

# **THE COLONY HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADING Guidelines 2025-2026 Lewisville Independent School District**



## **Statement of Purpose:**

Being a TCHS Cheer program member 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 the school. Cheerleaders should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their position and in accordance with the rules as stated in the LISD 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 and academic achievement both on and off campus than that of their peers. Cheerleaders are expected to be physically and mentally skilled in learning and remembering cheers/routines. They are also expected to be able to publicly demonstrate a skill level suitable for the team position and the timing necessary for group performance. On and off the field, they are to enthusiastically support all athletic teams and TCHS groups through advertisement, personal attitude and attendance at events chosen by the coach and approved by the principal.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statement of Purpose.....	1
Table of Contents.....	2
Definition/Eligibility/Commitment.....	3
Selection/Evaluation Process.....	3-4
Communication.....	4-5
Academic Eligibility.....	5
General Conduct Rules/ECOC.....	6
Discipline System.....	7-8
Practice/Performance.....	8
Other Cheer Duties.....	9
Banquet.....	9
Summer Camp.....	9
Uniform Guidelines.....	9-10
General Guidelines.....	10
Safety Guidelines.....	10-11
Cheering Activities.....	11
Transportation.....	11
Booster Club/Parents Expectations.....	12
Monies Collected/Costs.....	12
Honorary Cheer Members.....	12

## DEFINITION/ELIGIBILITY/COMMITMENT

**DEFINITION:** Cheerleading year: The rules and procedures outlined in this handbook are in effect from the time the student is selected to the cheerleading program until the next tryout date (March to March). These rules apply to cheerleaders, yell leaders and mascots in the program equally. This does not include the academic guidelines. Because of TEA rules, the academic policies are in effect for a school year. The LISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct will be enforced for the duration of the Cheerleading year (March to March).

**ELIGIBILITY-TRYOUT:** A student is eligible to try out for cheerleader if the following conditions are met:

- At the time of the tryout, the student is enrolled in The Colony High School.
- If the student is not currently enrolled in The Colony High School but is registered to attend the TCHS campus for the next school year, the student may try out at that campus with documentation to support residency within the boundaries of TCHS for the upcoming school year. Campus Administrative approval will be needed.

**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. Parents should help their cheerleader uphold this commitment. Any cheerleader who voluntarily quits the squad before the end of the cheerleading year without the approval of the principal and coach will not be allowed to try out for the next year without approval from the coach. The Coach has the right to approve seniors to graduate early if approval was given at the time of tryouts and the early graduation contract is signed with the tryout paperwork. Anyone that does not tryout for the team the following year or does not make the team at tryouts will be removed from the cheer period at the end of that grading period. They will finish the current grading period in a study hall period during that class.

## SELECTION/EVALUATION PROCESS

**SELECTION:** The procedures for selection are based on the Cheer Coaches Policies of The Colony HS and from the guidelines in this handbook. The coaches' decision for squad selection is final. Parents will not be allowed in the building during any phase of the tryouts.

**TRYOUT GUIDELINES:** The coaches will be responsible for the preparation/distribution of a packet of information to be made available to all candidates. This information will include specific tryout dates, times, attire, and procedures. 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 participate in the tryout process. TCHS cheerleaders shall be selected by an evaluation made by the coaches during the clinics and tryout. Students wishing to try out for the cheerleading squad must fill out all required paperwork with the team coach by the first day of the clinic before the clinic begins. A physical exam or proof of prior exam is required before a student is allowed to participate in try-outs. A parental permission form is also required. These must be completed before a cheerleader, yell leader, or mascot can participate in any activity. Each student trying out must attend the tryout evaluations to be considered for a team.

### EVALUATION PROCESS:

Candidates will be evaluated on jumps, tumbling, spirit, voice, enthusiasm, motion techniques, game day performance, dance, stunting, attitude, participation, and anything else the coach determines. The coaches will watch them during the two clinic days and the tryout day to determine if they execute the skills, attitude and work ethic to be placed on a team. Coaches' decisions are final.

