

Northwest Independent School District High School Cheerleader Constitution and Guidelines



Northwest Independent School District

2020-2021

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Northwest ISD Cheerleader and Mascot High School Constitution and Guidelines

I. Purpose

Northwest ISD Cheerleaders are first and foremost representatives of their school, district and community. They must exemplify behavior suitable to their position of leadership. The guidelines of the Cheerleader Constitution outline details of behavior, responsibilities, uniform information, and tryout procedures. This document is designed to inform administration, faculty, students and parents of important details pertaining to the NISD Cheer program.

- A. The Northwest ISD high school cheerleaders will be divided into two (2) squads:
1. Varsity with a maximum of 25 cheerleaders plus one (1) mascot
 2. Junior Varsity with a maximum of 25 cheerleaders plus one (1) mascot
 3. Additional competitive squads made up of cheerleaders from either squad may be formed at the coach's discretion to perform or compete at events

Their purpose will be fourfold:

1. to promote spirit and cooperation among faculty, students, and parents
 2. to promote healthy sportsmanlike conduct
 3. to develop character, leadership, and commitment in each member
 4. to be Good Will Ambassadors between Northwest ISD and the communities of NISD
- B. Additionally, each cheerleader agrees to promote good relationships with rival schools and to cheer at the following events:
1. All football games
 2. All other events when requested and appropriate
 3. All play-off games

II. General Requirements

- A. Candidates and their families must agree to, and be fully aware of, the financial responsibilities of being a cheerleader and meet all financial obligations throughout the year.
- B. Candidates must be willing to give of their time to all cheerleading activities throughout the entire year.
- C. Candidates must reside with parent/guardian(s) within the attendance zone of the school or show proof of an accepted inter or intra district transfer that has been approved by NISD.
- D. Each candidate must tryout each year, regardless of whether or not he/she has previously been a cheerleader.
- E. All financial obligations to any NISD affiliated program must be cleared.

III. Tryout Requirements

- A. Candidates must be enrolled in the 8th, 9th, 10th, or 11th grade at an NISD school at the time of tryouts.
- B. A candidate's parent(s) or guardian(s) must attend the scheduled orientation meeting and/or schedule a meeting with the cheer sponsor and campus administrator in charge prior to the mandatory orientation meeting.
- C. Candidates must turn in the following items prior to the first day of the Tryout Clinic:
 - 1. Medical Release Form signed by the parent/guardian
 - 2. Pledge stating that he/she agrees to the terms and expectations of a cheerleader
 - 3. Constitution signed by both the candidate and parent/guardian
- D. Candidates are expected to attend the tryout workshop(s) in order to familiarize themselves with the tryout process. Attendance is expected but not mandatory. Failure to participate in the workshops could hamper a candidate's ability to learn the material used for judging at the tryouts, and therefore, could impact their ability to be selected to a squad.
- E. A candidate will not be able to tryout for cheerleader if he/she attends DAEP or JJAEP during the current school year.
- F. Requirements for tryouts. A candidate:
 - 1. Must not have been academically ineligible for any two or more grading periods during the current school year
 - 2. Must have no DAEP or JJAEP school placement during the current school year
 - 3. Must not have been absent (excused or unexcused) for more than 10% of school days in the current school year
 - 4. Must be cleared through both the attendance and administrator's offices before being eligible to tryout
 - 5. With current injuries must provide a doctor's release note at the time of the tryout in order to participate
 - 6. With extenuating circumstances, may use a video for tryout purposes with prior approval from the cheer coach and campus administrator

IV. Selection Process

- A. Varsity and Junior Varsity candidates will be selected with 100% of their scores coming from the judges.
- B. The Varsity squad candidates will be selected from current 9th, 10th and 11th grade students, at the time of tryouts, who will be entering 10th, 11th, or 12th grades.
- C. The Junior Varsity candidates will be selected from current 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students who will be entering the 9th, 10th, or 11th grades.
- D. Tryouts are closed to the public. Cheerleader names or tryout numbers will be posted at a time following the tryouts.

