarily quits the squad before the end of the cheerleading year without the approval of the Coach will not be allowed to try out for the next year.

**Definition**

Cheerleading year: The cheerleading year begins the day after tryouts and ends either with the end of Trimester 2 or the end of the basketball season, whichever may come first. The rules and procedures outlined in this constitution are in effect from the time the student is selected to the cheerleading squad until the next tryout date.

**\*When selected to the squad the cheerleader is making a commitment for tri 1 and 2 unless playing a winter sport. If playing a winter sport the cheerleader MUST continue to attend games, practices and any other event until the day the other winter sport begins.**

**Tryouts**

**Eligibility:** A student is eligible to try out for cheerleader if either of the two conditions is met:

1. At the time of the tryout, the student is enrolled in Parish and is trying out for the next school year.

OR

1. If the student is not currently enrolled in Parish, but has been accepted to attend Parish for the next school year. Candidate must attend all meetings, practices, and camps

**Academic Requirements:** To be eligible for tryouts, students must have passed all subjects the preceding grading period to tryouts. If a student is ineligible for any two grading periods prior to tryouts, that student is not eligible for cheerleading tryouts.

**Code of Conduct:** Any student who has an excessive number of disciplinary actions will not be eligible to participate in tryouts without approval from the Athletic Director and Coach. Areas to be reviewed will include but are not limited to referrals, academic grades, other discipline records, student attitude, and any other factors deemed relevant by the Athletic Director and Coach.

If the student is removed from the squad for any reason in the prior year, he/she is not eligible to tryout without the approval by the Athletic Director, Coach and Head of Upper (JV and Varsity) or Middle School (MS).

**Squad Selection/Size:** Candidates and parents must sign a form stating that they understand and will comply with all information in the packet before the student is allowed to tryout. Middle School will be made up of both seventh and eighth graders to form one team.

**Academic Eligibility for Cheerleaders**

The Assistant Head for Academics will monitor grades and report students in grades 6, 7 and 8 of concern to advisors, extracurricular/arts sponsors, and the Athletic Department.  Students with two or more grades of 64 or below will be put on academic watch.  While on academic watch, students are still able to fully participate in extracurricular activities.

Students will be placed on academic probation if they still have two grades of 64 or below two weeks after being placed on academic watch.  In grades 7and 8, while on academic probation, students may continue to participate in practice; however, they may not participate in competitions or special events on or away from campus.  In the event that a student's team competes away from campus and early dismissal is required for travel, that student may not be excused from school until the end of the regular school day.  However, students on probation are encouraged to support their team even if they are not eligible to play.

Two weeks after being placed on probation, and every two weeks following, students may again be able to participate in athletics if they have sufficiently raised their averages.

The Assistant Head for Academics will notify parents, the Athletic Department, the extra-curricular/arts sponsors, the student, and the advisor when a child is put on academic watch or academic probation.  The Athletic Department will communicate this information to coaches. Academic ineligibility may cross seasons should the student play multiple sports consecutively.

**General Conduct Rules**

Cheerleaders are expected to behave in a manner that is becoming to the individual, as well as the organization they represent. They should be aware that in or out of uniform they are representatives of the cheerleading squad and the high school and should act accordingly.

Maintaining a higher standard of conduct will also include ensuring that cheerleaders’ websites are appropriate. The internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible form of communication. Any communication such as Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, photo sharing, etc. appearing on the internet is public domain even if it is marked private. Cheerleaders are responsible for their personal websites and postings as well as for posting on other students’ websites. The area of appropriateness will include but are not limited to, language (abbreviated or alluding to), pictures, suggestive poses, clothing, reference to alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. Any question of appropriateness will be decided by PES.

Any cheerleader removed from his/her squad for disciplinary reasons or academic reasons during the current cheerleading year will not be eligible to participate in the next years tryouts without approval from the Athletic Director and Coach. Areas to be reviewed will include but not limited to a review of the reason(s) or removal and student records since removal (academic grades, discipline records, attitude, etc.)

Students who have been removed and those who voluntarily quit retain no rights to ream awards, recognitions, etc. which are received after dismissal, although they may have accrued over the duration of the school term. They lose all privileges associated with cheerleading membership, including attending cheerleading only events, using facilities, and wearing cheerleading attire.

Proper manners should be used at all times to address adults. Mutual respect and politeness toward members within the squad are basic elements that contribute to the total success of the squad.

Any member failing to abide by the published school rules relating to conduct, possession and/or use of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or other illegal activities will be subject to review by the Athletic Director and Coach. Review may result in dismissal from squad.

Any member who is expelled from school will be removed from the cheerleading squad for the remainder of the school year. The possession and/or use of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs are expressly forbidden and will not be tolerated. Any infraction, on or off campus, will result in Athletic Director/Coach/Parent/Student review. This is a zero tolerance policy and first infraction will result in dismissal from squad.