### SQUAD DYNAMICS:

**\*The decision to combine squads or move team members up can be done at the discretion of the coaches based on numbers and team needs at any time; this will override the grade level per squad.**

#### Varsity:

- Number will be determined by the coaches' evaluations at tryouts
- Consists of Junior and Senior females
- Sophomore females will be considered for Varsity depending on squad needs

**Junior Varsity:**

- Number will be determined by the coaches' evaluations at tryouts
- Consists of Sophomore females
- Any junior not making the Varsity squad may be eligible to make the Junior Varsity squad, if they consent in writing prior to the tryout
- Freshmen females will be considered for JV depending on squad needs

**Freshmen:**

- Number will be determined by the coaches' evaluations at tryouts
- Consists of freshmen males and females

**Yell Leaders (Male Cheerleaders):**

-Sophomore, Junior, and Senior males will be placed on the JV/V team that the coaches determine is best for the skill level. Freshmen males are only eligible for the freshmen squad.

**Mascots/Managers:**

-Can be 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade males or females. If there are no mascot candidates that tryout, then cheerleaders that do not meet the cheer tryout criteria can be placed as a mascot. Mascots will receive a PE credit, so they will do all athletic aspects of cheer as designated by the coaches. Mascots will be in the cheer class during football season and will perform at designated football games and pep-rallies. Mascots will also serve as the team manager at times as designated by the coaches. The number of mascots will be determined by the coaches.

**Captains:**

-The Varsity captain can be chosen by a combination of squad vote, essay evaluation, teacher evaluations and coach's evaluations. The coach will have the final say on the captain process and the selection of captains. The number of captains will be determined by the coach. To be considered for captain, you must be a senior that has already cheered at least one year at the varsity level. A Varsity Co-Captain can be selected from the Juniors if the coaches choose to do so. This Junior must have cheered a full year on the Varsity/JV team prior. Junior Varsity/Freshmen captains can be chosen by squad vote and coach evaluation. The number of captains and whether to have a captain is up to the coach. JV captains should have already cheered at the freshmen level. Captains can be demoted from their position at any time if the coach feels they are not performing to expectations.

**VIDEO USAGE GUIDELINES:**

If there is an injury prior to tryouts for new candidates, it is at the coaches' discretion whether to use a video tryout of skills prior to the injury. Current members will be evaluated on skills witnessed by the coaches.

**NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS:**

All results will be posted on the school website on the date designated by the coaches.

**PARENT REQUEST FOR EVALUATION RESULTS:**

Parents may request by email what was witnessed by the coaches in the evaluation process that determined the results. By law, all other student evaluations are protected and cannot be shared with anyone except the coach, principal, or principal designee. No other candidates will be discussed.

**COMMUNICATION**

Parents have the right to know, and understand the expectations placed on them and their children. Coaches have the right to know if parents have a concern; a parent should discuss concerns with the coach at the appropriate time and place.

**COMMUNICATION OF THE PARENT:**

Appropriate communication coaches should expect from parents:

- Concerns regarding a son/daughter expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place.
- Specific concerns regarding the coaches' philosophy and/or expectations.
- Notification of any prior schedule conflicts.
- Mental and physical treatment of a student.
- Improvements on which a cheerleader/mascot may need to focus.
- Student Behavior/Safety

Concerns not appropriate for discussion with a coach:

- Squad selection of cheers, chants, stunts or elements of a performance.
- Any situation that deals with other student athletes or squad members.

#### **COMMUNICATION OF THE COACH:**

Communication parents should expect from the coach:

- Requirements and/or feedback the coach has for his/her student and the team.
- Locations and times of practices and performances.
- Team requirements of fees, special equipment, uniforms, squad rules, travel arrangements and off-season expectations.
- Procedures in the event his/her student becomes injured during a performance or practice.

