

Descriptor Term:
CRITERIA FOR CHEERLEADING SELECTION

IDFB
ISSUE DATE: **4-3-06**
Revised: 01-13-14
02/05/18

PURPOSE:

The primary purpose of cheerleading squads in the Jackson County School District shall be to provide enthusiastic support of team members comprising the various organized athletic teams, coordinate and encourage fan support, and promote school spirit throughout the year.

NUMBERS:

The Varsity Cheerleader Squad shall consist of a maximum of 20 members from the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades effective for the 2014-2015 school year and beyond.

The 9th grade Cheerleader Squad shall consist of a maximum of 12 members from the 9th grade effective for the 2014-2015 school year and beyond.

If there are less than 8 candidates for the 9th grade squad, the school may choose to terminate the 9th grade squad for the upcoming school year and have a single varsity squad consisting of 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade. The Varsity squad will, only then, have a new maximum of 30 members effective for the 2014-2015 school year and beyond.

The Middle School Cheerleader Squad shall consist of a maximum of 20 members from the 7th and 8th grades class effective for the 2014-2015 school year and beyond.

Selection to each squad shall consist of representation from each grade. Remaining positions shall be filled on a natural break in scores not to exceed the maximum squad number for the year. In the event of a tie for the final position on the squad a call back will be conducted to break the tie, if the scores are tied again the highest GPA will be the tie breaker. All candidates must try out. In the event that a cheerleader from the team/organization is injured while under the supervision of the coach/sponsor in a MHSAA athletic activity, an exception to waive the tryout, may be made at the discretion of the coach/sponsor/administration. The student must provide medical documentation from a physician outlining the injury and restrictions of the athlete.

CRITERIA FOR TRYOUTS:

Effective for the 2013-2014 school year and beyond, each cheer coach shall announce tryout dates at least one month prior to the tryouts. Tryouts shall be scheduled during the spring semester that will ensure maximum student participation. Tryouts shall not be conducted during school holidays or weekends associated with school holidays. Tryouts may be conducted on Saturdays.

Less than one month prior to tryouts, each cheer coach will conduct a mandatory clinic to teach routines that will be used for tryouts.

During the tryouts, candidates for cheerleader shall wear plain shorts and a plain t-shirt to eliminate the appearance that any candidate has been a cheerleader or associated with a cheerleading organization in a previous year.

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Students shall be required to have a current physical on file with the school prior to participating in any clinic or tryout as well as proof of medical insurance.

The tryout process for males and females will be the same, yet the criteria are different due to the nature of the sport. Females will be judged on a dance, a cheer, and jumps. They will also be judged on at least one of the following: gymnastics, overall showmanship, and/or chant. Males will be required to perform stunts consisting of, but not limited to, "toss the chair" in place of performing dances. At the sponsor's discretion, males may be dismissed at dance-only practices.

Cheerleader tryouts shall be closed except to authorized employees of the Jackson County School District and the judges. Candidates will be admitted only during his or her individual tryout. No video recording devices or cameras of any type will be allowed in tryouts.

CLINICS/JUDGES:

Effective for the 2013-2014 school year and beyond: Tryout clinic shall be led by one professional instructor, qualified through the Universal Cheerleaders Association or a similar nationally recognized cheerleading association.

Tryout Clinic shall be closed except to authorized employees of the Jackson County School District and the Instructor teaching the clinic. No video recording device or camera will be allowed in tryout clinic. Cheer Coaches shall have the option of distributing DVD's provided by the cheer association leading the tryout clinic. These DVD's will include the routines that will be taught during tryout clinic and performed during tryouts.

Cheerleader candidates shall be judged by an impartial selection committee composed of three judges not associated with the Jackson County School District. The judges shall be certified by the Universal Cheerleaders Association or a similar nationally recognized cheerleading association. Coaches will request that judges shall reside no less than 60 miles outside of the Jackson County School District. The expenses associated with tryout clinic shall be paid from the school athletic fund. The expenses associated with hiring judges shall be paid from the school athletic fund.

The maximum allowance the district athletic fund will pay associated with Cheerleading clinics and tryouts will be \$1500 for each high school and middle school.