**Participation**

All Cheerleaders shall fully participate in the cheerleading program. Participation includes:

* + - 1. Football Games
			2. Basketball Games
1. In school practices
2. Pep Rallies

5. Other activities

**Absences**

Cheerleaders cannot have an unexcused absence the last practice before a game or pep rally. This will result in the cheerleader being removed from the performance or sitting out for part of the game.

Excused absences include but are not limited to the following:

1. Death in family
2. Travel for death or illness in family
3. Illness (more than one illness requires a Doctor note)
4. Religious holidays
5. Other Parish sponsored activity: If a cheerleader is involved with other Parish sponsored sports or activities and will miss a practice or a game, the cheerleader must give written notice to the coach as soon as she/he knows of the absence.

The following absences are deemed unexcused and shall result in participation consequences or demerit

1. Vacation
2. Appointments (unless approved by coach)
3. Non-school related activities (unless approved by coach)

Any absence must be cleared by the Coach **prior** to the practice, event, or activity. Written notification must be given in a timely manner. It is up to the discretion of the coach, on if notification was given in a timely manner.

After 2 unexcused absences, a meeting shall be held with the Athletic Director, Coach, Parent & Cheerleader to determine the appropriate action. Activities may include:

1. Removal from squad
2. Benching for all or part of a game/pep rally

**Practice**

1. CL must wear appropriate workout clothing when practice begins
2. Hair must be up and secure
3. No jewelry during practices
4. No chewing gum
5. No cursing/arguing with anyone
6. Must be on time to cheerleading class & in/out of school practices

**Games/Pep-Rallies/All Cheerleader Activities**

1. CL must be in correct/complete uniform at school on game/pep-rally days. Only letter jackets/designated sweats/sweater may be worn with uniform or spirit attire
2. CL will be in correct/complete uniform 30 minutes prior to game or pep-rally
3. Hair will be up and secure
4. No jewelry during performances, games, or pep-rallies
5. No gum chewing
6. No cursing/arguing
7. CL will maintain proper sideline behavior at all times:
* No excessive talking among CL
* No talking to people in crowd
* Pay attention to game/pep-rally
* Stand in correct formation/stance
* Cheer/spirit, jump and tumble the entire game or pep-rally
* No taunting the other team
* CL will show respect during the National Anthem and both school songs.
1. CL will arrive on time in correct uniform at the designated meeting area and will remain for the duration of the game/pep-rally
2. CL will be back on the field/court ready to cheer 2 minutes before halftime ends
3. CL will stay on the field/court for the entire game/pep-rally
4. CL will attend all in/out of school games, pep rallies, meetings, functions, and activities. Any absence must be cleared by the Coach prior to practice
5. CL must act in a safe manner as determined by the Coach
6. Leaving a cheerleading event early will result in a benching equal to time missed or demerit

**Summer Camp**

Middle school cheerleaders will not travel to an official cheerleading summer camp. The Parish Cheer Program will bring in a cheerleading coach to work with the team for a couple of days. This will happen right before school starts. Middle school cheerleaders will be required to attend these practices.

**Uniform Guidelines**

1. CL will not lend out uniforms, sweats, letter jackets, etc. to someone who is not a CL.
2. Uniforms may be altered, but no fabric may be cut without prior approval from the Coach.
3. CL is responsible for damage to or loss of any part of a uniform.

**General Guidelines**

1. CL hair will be a natural color.
2. No visible tattoos.
3. CL will not leave food, trash, or mess in the locker room, practice area, halls, or any performance area.
4. CL will not participate in any public display of affection during school, at school activities or while wearing CL uniform.
5. CL will follow all school rules and Parish policy, including dress code.
6. CL will respect/respond to all Coaches at all times. Rudeness/insubordination will not be tolerated.
7. CL will respect all teacher/staff members at all times

**Dismissal/Probation**

Accumulation of three or more benching may result in an Athletic Director/Coach review which could result in dismissal from squad.

Repeated/excessive offenses may result in principal/sponsor review. Repeated/excessive is defined as repetition of the same offense three or more times during the duration of the season. Violation of the same rule or guideline three or more times in a season will result in the cheerleader being placed on probation for the remainder of the season. Violation of the probation by further misconduct will result in dismissal from squad.

Any Athletic Director/Coach review of student’s actions may result in dismissal from squad.

These are general rules/guidelines for all Parish Cheerleaders. Failure to comply may at times require judgment calls to be made. These decisions will be left up to the Athletic Director & Coach.

**Inclement Weather**

In the event of inclement weather, it will be the responsibility of the Coach, in collaboration with the Athletic Director, to make the decision to leave the event. The decision will be based on what is in the best interests of the students.

**Transportation**

Middle school cheerleaders are required to provide their own transportation to games.

**By signing this contract I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, (cheerleader print name) agree that I have read the above 2019-2020 Parish Cheerleading Constitution and agree to follow all rules and guidelines as listed. I am aware that I am committed once placed on a team until Trimester 2 or basketball season concludes, whichever may come first, unless I play a winter sport and in that case I am committed until the start date of that sport.**

**Cheerleader Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**