#### **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENT/GUARDIAN, COACH AND SCHOOL:**

There are situations that may require a conference to promote resolution to an issue. If a parent has a concern to discuss with the coach, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Call the coach to set up an appointment: Outline and define objectives for a meeting and stick to discussing facts only.
2. Do not confront the coach before, during or after a practice or performance. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution of the situation, but often escalate it.
3. Do not attempt to enter the cheerleader athletic class without prior written permission from the Campus Principal or his/her designee during school hours. Parents and guardians are restricted to campus visits under the guidelines for campus visitors in LISD.
4. If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, a parent or guardian should follow the following chain of command: (You cannot contact the following if you have not first met with the coach directly)
  - Campus Assistant Athletic Coordinator or Athletic Coordinator
  - Assistant Principal over Cheer
  - HS Principal
  - Assistant District Athletic Director
  - District Athletic Director
  - Assistant Chief of Schools
  - Chief of Schools

### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

**ELIGIBILITY:** Academic eligibility begins anew each school calendar year (August) as is the case with UIL sanctioned activities. A student whose recorded grade average in any course is lower than a 70 at the end of a UIL eligibility period shall be suspended from competition or performance. A suspension continues for at least three weeks and is not removed during the school year until the student is passing all subjects taken. This suspension shall become effective seven calendar days after the last day of the UIL eligibility period during which the grade lower than 70 was earned. Refer to board policy for a list of courses that are exempt from this policy. A student who regains eligibility at the end of a UIL eligibility period shall not become eligible until the school day seven calendar days later at 4:00 pm. Cheerleaders will continue to attend classes, all practices, fundraisers, and community service. Any cheerleader that becomes ineligible will not be allowed to perform, travel with the squad, or wear his/her uniform for any reason for the term of ineligibility without the coaches' approval. The Head Coach will determine if the cheerleader(s) is required to attend an event without participation. This state policy regarding eligibility does not apply to social activities. Per the TEA/UIL Eligibility Calendar High School Side by Side, a cheerleader who is ineligible at a Nine Week grading period and one other subsequent 9-week grading periods in the same or different subjects, will be removed from cheerleading at the next grading period. The participant will only be allowed to tryout the following year with the approval of the campus cheerleading coach.

## **GENERAL CONDUCT RULES/EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT (ECOC)**

**GENERAL CONDUCT RULES:** Cheerleaders are expected to behave in a manner that is becoming to the individual, as well as to 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 they attend and should act accordingly. Any cheerleader removed from his/her squad for disciplinary reasons during the current cheerleading year will not be eligible to participate in the next tryout without approval from the coach. Areas to be reviewed will include but not be limited to a review of the reason(s) for removal and student records since removal (academic grades, discipline records, attitude, etc.) 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.

**IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** Anyone assigned to in-school suspension will be subject to the following actions:

- First Offense – Benched for next event.
- Second Offense – Benched for next event and placed on probation for the duration of the year.
- Third Offense – Removal from squad.

Students assigned to in-school suspension may not perform, wear the cheerleader uniform, or practice with the squad while serving in-school suspension. However, students benched for disciplinary reasons will be required to attend the event, and stand in the designated area by the coaches.

**OUT-OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** Anyone assigned out of school suspension will be subject to the following actions:

- First Offense – Benched for next two events, Principal/Coach Review, Placed on probation for the duration of school year. Possible dismissal.
- Second Offense – Removal from squad.

Any member failing to abide by published school rules relating to conduct, use of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or other illegal activities will be subject to review by the coach and principal. Dismissal from the group may result from that review. Any drug/alcohol violations will be disciplined in accordance with the LISD Student Code of Conduct at school or for any school sponsored activities. The LISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct will be implemented if not at school or school sponsored activities. Should any eligibility situation not be covered by the above policy, the UIL eligibility standards will apply. Any member who is expelled or placed in the Alternate Education Program will be removed from the cheerleading squad for the remainder of the school year. The participant will only be allowed to try out the following year with the approval of the campus cheerleading coach and campus administration.