- E. All judging rubrics and individual judge scores will be shredded immediately after the scores are totaled at the tryout. If a parent wishes to view their student's total score, they must make an appointment with the officiating campus administrator. Parents are only allowed to view their student's total score. The time period for viewing a score is five (5) school days following the tryout session.
- F. All candidates in 9th, 10th, and 11th grade at the time of tryouts are eligible for the JV or Varsity squads.
- G. All candidates in 8th grade at the time of tryouts are only eligible for the JV squad.
- H. Each candidate is eligible to receive a maximum score of 65 points from each of the three judges. The highest possible score total score is 195. The top scoring 25 candidates in the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades at the time of tryouts with total scores that range between, and include, 125-195 will comprise the Varsity squad. The top 25 candidates in the 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th grades at the time of tryouts with total scores that range between, and include, 90-195 will comprise the JV squad. Please note: It is possible to achieve a qualifying minimum total score and not be selected to a squad because 25 higher scoring candidates were selected. The judges will break all ties.
- I. The maximum number of squad members is 25 for Varsity and 25 for JV.
- J. The judges' decisions are final.
- K. Tryout results may not be appealed beyond the campus level.

V. Head Cheerleader and/or Captain Duties

- A. The Head Cheerleader(s) and/or Captain(s) will be selected by a process developed by the sponsor.
- B. The Squad(s) will have a head cheerleader(s) who will:
 1. Call practice to order
 2. Start cheers and chants
 3. Coordinate pep rally planning with the sponsor
 4. Be the representative to any student's leadership organizations
 5. Work with sponsors to select cheers and chants to be used at games
 6. Report complaints, uncooperative behaviors, squad problems, etc. to the sponsor immediately so they may be properly addressed and rectified
 7. Work closely and cooperatively with the sponsors
 8. Act as a host/hostess at home games and help visiting schools
 9. Work with sponsors to select the uniforms for each event

VI. Mascot Responsibilities

- A. Duties of the mascot(s) will include
 1. Attending summer camp
 2. Keeping the uniform in good condition

3. Interacting positively with the crowd, especially small children
- B. All rules, applicable costs and responsibilities of cheerleaders also apply to mascots.

VII. Attendance Responsibilities

- A. Cheerleaders on all teams will attend an instructional summer camp at a time selected by the sponsor; failure to attend without prior approval from the cheerleader sponsor may result in immediate removal from the team.
- B. Cheerleaders will attend all scheduled camps, practices, games, pep rallies and other scheduled events or activities as notified by their sponsor(s). Three (3) unexcused absences from one, or a combination of the afore-mentioned activities, may result in immediate removal from the team. A written note from a parent/guardian is required for every absence.
1. First Offense – cheerleader will be benched for the next performance
 2. Second Offense – cheerleader will be benched for the next two (2) performances
 3. Third Offense – cheerleader may be dismissed from the squad
 4. Fourth Offense – cheerleader will be dismissed from the squad. A parent conference is required with the cheer coach present.
- C. In order for an absence to be considered approved, it must be cleared by the sponsor prior to that event, unless there are extenuating circumstances such as a death in the family. Written notes must be provided by parents/guardians for all absences.
1. Excused: Illness with a doctors note, death in the family, religious holidays, University Interscholastic League game/match/performance, eco, Saturday school, or school related meetings. Absences related to UIL game conflicts and school related meetings require a written notice five (5) days in advance to prevent the absence from being unexcused unless notification of the event was received within that five (5) days.
 2. Unexcused: Work, vacation, appointments, non – University Interscholastic League involvement event

VIII. Conduct Responsibilities

- A. Cheerleaders will abide by the NISD Student Code of Conduct at all times.
- B. Cheerleaders will not be allowed to sit in the stands or leave the squad without direct permission from the sponsor during any cheer event.
- C. Cheerleaders will not eat food, candy, or chew gum while performing or practicing.
- D. Cheerleaders will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times.
- E. Cheerleaders will be courteous and respectful at all times.
- F. Cheerleaders will keep all tattoos covered while in uniform.
- G. Cheerleaders will refrain from public displays of affection (PDA) while in or out of uniform.

- H. Any inappropriate actions or violations of conduct responsibilities, including representation on social media that do not uphold the standards and expectations of the NISD cheer program, may be subject to disciplinary actions including benching, probation, suspension, or removal from the cheer program.

IX. NISD Code of Conduct

- A. Cheerleaders will follow the NISD Code of Conduct and the NISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct at all times.