Each participant will receive a packet, to include a score sheet, practice requirements, rules and regulations, expected expenses, etc., detailing requirements in advance.

UNIFORMS:

Uniforms will be worn for pep rallies, games and other approved performances approved by administration. School dress code policy will be followed on all other occasions.

MASCOTS:

One mascot shall be selected to represent the entire school. The mascot shall be chosen from the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade class. Mascots shall tryout immediately following cheerleaders. Mascot candidates shall create and perform a 1 to 3 minutes skit with music

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and props. Mascot candidates will be selected judged on entrance, cheer, skit, and overall impression, and interest.

**Jackson County School District
Cheerleader Constitution**

I. Cheerleader Purpose and Philosophy

- To promote and uphold school spirit
- To develop a sense of good sportsmanship among students and athletes
- To promote unification of the crowd's involvement during athletic events
- To strive to build better relationships between schools
- To strive to uphold the highest personal, as well as, cheerleading standards

II. Tryouts will be held according to the policy

Skills and Procedure

1. Group Dance
2. Group Cheer
3. Group Cheer
4. Jump 1 (toe touch)
5. Jump 2 (choice)
6. Tumbling

Selection of Cheerleaders (Numbers):

- The policy reflects the number of cheerleaders allowed beginning in the 2014-2015 school year and beyond.

Criteria for Tryouts:

- ALL CANDIDATES MUST HAVE A PHYSICAL PRIOR TO TRYOUT CLINIC.**
- School insurance is strongly suggested unless other arrangements are made. Proof of other coverage is required prior to clinic. The entire tryout application must be complete and correct with all required information by the deadline. Sufficient time will be given.
- Females will be judged on a dance, a cheer, and jumps. They will also be judged on at least one of the following: gymnastics, spirit, facials, and overall showmanship.
- The tryout process for males and females is the same, yet the criteria are different due to the nature of the sport.
- In place of males performing dances they will be required to perform stunts. At the sponsor's discretion, males may be dismissed at dance-only practices. In place of the dance at tryouts, they will perform the stunt known as "toss the chair."

Judges will be selected according to the policy.

Eligibility (Current MHSAA Eligibility will be followed.)

- Eligibility will be checked once a cheerleader candidate has made the squad. Information relative to academic eligibility can be found at www.misshsaa.com.
- All cheerleaders must have maintained and continue to maintain at least a 2.0 average during the current school year.

III. Policies for Practices and Games

- Cheerleading is 100% a team sport. When one member is not present, the entire squad is affected. Participation in practice is imperative to adequately prepare for

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games, pep rallies, and other events. Cheerleaders will be required to attend 100% of all weekly practices and be present for 100% of the practice time to be eligible to cheer at a game or pep rally. If this requirement is not met, the cheerleader will be suspended from the next game or pep rally. After two suspensions, the cheerleader will be removed from the squad before the 3rd suspension.

- Cheerleaders will practice as needed during the summer, football and basketball seasons. Often practice times will change from day to day according to the availability of the gym. In other words, we may practice 3-5 on Monday, 5-7 on Tuesday, etc... (this is just a example)
- Squad members will report appropriately dressed and ready for practice by time designated by the sponsor.
- Dress code:** Cheerleaders will be dressed appropriately even in practice.
 - o Females will be required to wear "hot pants"/ spandex that are clearly visible under practice shorts during class.
 - o Failure to meet required dress code will result in demerits.
- Practice dress code:**
 - o Designated shirt and shorts- do not lose camp clothes because these outfits will be required for class.
 - o Cheer shoes ONLY
 - o Hot pants/ spandex as mentioned above or shorts with built in liners
 - o NO jewelry of any kind!
 - o Hair must be pulled back in a pony tail or braid; short hair must be pulled back off of face.
- Tardiness to practice or a game for any reason will result in 1 demerit. Tardy is defined as not being dressed and ready to perform at the EXACT time assigned. If a cheerleader arrives more than thirty minutes late, she will receive an unexcused absence. (5 demerits for game or 2 demerits for practice)
- Leaving early (less than 30 min) from a practice for any reason will result in 0.5 demerits. Leaving early from a game (less that 30 min) will result in 1 demerit. Leave early is defined as leaving before the sponsor has dismissed the squad. If a cheerleader leaves more than 30 minutes early from practice or a game, she will receive an unexcused absence. (5 demerits for a game or 2 demerits for a practice).
- COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY! Cheerleaders are expected to notify the sponsor any time they are going to be absent, tardy, or may need to leave early. If there are VALID reasons, at the discretion of the sponsor, no demerits will be given.
- Any absence or tardy will automatically be counted as unexcused unless it can be classified as excused. Unexcused absences from practice will result in TWO demerits for each absence. Permission for absence must be received directly from sponsor prior to the absence. Only the sponsor can approve an absence or tardy.