### **BEHAVIOR CONTRACT:**

Cheerleaders are expected to demonstrate exemplary character at all times. At practice, performances, and all cheer related events, cheerleaders are expected to have a positive attitude, work hard, be willing to learn new things and improve skills, encourage, and help teammates, and show respect for each other, coaches, and other staff. Cheerleaders who do not meet these expectations will be counseled by the coach about needed improvement and parents will be notified. If the cheerleader continues to fail to meet these expectations, he/she will be required to meet with a coach and campus administrator and sign a behavior contract. Parents will be notified. Any failure to meet expectations after this point may result in removal from the squad. The Coaches have the right to discipline for poor attitude/behavior with conditioning, benching's or removal at any time.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT (ECOC):**

An extracurricular code of conduct has been developed and approved by the LISD school board. The ECOC must be signed by all TCHS Cheer program members as part of the tryout paperwork. The extracurricular code of conduct goes into effect from March of the current year until Tryouts of the upcoming year. Any incidents that occur after school hours or on the weekend will be disciplined in accordance with the extracurricular code of conduct, which will supersede the cheerleader constitution during these times. This does not include times that a cheerleader or male spirit squad member is participating at a school sponsored cheerleading event or activity, during which times the campus code of conduct and cheerleader guidelines will be enforced.

## DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

### ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE GUIDELINES:

\*Cheerleaders will attend all in/out of school practices and required events. Any absence must be cleared by the Coach prior to the practice/event.

- EXCUSED: Illness with a doctor's note/school nurse (unless for emergency reasons, the cheerleader should make every effort to schedule **ALL** appointments around practice and events), death in the family, absences approved by coach/principal. Students will have one week from the absence to provide a doctor's note in order to be excused.
- UNEXCUSED: Work/vacation, personal appointments and any other absence not approved by the coaches. (Excused absences w/o prior notice is benched for ½ game; exception, death in the family) Unexcused: Benched one game.
- Cheerleaders cannot miss the last practice before an event (Benched one (1) event).
- Cheerleaders will attend all summer practices (Benched one (1) game per miss).
- Injuries: If an injury occurs that keeps the student out of two or more practices, a note from the student's parent or doctor stating the reason will be required. If the injury restricts the student from three or more practices, a doctor's note will be required. This note should state the nature of the injury, the specific length of time of the restriction, the specific task the student cannot perform, and any special instructions. Lack of participation will be categorized as missing practice if there is no note.
- Injured cheerleaders will attend all cheer events.
- If a team member is absent, it is their responsibility to find out what was covered and learn any new material that was missed.
- You must call or email the coach ahead of time to let them know of any absence during the cheer period or after school events. Conditioning/game benching's can be given if notice is not given ahead of time.
- An unexcused or excused absence without prior approval could result in being moved to a different position in a routine, game line up or performance. A squad member may also be moved if there is an absence (excused or unexcused) on a day when a routine is being worked on depending on the needs of the routine. A team member that is absent on the day that a paid choreographer or tumbling coach is either in the class period or working with the team after school **MUST** give prior notice since this is considered a scheduled team practice. This absence will result in being removed from the choreography and possible game benching. Each squad member is allowed to use up to 3 absences for situations beyond their control **with at least a week's prior notice** to the coach for approval. The coach will decide if the absence is an approved reason.
- College visits and other school approved visits must be approved by the coach ahead of time if missing class, events, or practice and should be planned not to conflict with cheer events. TCHS Cheerleading should be your first priority after academics.
- All other school activities will not be approved without at least a week's prior approval from the coach. School field trips are not excused during competition season or other major performances.
- All tutorials and make up work should be scheduled to the best of your ability around the cheer schedule. The coaches do not have to excuse a team member from practice/events for this reason.
- TCHS Cheer takes precedence over any other club, organization, sport, or outside activity.

### IN SCHOOL MINOR VIOLATIONS:

These items will be considered minor violations during the cheer class period: dress out, tardies, jewelry/spacers, gum, hair/bangs down, nail length, etc. All these minor violations will result in immediate conditioning designated by the coaches. If the conditioning is not started the first time asked, additional conditioning will be added. If it is not started the second time asked, another additional amount of conditioning will be added. If a coach must ask a third time, then it will result in an office referral. If a coach misses a minor violation at the start of class and then notices it later, the squad member will be asked to run double for not being upfront with the violation on their own.

