

**SANTA FE
JUNIOR HIGH &
HIGH SCHOOL
CHEERLEADER CONSTITUTION**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
2021-2022**



WELCOME TO THE SFISD CHEER PROGRAM!

When a student becomes a member of the Santa Fe I.S.D. cheer program, their entire family becomes involved as supporters, spectators, and helpers. Being a Cheerleader makes many demands upon the family involved in terms of time, money, and emotional involvement, but we hope you will find it a rewarding and enriching experience for all of you.

PURPOSE

It shall be the purpose of this organization to promote and uphold school spirit, to develop good sportsmanship among students, to support athletic programs, and to develop positive relationships in the community and between schools during athletic events. The organizations goal is to work in harmony with the administrative, faculty, and school organizations. Cheerleaders should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their position and in accordance with the rules as stated in the SFISD Student Code of Conduct. Members of this group have a fundamental responsibility to play a leadership role in building teamwork and helping the school achieve its goals and objectives. Because of these special responsibilities, members of the cheerleading squad will be expected to maintain higher standards of behavior, both on and off campus, and higher academic achievement than that of their peers.

OBJECTIVES AND COMMITMENT

The skills shown at tryouts should be improved upon throughout the entire cheer season. Off the field/gym floor, cheerleaders are to enthusiastically support all school groups through advertisement, personal attitude, and attendance at events designated by the coach. Becoming a SFISD Cheerleader is a privilege. It is also a fun-filled year long commitment to our team, the school, and the community. Immediately following tryouts, members of the new squads will be expected to follow this constitution and consequences as listed will apply. However, members of the current year squads will be expected to fulfill all cheer duties until the last day of school. In essence, there is an overlap of the seasons. Current year squads will continue their duties, while the coming year's squads will be preparing for the new school year. Both will be expected to follow the constitution.

I. MEMBERSHIP:

- A. Each year, the cheerleading coaches shall determine the number of cheerleaders, the number of squads, and the composition of squads.
- B. Members must tryout each year to renew membership.
- C. Cheerleaders must pay their fees and dues punctually. A student who has outstanding debt may not tryout for cheerleader.
- D. Cheerleaders may forfeit their membership during a school year if they do not fulfill the expectations outlined in this document.

II. TRYOUT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- A. Cheerleader candidates must be in good physical shape and be able to participate in long periods of vigorous activity without undue fatigue. Cheerleader candidates should not have any long-term injuries that would prevent full participation in required activities.
- B. Each Candidate must turn in the required forms at the designated time to be eligible to try out for any position on the Santa Fe I.S.D. School Cheer Team. **NO FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED LATE.**

III. CANDIDATES INELIGIBLE FOR TRYOUTS:

- A. Candidates NOT meeting the requirements in the above section are not eligible to tryout.
- B. Students assigned to District Alternative Education Program are NOT eligible to tryout, during the current school year.
- C. Any student who knows, prior to tryouts, they are moving to another school district during any part of the 2021-2021 school year.
- D. Candidate who has received more than one office referral that resulted in disciplinary action during the current school year, prior to tryouts, will not be eligible to tryout.

IV. VIRTUAL TRYOUT CLINIC:

- A. The tryout material will be available virtually to all cheer candidates who have completed the required paperwork and meet all requirements for tryouts.

V. TRYOUTS:

- A. The candidate's performance during the cheerleader tryouts will be evaluated and scored by professional and high-qualified judges and the SFISD coaches.
- B. Coaches have the right to dismiss a candidate from tryouts if his/her conduct is deemed inappropriate.
- C. Candidates will perform the tryout material in front of judges and/or coaches at each station.
- D. Candidates can be evaluated by the coaches during tryouts at any time.
- E. Tryouts are closed to spectators. Those eligible for attendance include the coaches, judges, school administrators, and score tabulators. Parents are not allowed to enter the front entrance, locker room, or gym at any time.
- F. Scoresheets are confidential. Parents have 24 hours to email the coach to request scores. By law, all other student scores are confidential. No other candidate's scores will be discussed. All tryout scores and coaches decisions are final.