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- EXCUSED ABSENCES ARE THE FOLLOWING:**
 - o Personal illness (must turn a doctor's excuse)
 - o Doctor/dentist's appointment approved in advance by the sponsor (must turn in doctor's excuse)
 - o Death in the family
 - o All other absences must be approved by the sponsor.
- ****Haircuts do not fall under the category of an excused absence!!
- Work, extracurricular activities, other sports, and all personal business **MUST** be scheduled after practice. Failure to do so will result in an automatic unexcused absence.
- Uniforms will be worn for pep rallies, games and other approved performances. School dress code policy will be followed on all other occasions.

IV. Football/Basketball Games

- All rules apply at games.
- Bring all uniforms to games. If a cheerleader does not have the appropriate uniform, they may be sidelined at the discretion of the coach.
- Teams may be assigned for away games and games may be rotated at the discretion of the coach. Teams may also be assigned at home basketball games with a rotation at the discretion of the coach.
- Varsity cheerleaders will cheer at all varsity football games as well as all home 9th grade and Junior Varsity games. Cheerleaders must be dressed, ready for home games, and on the field forty-five (45) minutes prior to game time; or at the time designated by the sponsor.
- When cheering, the squad will wear the official uniform designated for that game. If one member wears a raincoat, everyone must wear a raincoat, etc.
- Each cheerleader must wear the uniform, bloomers, socks, shoes and hair ribbon selected by the cheerleader captain and approved by the sponsors.
- Cheerleaders must cheer at all home 9th grade, Junior Varsity, and Varsity basketball games. Cheerleaders must be dressed, ready for home games, and in the gym at the time designated by the sponsor.
- When a 9th grade squad is chosen, the responsibility of cheering at 9th grade football and basketball games will be solely on the 9th grade squad.
- Squad members may not participate in any cheering activity on any day they are absent from school.
- Any unexcused absence from a basketball or football game will result in 5 demerits. A second unexcused absence will result in dismissal from the squad.
- Each week sign groups will be assigned certain duties before and after the game. Every member of the group must meet at the school before the game and come back to the school after the game to put everything away. Failure to complete sign group responsibilities will result in 2 demerits per occurrence. This means 2 for before the game and 2 for after the game.

V. Summer Camp, Season Practices, and Competitions

- Attendance to camp, practices, and competitions is mandatory.
- All practices are closed! Only squad members are allowed to attend.
- The final decision of the date, location and type of camp will ultimately be the coach's choice.
- The cheerleader must attend pre-camp practices as planned by the coach.
- Two weeks prior to camp, cheerleaders are not allowed to miss any practices; doing so will result in an unexcused absence of 5 demerits. If the cheerleader has an unexcused absence in the two weeks prior to camp and has a previous unexcused absence, the rule stated in D will still be applied in addition to demerits for the unexcused absence.**
- Excused absences from mandatory camp practice are the same as those defined in previously. Tardies and leaving early from mandatory camp practice will count as defined previously.
- For Mandatory practices: Missing practice, coming late, or leaving will NOT be **excused; an unexcused absence will be issued.**
- Competitions will be held according to the discretion of the coach.