**OUT OF SCHOOL MINOR VIOLATIONS:** These items will be considered minor violations and will be dealt with in the following manner: dress out/full uniform (including make up for females), tardies, jewelry/spacers, gum, failure to

bring supplies needed (poms, megaphones, etc.), hair/bangs down, nail polish/nail length (only clear or french are allowed), not fulfilling sign crew or committee meeting duties, etc. Three minor violations will result in a half game benching. One half-game benching per season from minor violations (off season - from tryouts to the start of school, football - from the start of school until Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, and basketball - from Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> until tryouts) will be allowed to be worked off with assigned conditioning. Work offs will be mandatory to complete if the squad member has not used a work off for that season. Any squad member that does not complete the work off in the designated time will serve their half game benching and will still be responsible for finishing the remainder of the work off in the time designated by the coach. The work offs need to be completed on the coach's scheduled time only. Cheerleaders that are injured at the time a work off is issued will be given other duties if the work off cannot be completed in the allotted time. (i.e. Cleaning and organizing the cheer closet, vacuuming mats, etc.)

**UNEXCUSED TARDIES:** An unexcused tardy that is under 10 minutes will result in a minor violation, unexcused tardies from 10:01-19 minutes will result in a half game benching and unexcused tardies that are 20+ minutes will result in a full game benching and will be considered an unexcused absence.

**SOCIAL MEDIA CONTRACT:** All team members chosen for the TCHS cheer program are required to sign the social media contract. Anyone that is found not following this contract can be subject to immediate dismissal or game benching's. The Coach will decide the consequence, depending on the severity of the contract violation.

### **PRACTICE/PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES**

UIL: One contest/per week: Cheerleaders are not permitted to lead cheers for contests held on separate school nights during the week. Playoff games are an exception to this rule. A school week consists of contests Monday-Thursday. Friday-Saturday contests do NOT count in the calendar week.

Violation of the following guidelines may be dealt with by benching during practice/performance, running, jumping, mat duty, or other physical conditioning as determined by the Coach.

#### **CHEERLEADER GUIDELINES:**

- Appropriate attire when practice/performance begins.
- Hair must be up and secure with natural hair color only. No low ponytails unless length of hair requires that for practice only or half up. The coach will determine what length requires which option.
- Nail length should be considered active length and no polish while in uniform.
- No jewelry during performance, game, pep rally or practice.
- Bring all required items (forms, signs, poms, etc.) at the beginning of practice/performance.
- Be on time to all practices/performance, and returning from halftime or breaks during an event.
- No leaving practice/performance area without Coach's permission.
- No leaving practice/performance until dismissed by the Coach.
- Must maintain skills demonstrated at tryouts. Failure to maintain these skills may result in benching until skills are regained.
- Must perform game skills at the expectation of the coach.

\*Note that unscheduled practices and events may be called with a 24-hour advance notice.

#### **CLASS PERIOD:**

1. Cheerleaders will have 5 minutes after the tardy bell to get dressed and be in their assigned spot for the cheer class. Any tardy to class, wrong clothes/shoes, hair not properly put up, jewelry, shorts rolled, etc. will be given immediate conditioning.
2. Practice and class time can consist of the following: stretching, jumping, running, weight training, tumbling, stunting, cheers/chants, routines, sign making, and any other skills designated by the coaches.
3. All cheerleaders, yell leaders, and mascots will be required to take the cheerleading class period and will be graded on cheerleading skills as well as class participation, sign making, attitude, and other areas decided by the coaches. Seniors MUST stay in the cheer class the full year to be eligible to attend the end of the year cheer banquet. Only those seniors that need a required course to graduate will be given approval to get out of the cheer class the second semester. This MUST be scheduled the year prior during the scheduling period.