VI. MAKE UP and REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL TEAMS:

- A. *Varsity team* – the number of varsity members will depend on the tryout score. The varsity team can be a combination of 10th, 11th and 12th graders. The cut-off will be where there is a natural break in the scores. If you are on the Varsity squad for the 2021-2022 season, you can drop to Junior Varsity or put on suspension if you do not uphold your responsibilities as a Varsity squad member.
- B. *Junior Varsity Team* –The JV team will consist of 9th – 12th graders. The cut-off will be where there is a natural break in the scores.
- C. *Junior High Team* – The JH team will consist of 7th and 8th graders. The cut-off will be where there is a natural break in the scores.
- D. *Team Selection* – The cheer coaches will determine the number of members on the team based on where the natural breaks in scores occur. There is not a predetermined number of spots on the cheerleading squad.
- E. *Alternates* – Alternates are not named. If a vacancy occurs before the first day of the 2021-2022 school year, the vacancy may be filled by naming the student with the next highest composite score, assuming that student still meets the qualifications and desire to make the necessary commitments. At the time a vacancy is filled, uniform and accessories will be ordered at parents' expense.

VII. CAPTAIN(S):

- A. The cheer coach shall determine the method of selection.
- B. After the squad is selected, the coach shall meet with the squad and review the requirements and process for selecting captains.
- C. Even if a captain(s) is selected, the coach of each squad has the ability to choose any member of the team as captain(s), despite age, grade level, experience, or skill of the cheerleader.
- D. A captain can be removed or replaced from the position at any time if the cheerleader is not upholding his/her role as a captain.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES, DUTIES, AND OBLIGATIONS:

- A. Participate fully the entire year:
 - 1. A Cheerleader's year begins the day he/she is elected and ends upon the last cheerleading event as designated by the coach.
 - 2. Cheerleaders cannot tryout for fall sports. Game times will be conflicting with our cheer calendar. Team members may participate in sports during the spring semester. The reality is that attempting to practice with several squad members missing is detrimental to the team. It is highly recommended that cheerleaders consider carefully all activities and their ability to participate fully before trying out for cheerleader.
 - 3. Cheerleaders must participate in all cheerleading activities (including tumbling/stunting classes, practices, games, events, team bonding, fundraisers, and competitions.) All practices (including summer and back-to-school), games, pep-rallies, parades, play-off games, camps (including summer), fundraisers, cheer class, and other events assigned by the coaches are mandatory.
 - 4. Cheerleaders must know material for performances at all times. Anyone who does not know material at any time throughout the year will be subject to consequences.
- B. Fulfill all financial obligations punctually:
 - 1. The cheerleader is expected to fulfill all the financial obligations required throughout the entire year, including UC payments, uniforms, camp, clothes, equipment, etc.
 - 2. Members will work with coaches from outside the school to provide choreography, tumbling, instruction, building and safety techniques, etc. Each member will be required to cover the monthly fee for weekly training.
 - 3. This includes participating in all fundraisers, paying for equipment/clothing, and replacing items that are lost or damaged.
 - 4. Returned checks may be assigned a fee.

5. Any member, who is not paid in full, including clearing of all outstanding checks by the last day of school, will be dismissed from the squad.
 6. Anyone who is removed from the team or quits the program may still be responsible for designated fees. Prices are based off of numbers of each squad.
- C. Represent the school with integrity, honesty, and morality:
1. Cheerleaders are expected to be models of good behavior; less than admirable behavior will not be tolerated. Any situation revealed after a candidate makes a team that could interfere with the integrity of the program may result in an automatic dismissal.
 2. Cheerleaders provide positive leadership to SFISD in many ways. As a result of their high visibility, exemplary behavior is expected at ALL times.
- D. Remain in good physical shape:
1. Cheerleaders are expected to maintain and to improve all skills demonstrated at tryouts. Failure to do so will result in suspension and may result in removal/replacement/squad change until ability is proven. Any member of varsity can be asked to step down to the junior varsity team if skills are not maintained.
 2. Regular conditioning and training outside of school is expected and encouraged.
 3. In practices, cheerleaders will participate fully to the best of their ability.
- E. Adhere to all guidelines set by USA Cheer, NFHS Spirit, and the U.I.L. Guidelines:
1. No jewelry of any kind (except for medical alert bracelets) may be worn at any time the cheerleader is in uniform, performing in class, or practicing. This includes any type of device used to prevent a hole from closing (plastic, metal, clear, etc.). Additionally, it is not acceptable or safe to simply cover a piercing with tape or Band-Aids.
 2. Fingernails cannot be longer than the tip of the finger. Fingernails must be worn natural, clear polish, or American/French manicure only. No other colors permitted.
 3. All hair must be pulled back and secure while participating in cheerleading events.