VI. Financial Responsibility/Fund-raising

- The estimated cost of cheerleading can range from \$600.00 to \$1300.00.
- Cheerleaders are responsible for purchasing uniforms, shoes, pom poms, warm-ups, hang-up bags for uniforms, sport bags, jackets, sweaters, and/or sweatshirts, and rain gear.
- Cheerleaders are responsible for camp fees and camp clothes.
- Other additional expenses such as choreographer fees might be necessary for competition.
- There will be due dates for these expenses. Cheerleaders will be informed as far in advance of these due dates as possible. Parents may raise these funds by means of fundraisers as decided by cheer parents.
- Each cheerleader will be expected to sell a minimum amount of spirit products (ribbons, buttons, etc.) or to participate in group fund-raisers with a minimum request to be set **by the coach.**
- Any cheerleader who does not meet the minimum fundraising request for any fundraiser must pay the difference.

VII. Requirements and Rules of Conduct

- Conduct - the general conduct of every cheerleader must be above reproach at all times.
- Cheerleaders must not use language that is considered foul or inappropriate.
- No squad member will show disrespect to the coach at any time.
- There will be no smoking, drinking or use of drugs; doing so can result in dismissal if there is sufficient evidence.
- There will be NO cell phone use allowed during practices or during games with the exception of halftimes.
- Cheerleaders must change from their uniform after any game or pep rally before the cheerleader goes to any social event (date, party, etc.).

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- Should a squad member have a problem with the squad, it should first be discussed with the cheerleader coach who will determine if it should be discussed with the entire squad. Squad members should not discuss squad problems outside the squad meetings/practices at any time.
- Squad members should not argue amongst themselves at any time during a game or pep rally.
- All cheerleaders must pass a medical physical examination.
- All cheerleaders must represent the district in a positive manner at all times. Be an asset to the squad.
- Cheerleaders are not to talk negatively about fellow cheerleaders/cheer sponsors or behave in any manner so as to promote disunity on the squad. Cheerleaders are not allowed to discuss cheerleading negatively on the internet. This includes Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Facetime, Text Messaging, Skype, or any other form of communication. There will be NO CYBERBULLYING. This action may result in demerits and possibly dismissed from the squad and/or disciplinary action with the school.
- Show respect for the coaches and fellow cheerleaders.
- All Cheerleaders are required to set up practice mats at every practice as well as rolling them back up at the end of practice. Failure to do so may also result in demerits and/or being sidelined.
- Cheerleaders must bring pom poms or megaphones to all games, pep rallies, and practices. Failure to do so may result in cheerleader being sidelined and/or demerits.
- Each cheerleader must be physically able to participate in long periods of vigorous activity without undue fatigue. Sponsors will provide a strength training program that will need to be followed over the summer. Fitness may be checked during the first weeks of school. Lack of conditioning can cause serious injuries to athletes.
- Each cheerleader will be required to perform mounts, jumps and tumbling in any capacity. Failure to meet these requirements may result in suspension from the squad. Any condition that may hinder these activities must be made known to the sponsors prior to clinic/tryouts or as soon as the condition arises.
- If a cheerleader can not for some temporary reason participate in a game or practice, she must participate as completely as the medical condition allows. Attendance is required unless physically unable to do so.
- Placement of a cheerleader in ISI will result in 2 demerits per day of ISI.
- Placement of a cheerleader in OSS will result in 4 demerits per day of OSS.
- Additionally, demerits will be given and cheerleaders disciplined according to the Assertive Discipline Plan (Demerit System) attached.

Appearance during football/basketball games, pep rallies, and practice

- Cheerleaders are required to cheer at all football and basketball home games.
- Uniform must be kept neat and clean.
- Hair must be off of the face and shoulders; long hair tied up in a ponytail or French braid. Short hair and all bangs must be pinned back out of eyes.
- Make-up must be natural, no heavy eye make-up or glitter.
- Absolutely no jewelry is allowed.**
- Sweats or leg tights will only be worn while cheering in extreme cold and only when instructed by the sponsors.
- Natural smiles, pep, good grooming and posture should always be evident. Cheerleaders should be confident and in command of the situations at all times.

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- Fingernails, including artificial nails, shall be kept at a length appropriate for safe participation. The appropriate length means the nails are not visible beyond the end of the fingers when viewed from the palm side of the hands.