## **OTHER CHEER DUTIES**

### **SIGN CREW:**

JV/Freshmen cheerleaders will be required to attend designated varsity games to serve as sign crew and must remain at the game until all duties are fulfilled. All sign crew must ride to and from away games with the team. Any sign crew duties that need to be switched with another team member must be approved ahead of time by filling out the game switch form and turning it into the varsity coach at least a week in advance. Minor violations will be given for each part of the sign crew duty that is not fulfilled. Game benching's can be given based on the severity of the sign crew duty not fulfilled. Sign crew **MUST** sit down on the track in the designated area given by the coach and must follow all the same guidelines as the varsity cheerleaders. This means that they should not be using their phones or eating/drinking during the game. This can be done at half time or before or after the game. Sign crew may also be assigned mascot duties if needed.

### **CHEER COMMITTEES:**

Cheer committees will be set up that have meetings determined by the coaches. Meetings are mandatory and will be given class grades or minor violations for any portion of the committee duty that is not fulfilled. Committee meetings are on the calendar that the coaches distribute in advance. Reminders may be given by the coaches, but the cheerleader is responsible for checking calendars on their own and attending all meetings. If a meeting is missed, it is up to the cheerleader to approach the coach about what they missed. Once a squad member has missed a third meeting it will become a benching. At the third miss, they will receive a half game benching, and the 4<sup>th</sup> will be a full game. There will be a full game benching for every miss after the 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE/SOCIALS:**

Community service hours will be set up as a group by the cheer coaches and attendance will be mandatory. If a cheerleader must miss a community service event for an approved excused reason, then they will be required to make up those hours on their own approved scheduled event. These absences **MUST** be turned in for approval at least one week prior to the event. They will have one month from the scheduled community service date to make up the time and should show proof from the organization that the community service was done with. If it is not made up by this time, then it will be considered a miss from an event and a game benching will be given. All squad members **MUST** attend all required community service to be eligible to attend the end of year cheer banquet. Socials that are paid for by the booster club for the full team will be considered required and unexcused misses will follow the absence guidelines. Any event that a member volunteers for is mandatory once they have committed.

## **BANQUET**

Any squad member quitting the team or removed from the team will not be allowed to attend the end of year cheer banquet as a squad member or as a guest of a squad member. Squad members removed due to injuries will still be able to attend with prior approval from the coaches. Early grad seniors can attend banquet as a team member with coach approval only if the early grad form was filled out at the time of tryouts.

## **SUMMER CAMP GUIDELINES**

Cheerleaders will attend summer camp. Camp is **MANDATORY**. Failure to attend summer camp is reason for dismissal from the squad.

## **UNIFORM GUIDELINES**

### **CHEERLEADERS WILL NOT:**

- Wear uniform to a non-CHEERLEADING function (Eating after a game may be approved by the Coach as an exception to the guideline)
- Lend out uniforms, warm-ups, practice clothes etc. to someone who is not a cheerleader.
- Cut fabric or alter uniforms in any way without prior approval from the Coach for uniform alterations.

### **CHEERLEADERS WILL:**

- Turn in uniforms by the scheduled date.

- Be responsible for damage to or loss of any part of a uniform (replacement of uniform or repair cost).
- Uniforms are expected to be washed after each use during the season; it is unacceptable to wear dirty uniforms for performances. Wash uniforms inside out and then hang to dry. DO NOT dry clean, this ruins the emblems.
- Will be charged a cleaning fee of \$50 for unwashed/wet uniforms.

#### **GAME DAY READY:**

- All squad members should look game day ready anytime they are in uniform. Those that do not follow this will sit out until corrected. This will go towards their game benching's.
- Correct full uniform including shoes, top, skirt/pants, hair bow, white ankle socks and cheer issued backpack. This will also include jackets, leggings and crop tops if designated.
- Hair ALL up in a high ponytail (or half up if length is approved by the coach). NO wispy's hanging down. Natural hair color only.
- Performance make-up for females.
- NO jewelry.
- Nails correct length/shape and no paint (french only).
- No visible tattoos or hickies while in uniform.
- Team members should maintain an All-American look as determined by the coach.