IX: CHEERLEADING CLASS GUIDELINES:

- A. Cheerleaders are expected to dress out in the appropriate attire every day.
- B. Daily attendance is mandatory. Failure to attend class may result in disciplinary action.
- C. Cheerleaders are expected to be prompt to class and participate fully.
- D. Cheer class is used for workouts, practice and preparation of cheerleader materials. Failure to participate in scheduled class activities will result in deduction of points from the daily cheerleading grade.
- E. If removed from the squad or forfeits his/her position at any time, the cheerleader will remain in class and participate until a schedule change is made.

X. UNIFORMS:

- A. Purchase of Uniform
1. Each member must purchase uniforms and accessories, which are established by the coach.
 2. Members may be required to purchase an additional uniform, including the competition team.
 3. Lost or damaged items must be purchased/replaced by the cheerleader.
 4. Cheerleaders will not be allowed to participate if uniform pieces are missing.
- B. Length and Fit
1. The coach must approve the uniform fit before being ordered or worn.
 2. If at any time the uniform does not fit properly or is too short, the cheerleader is responsible for getting the uniform fixed.
 3. All alterations must be approved by the coach.
 4. All alteration fees are the responsibility of the parent/cheerleader.
- C. Use of Uniforms
1. Uniforms shall be worn only at scheduled events. If you remain at an event and you are not scheduled to cheer, you must bring a change of clothes to wear. At no time should anyone who is not a cheerleader wear your uniform or any other clothing associated with cheer.
 2. Uniforms, or any part of the uniform, must remain in the care and possession of the cheerleader throughout the school year. Other students or adults, including siblings, parents, and best friends, are not allowed to wear any cheerleader items that represent the team (including warm-ups and camp clothes, etc.).
 3. If a cheerleader is removed from the squad or forfeits her/his position, she/he cannot wear any part of the uniform during the school year. This infraction may result in discipline consequences through the school.
 4. Reminder: PDA in or out of uniform is not tolerated.

XI. ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE:

A. Grades: A cheerleader must maintain passing grades in all subjects, as set forth by UIL guidelines for participation.

B. Absences: EXCUSED (must be cleared with your coach first)

1. The following list qualifies as an excused absence: a doctor's note, court, family death, school-sponsored event, or a coach approved event.
2. Parental notes (hand written notes from a parent of any type) will not be accepted.
3. The coaches must have a copy of the excuse on file.
4. Cheerleaders are expected to maintain good attendance in all classes and are required to attend all cheerleading practices, events, and games without fail.

C. Absences: UNEXCUSED

1. The following are NOT excused absences: other non-UIL activities, doctor appointments, dental appointments, and family vacations.
2. Unexcused absences are those that do not follow proper procedures for procuring "excused" status. Unexcused absences are very serious in nature and will result in consequences.
3. Depending on frequency, unexcused absences may result in dismissal.
4. Excessive absences (excused or unexcused) for one cheerleader stops the progress of the entire squad and could result in a cheerleader being dismissed from the squad.

D. Tardies: Cheerleaders are expected to be prompt and punctual. The time stated for arrival is the time when all cheerleaders should be ready to cheer. Restroom needs, primping, uniform needs (including putting on shoes), etc. must be taken care of prior to the arrival time.

E. All Other Activities:

1. Any cheerleader who is involved in any other U.I.L. activities MUST give all dates, calendars, schedules, events, conflicts, etc., to your coach as soon as you receive the information. If the coach does not receive notification of an event ahead of time, the cheerleader will be expected to attend the cheer event.
2. Telling your coach the night before or the day of will not be acceptable.
3. Do not expect your coach to excuse you from an event because of a scheduling conflict.