VIII. Safety Procedures

- All squad members must pass a medical examination and have proof of insurance.
- Stunts and stunt progressions - all partner stunts must be legal according to the National Federation of High School Association's Spirit Rules Book for the current year and approved by the cheerleading coach.
- All rules/regulations established by the MS High School Activities Association will be followed.
- No stunts should be performed by any squad member without the sponsor present and aware of stunts being performed.
- Shoes are required to be worn at all practices, games and events.

IX. Squad Captain/ Co Captain

Selection of Squad Captain/Co Captain

Each squad member who wishes to be considered for a captain position must submit an essay stating why she wants a leadership position and feels she is qualified.

- a) Tryout score - 25%
- b) Sponsor Evaluation - 50%
- c) Confidential Squad Vote - 25%

Squad Captain Duties

- o Display model behavior that reflects a positive school and personal image
- o Have a captain's notebook at all practices and meetings
- o Meet with the coach weekly to join in the planning of practices, pep rallies, and games
- o Be responsible for leading the squad in game situations, starting chants, etc.
- o Be responsible for coordinating summer practices with the approval of the sponsors
- o Act as special communicator between sponsors and squad during summer and school year
- o Plan pep rallies and have them approved by the sponsors no later than Tuesday the week of the pep rally

X. Dismissal

- Once a cheerleader has received 10 demerits, she will be removed from the squad and monies received for expenses will be forfeited. If there is an outstanding expense not paid for, the parents will assume responsibility for that amount as well.
- If a cheerleader is dismissed from the squad due to having 10 demerits, he/she will NOT be permitted to tryout and return to the squad the following school year.
- If a cheerleader quits the squad, she will automatically receive 10 demerits; therefore he/she will NOT be permitted to tryout and return to the squad the following school year.**

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Demerit System 2013-2014

1.0 tardy/leave early to a practice or performance (tardy is defined as not being dressed and ready to perform at the exact time assigned) If a squad member arrives/leaves in excess of thirty minutes tardy, she will receive unexcused absences.

1.0 inappropriate practice clothing, shoes, hair, jewelry, or fingernails; **SHOES ARE REQUIRED.**

1.0 incomplete uniform (socks, ribbons, shoes, poms, etc.)

2.0 any hard jewelry worn during practice or game

2.0 unexcused absence from practice or mandatory meeting.

2.0 ISI (2 per day of ISI)

4.0 OSS (4 per day of OSS)

1.0 referral for classroom misbehavior

1.0 "goofing" or "horseplay" during games or practices.

1.0 causing/ participating in a disturbance with other squad members

5.0 unexcused absence from any game, performance, or practice that is 2-weeks before camp or 4 weeks before competition.; absence from any mandatory special event.

5.0 performing any stunts without the presence of a sponsor.

2.0 not fulfilling cheerleading responsibilities (signs, fund-raising, money deadlines, etc...)

10.0 cursing or arguing with other squad members or sponsor at any time

1.0 continuously getting out of position in game lines or talking in game lines.

10 2nd unexcused absences from practice 2-weeks before camp or 4 weeks before competition.

10 drinking, smoking, fighting, using drugs in or out of uniform

10 placement in Alternative School program

10 disrespect to a sponsor

10 absence from a mandatory competition

10 inappropriate behavior that is not in accordance with the expectations of the JCSD cheerleading program

10 Quitting the squad

The coach is the only person authorized to issue demerits to cheerleaders. Once a cheerleader has received ten (10) demerits, she will be removed from the squad and monies received for expenses will be forfeited. Parents will assume responsibility for any outstanding expenses.

Benching:

- 4 demerits: Cheerleader will be benched for the first quarter of the game
- 6 demerits: Cheerleader will benched for the first half of the game
- 8 demerits: Cheerleader will be benched for the entire game

**If a cheerleader is benched, she must report to the game dressed in uniform and sit with the coach.

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Jackson County School District Cheerleading

I, _____, have read and understand the

constitution that I will be placed under as a member of the Cheerleading Squad. I agree

to abide by all rules set before me and understand the consequences for failing to do so. I

will do my part to continue to strive towards the standards of excellence set by the squad

members before me.

Cheerleader Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date