#### **LETTER JACKETS:**

Letter jackets are optional and not part of the cheer uniform, so should not be worn with the uniform at games. Those on the Varsity team and those that compete on the floor at UIL are eligible to letter in cheer after the season. So, these kids would be eligible for the fitting through athletics in the Spring. All letter jacket costs are the responsibility of each individual.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

Cheerleaders will follow all school rules and LISD policy, including dress code (Campus Code of Conduct and ECOC)

#### **GAME BENCHINGS:**

- Accumulation of three (3) benching's (for any reason) will result in a Principal/Coach review and possible removal from the squad. Game benching's will be served at the next football or basketball game after the discipline is assigned.
- Volleyball games will not be used as game benching's. If a coach has too many benched from one game to have a full team, then they may assign the last person disciplined to the next game.
- If a member is removed or quits the team, they are responsible for reimbursement to the booster club if payments for tumbling class or any other fees have already been paid out. There are absolutely **NO** refunds from cheer once items have been ordered and paid for through the booster club account.
- All rules set forth are general rules and guidelines for all TCHS cheerleaders, male spirit squad members and mascots. Failure to comply may at times require judgment calls to be made. These decisions will be left up to the Coaches/Administration.

**Coaches reserve the right to upgrade any penalty (immediate benching, office referral or removal) depending on the severity of the situation. Any conduct considered unbecoming of the program can be suspended from trying out for the program indefinitely. Coaches will determine what action will be taken in response to a situation on a case-by-case basis, and at their sole discretion.**

### **SAFETY GUIDELINES**

- Cheerleader squads should be placed under the direction of a knowledgeable coach.
- The Cheerleading coach or other knowledgeable designated school employee will be in attendance at all practices, performances, functions, and will ride with the team members on the bus when bus transportation is required.
- All Cheerleaders should receive proper training before attempting any form of cheerleading (tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps).

- If possible, all practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for the activities of cheerleaders, i.e., use of tumbling mats where warranted, away from excessive noise and distractions, etc.
- Training in proper spotting techniques should be mandatory for all squads attempting Cheerleader skills; i.e., camp.
- Warm-up and stretching should precede all practice sessions, pep-rallies, games and performances.
- If possible, all cheerleading squads should develop a conditioning and strength-building program.
- Coaches must recognize the entire squad's particular ability level and adjust the squad's activity accordingly.

**SPECIFIC SAFETY GUIDELINES:** All U.S. All Staff Federation and USA Cheer guidelines will be followed at all times.

## **CHEERING ACTIVITIES**

### **FOOTBALL:**

- Varsity Cheerleaders-cheer at all varsity games
- JV and Freshmen Cheerleaders-cheer at JV and Freshman home games, respectively
- Playoff games will be covered if squads are available and as determined by the coaches.

### **VOLLEYBALL:**

- V, JV and FR squads will cheer at Varsity Volleyball games as determined by coaches.
- FR and JV squads will cheer at FR and JV home games and possibly cover some varsity games.
- Playoff games will be covered if squads are available as determined by the coaches.

### **BASKETBALL:**

- Cheering is limited to district games only.
- Varsity Cheerleaders – All V boys and girls district home games should be covered.
- JV Cheerleaders – JV will cover Girls/Boys JV home district games and will cover Varsity games as needed.
- Freshmen Cheerleaders – Freshmen will cover Girls/Boys district home games and Varsity games as needed.
- Playoff games will be covered if squads are available and as determined by the coaches.

### **BASEBALL/SOFTBALL:**

- Cheering is limited to district games only after tryouts that fit in the cheer schedule.
- Varsity/JV Cheerleaders – Will attend designated Softball and Baseball games as assigned.
- Playoff games will be covered if squads are available and as determined by the coaches.