F. Absence on an event day:

1. If a cheerleader misses a school day on the same day of the event, he/she may not participate in the event. Extenuating or unusual circumstances may be reviewed by the coaches.

G. ISS/OSS on an event day:

- if a cheerleader serves ISS/OSS on an event day, he/she will not be able to participate in the event.

XII. SAFETY AND INJURIES

A. Safety:

1. Cheerleaders may not tumble or stunt without direct supervision and permission from the coach.
2. The coach has the right to remove a cheerleader from participation if she/he feels that the cheerleader's behavior, attitude, or physical state would be a distraction or safety hazard to the squad.
3. Physicals for the coming school year MUST be on file prior to the last day of the 2020-2021 school year. Members not meeting the deadline set may have consequences.

B. Injuries/Physical Limitations:

1. Injuries will be handled as individual situations. All circumstances will be considered.
2. A physician's note is required for any injury prohibiting a member from full participation. Any time a cheerleader is sitting out, due to injury or otherwise, she/he is still required to dress out and be with the team/coach for the entire practice/event, complying with all uniform rules and expectations.
3. Coaches may not accept "limited" participation from athletes. This is left to the coach's discretion. If a coach believes an athlete's physical condition could be injurious to either the athlete, or other members, the coach has the responsibility to "sit-out" the athlete until the coach receives a doctor's release at the cheerleader's expense.

XIII. CONSEQUENCES

A. Infractions of the rules may result in extra conditioning, points deducted from cheer class, added responsibilities, permanent demerits, probation, suspension, or dismissal from the squad depending on the severity/frequency of the incident(s). The coach may elevate consequences depending on the situation and frequency of different actions. Cheerleaders may receive additional consequences through our organization for disciplinary infractions that result in school assigned consequences.

1. *Extra Conditioning:* For non-severe, infrequent violations, extra conditioning may be assigned.

2. *Benching*: for frequent violations, a bench may be assigned. When a cheerleader is benched, she/he is expected to report - in full uniform – to the assigned event and sit with the coach.
3. *Demerits*: demerits cannot be worked off. Demerits will be given and recorded by the coach.
4. *Probation*: for more serious offenses, cheerleaders may be placed on probation. Probation is a period of time in which a cheerleader must not commit any infractions or automatic dismissal will result. The coach will determine the duration of a probation period.
5. *Suspension*: The cheerleading coaches can place a cheerleader on suspension from the squad for up to three weeks (15 school days) at any time.
6. *Dismissal*: removal from the team and the program.
7. *Quitting the program*: If a cheerleader quits after clothes have been ordered or camp has been paid, the cheerleader is still responsible for the costs.

XIV. TRANSPORTATION

- A. Junior High: The school will not provide transportation to or from games/practices/events. It is the responsibility of the parent to transport cheerleader to all events, or arrange for transportation, and to do so on time. Cheerleaders not being dropped off or picked up on time from an event may receive consequences.
- B. Junior Varsity: The school will not provide transportation to or from games/practices/events. It is the responsibility of the parent to transport cheerleader to all events, or arrange for transportation, and to do so on time. Cheerleaders not being dropped off or picked up on time from an event may receive consequences.
- C. Varsity: Transportation is provided to Varsity away games. The school will not provide transportation to or from home games/practices/events. It is the responsibility of the parent to transport cheerleader to all events, or arrange for transportation, and to do so on time. Cheerleaders not being dropped off or picked up on time from an event may receive consequences.
- D. Parents are expected to provide transportation for their student to and from University Cheer each week and any extra practices scheduled at the gym.

XV. APPLICATION

- A. The policies and procedures in this document will be effective immediately following tryouts and continue through the end of the following school year.
- B. In the event that a situation arises that is not covered by the procedures set forth in this document, the coach shall make the decision regarding that situation.
- C. The Santa Fe ISD constitution is a working document and can be amended during the school year. Parents and squad members will be notified if any changes or deletions are to be made.