X. Practice

- A. Cheerleaders must be on time to all scheduled cheerleading events. Three tardies to cheerleading events combined will constitute one unexcused absence.
- B. Cheerleaders may not arrive late to practice, or leave early from practice, without prior permission from the sponsor. Without prior permission from the sponsor, an early departure from any cheerleading event will be considered an unexcused absence.
- C. Cheerleaders may not miss the last practice before a game without prior approval from the sponsor.

XI. Uniform and Appearance

- A. Varsity cheerleaders will have uniforms provided by the school district. When uniforms are distributed, a cleaning fee will be collected. Replacement costs, damage costs, or excess wear and tear costs will be the financial responsibility of the cheerleader.
- B. Sub-varsity cheerleaders will have uniforms provided by the school district. When uniforms are distributed, a cleaning fee will be collected. Replacement costs, damage costs, or excess wear and tear costs will be the financial responsibility of the cheerleader.
- C. Cheerleaders are responsible for personal uniform pieces, including shoes, bloomers, ribbons, poms, etc. not to exceed \$500. Cheerleader sponsors will provide a list of items required, along with their total costs, at the mandatory parent meeting held before tryouts.
- D. The length and style of the uniform will be selected by the sponsors with the approval of the principal.
- E. **Uniform Requirements**
 - 1. Cheerleaders may not wear their uniform to a non-cheerleader function, including attending classes during the school day. Special exceptions may be made by the campus administration and cheer coach.

2. Cheerleaders may not lend out uniforms to someone who is not a cheerleader without prior approval from the sponsor
 3. A cheerleader uniform may not be altered without sponsor approval. If this occurs, the cheerleader may be required to pay for the uniform
 4. Uniforms will be turned in by the scheduled due date
 5. Cheerleaders are responsible for damage or loss of any part of a uniform. Cheerleaders will be responsible for the replacement of the uniform or repair cost
 6. A uniform may be exchanged for another size based on the coach's discretion
- F. Hair must be worn securely, and out of the face, at all times during practices, performances, pictures, or any time while wearing the cheerleading uniform.
- G. No jewelry will be worn during practices, performances, or pictures, or any time while wearing the cheerleading uniform.

XII. Fundraising

All Cheerleaders are required to participate in one fundraiser per year for the benefit of all squads.

XIII. Discipline

- A. **Cheerleader Activities**
1. Cheerleaders will arrive on time at the designated meeting area for all events and will remain for the duration of the activity
 2. Cheerleaders will arrive 15 minutes prior to cheer activities
 3. If a cheerleader misses the bus it will be considered an unexcused absence
- B. Cheerleaders will maintain proper behavior at all times as designated by the cheer sponsor, including cheer events, practices and performances.
- C. Cheerleaders may be benched for an event or game by the sponsor and/or campus administrator for failing to adhere to school rules, the Student Code of Conduct, or the requirements of this constitution.
- D. If a cheerleader is placed in In-School Suspension or Out of School Suspension the following will apply:
1. First Offense – cheerleader will be benched for the next performance
 2. Second Offense – extracurricular code of conduct will apply
- *The extracurricular code of conduct may apply to any student who is placed in In-school suspension or Out of School Suspension even if it is a first time offense.
- E. A cheerleader who quits at any time, and/or is dismissed from the squad, will be unable to tryout for the cheerleading squad for the following year without approval from the sponsor and principal.

XIV. Undesirable Conduct and Probation

- A. Cheerleaders will be expected to engage in appropriate behavior at all times.
- B. Probation is classified as grade probation or conduct probation.

1. Grade Probation – University Interscholastic League policies will be enforced. Texas Education Agency – UIL “No Pass No Play” requirements
 - a. Student who passes all courses for the UIL designated grading period is eligible for the next grading period
 - b. Students who lose academic eligibility, and then regain eligibility, must wait seven calendar days before they become eligible to participate in competitions and performances. Students who are ineligible may continue to practice with their team, but they may not perform at any event.
 - c. Students who have failed a class may regain eligibility after three (3) weeks, providing that at the end of the three (3) weeks they are passing all courses. Students also have a seven calendar day waiting period after the three (3) week or six (6) week period before eligibility may be regained.
 - d. If an average of below 70 exists in any course for any two grading periods during the school year, the cheerleader will be dismissed from the squad

2. Extracurricular Code of Conduct Probation – Cheerleaders on conduct probation will attend all practices, but they may not perform at any contest, game, activity, or pep rally. Cheerleaders will not wear any uniforms while on probation.