### **OTHER SPORTS/EVENTS:**

All playoff games designated by the coach to cheer are mandatory. Note that playoff games are not on the regular calendar and will have a shorter notice than other events, performances and games. Cheerleaders will cheer for any other sports as designated by the coaches.

### **COMPETITION SQUADS:**

- UIL competition will be required and can be chosen from freshmen, JV and Varsity squads.
- Performance competition teams/STUNT teams may also be chosen at the discretion of the coaches and also will be chosen by the coaches/choreographer from the freshmen, JV and Varsity teams.
- Those chosen for the UIL/competition/STUNT team both as a member on mat, or an alternate will be expected to fulfill their commitment to that team. Refusal to compete on a competition team if chosen could remove them from all cheer duties.
- Competition team members may be asked to pay extra fees or participate in extra fundraisers to cover the cost of these fees.
- Competition teams are considered a privilege; the coaches have the right to remove anyone from the team at any time. No one's spot on the competition team is permanent; members can be moved for any reason as the coach sees fit.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **TRANSPORTATION:**

Cheerleaders must utilize designated transportation. In emergency situations, students may ride home with their parent with prior approval in writing. Parents may be used to drive students to and from events where a school bus is not provided such as camp and competitions. Students should be picked up from events at the designated times. Violations/conditioning/benchings could be given if it is well over the designated time.

## **BOOSTER CLUBS/PARENT EXPECTATIONS**

### **BOOSTER CLUBS:**

ALL BOOSTER CLUBS WILL FOLLOW LISD GUIDELINES. Booster clubs are optional but may be allowed at the discretion of the principal and coach. Booster clubs are formed by school patrons to help enrich an organization's participation in extracurricular activities. This should be their primary focus.

Fundraising activities should support the educational goals of the school and cheerleading squad, but they should not exploit students. Booster clubs should have a board of directors made of at least a President, Vice President, and Treasurer. There should be at least two signatories on booster club checks. A detailed list of income and expenditures should be published by the Treasurer for the membership monthly. Cheerleaders shall not be required to pay dues to a booster club. Cheerleaders shall not be required to raise money if a parent prefers to pay the students' cost. Certain fundraising activities of the booster club may result in a donation to the school cheer activity fund.

### **MEETINGS:**

All parents should try to attend the booster club meetings to stay informed with the program and will be required to attend at least one fundraiser to help the team. Tryout meetings and after tryout meetings will be MANDATORY for all team members' parents. All freshmen parents and new parents to the program MUST attend an additional after tryout parent meeting to be designated by the coaches.

### **BEHAVIOR:**

Relatives and friends should understand that the cheerleaders have responsibilities during games, pep-rallies, performances, and practices. Therefore, they may only take photos or talk to the cheerleader after their responsibilities are completed.

Parents should remember that cheerleading is a team sport, suspending cheerleading activities as a punishment will punish the entire team and will not be excused.

Parents are expected to help out with events/activities as needed by the program; it is not acceptable to expect other parents to complete all required duties. All parents are expected to support the program as equally as possible and are required to help out with at least one team fundraiser. JV/Freshmen parents are also required to volunteer to work at least one spirit table fundraiser in addition to the team fundraiser.

## **MONIES COLLECTED/COSTS**

### **MONIES COLLECTED BY COACHES:**

Cheerleader coaches collecting monies from students for a school account only will give receipts to students stating the amount of monies collected and what the money is to be paid toward (trip, uniform, banquet, etc.). Coaches have no access to booster club funds and information regarding this account will be supplied by the booster club.

### **PROGRAM COSTS:**

A listing of additional costs can be obtained from the cheerleading coach and will be included in the campus tryout packet.

### **HONORARY CHEER MEMBERS:**

Honorary Cheer Members are students from our TCHS Life Skills class that would like to join the cheer team without going through a tryout process. These team members will follow the separate Honorary cheer member guidelines and will have a more flexible schedule. See the contract for the Honorary Cheer Member guidelines. Any Life Skills student that would like to try out for the team under the TCHS guidelines may do so but will need to meet the skill requirement of the cheer program.