XVI. Discipline/Demerit Guidelines

1. These procedures have been set in order to provide for the safety and opportunity of self-discipline for all cheerleaders.
2. This list is meant to be a guideline. It may not include all possible actions and consequences. The coach reserves the right to set expectations and possible approved disciplinary consequences.
3. Extra Conditioning will be decided by the coach.
4. Once you make the SFISD Cheerleading squads, you fall under the demerit system. In addition to the requirements in the cheerleading constitution, a separate and distinct demerit system will be used for the purpose of enforcing cheerleader policies as well as disciplining a cheerleader for infractions. All demerits will count towards suspension. Demerits will be enforced from the time of squad selection until the end of the following school year.
5. The demerit system is not connected with the Santa Fe ISD discipline policy; however, demerits will affect the cheerleader's ability to participate in all cheer related activities. Some offenses may be violations of the Student Code of Conduct and of this demerit system. Punishment from both may be enforced.
6. Cheerleaders will be expected to keep up with the amount of demerits they receive. A complete record of demerits will be provided upon request.

DEMERIT SYSTEM

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| 3 demerits |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School or teacher assigned detention. • Undesirable conduct in academic classes (teacher contacts coach). • Not participating – chants, cheers, sideline activities, painting signs, etc. • Unsportsmanlike behavior, including complaining and poor attitude. • Failure to clear absences and/or tardies in advance. |
| 5 demerits |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate public display of affection while in uniform. • Disrespectful body language – eye rolling, obscene gestures. • U.I.L. Ineligibility due to grades. • Non-Compliance – do what your coach says when asked! • Unexcused absence from practice, activity, game (any sport) or performance. |
| Automatic Suspension – 10 demerits |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stealing • Using vulgar/abusive language. • Insubordination, defiance, lying, or deception. • Leaving a game, practice, or event without permission. • ISS • Inappropriate content on the internet, including social media. |
| Removal |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accumulation of 20 demerits • Serious breach of violation of the Student Code of Conduct. • Placement of DAEP • Repeated inappropriate behavior, at the coach’s discretion. • Any arrest • Members possessing, using, transmitting, or to appear under the influence of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, etc., while at school, in uniform, outside of the regular school day including summer vacation, weekends, holidays, etc. or while representing the organization. |

Possible Consequences for items not directly addressed: Warning, After School detention, Benched/Sitting out (length of time decided by Coach), Jumps, Running laps, gut miles, additional exercises following practice, parent notification (mail, email, phone, or in person), conference with student/coach, student/coach/parent, student/coach/principal, or with student/Coach/parent/Principal, Essay or Sentences, Permanent Demerit.

Parent Involvement

How can we support the team?

1. Realize that “we” are all part of the TEAM and that the good of the team always comes first.
2. At games and performances, all parents are encouraged to sit with one another to create a “Cheering Section”. I also encourage you to wear an Indian/SFISD spirit shirt.
3. Participate as parents. Stay informed and be open to communicate concerns or issues.
4. Participate in fundraisers. Your assistance is greatly needed.

Cheer Parent “DO” List

- ♥ Praise and appreciate their hard work, time, energy, loyalty and dedication. These are all fine characteristics that they will use for a lifetime.
- ♥ Provide nutritious meals and snacks. Please try to avoid fast food, soft drinks, candy and other foods that do nothing for their body and can lead to injury or sickness. Please make sure they eat breakfast every day and have a complete lunch.
- ♥ Support the team, Captains, and Coaches.
- ♥ Be there when your child needs you for support (emotionally, physically and financially).
- ♥ Allow them to be responsible for themselves. You cannot always help them with waking every morning, completing homework and packing their cheer bag. Basic living skills are what they need to be practicing now in preparation for high school, college, and the “real world”.
- ♥ Allow teachers, administrators and the coach to hold them accountable for their own actions. Making excuses for your child does not benefit them in any way. He/she is now an athlete and will be treated as such.
- ♥ Encourage them to keep up their grades. Stay in contact with teachers and check up on her/him using SFISD Skyward.
- ♥ Do stop gossip. Whether it is coming from your son/daughter or other parents. Even adults are known to partake in it. Do your best to set an example that gossip, no matter by who, is not acceptable.
- ♥ Understand that decisions made are for the betterment of the team and to be fair.