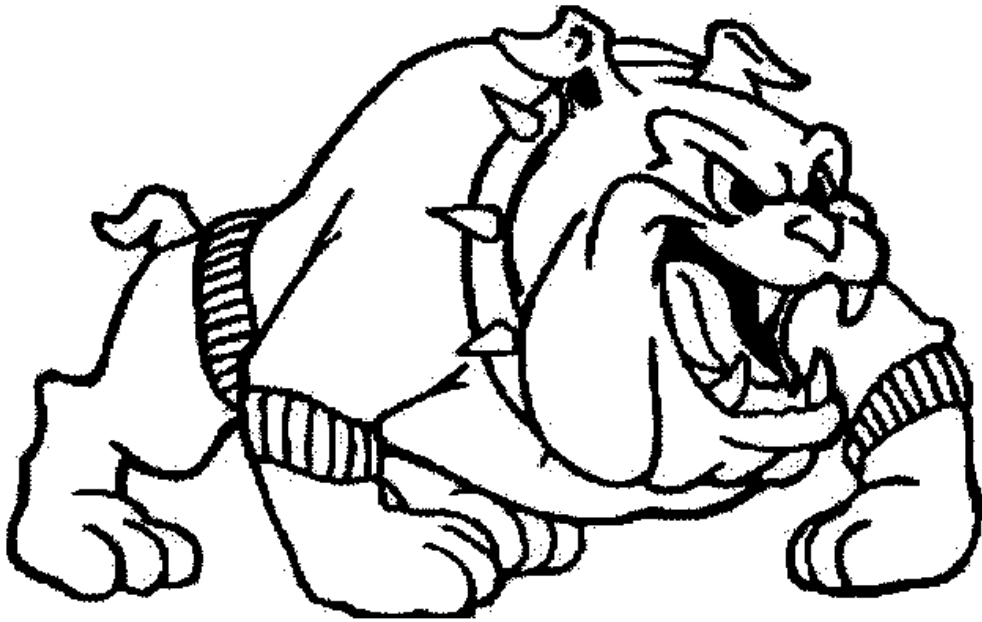


# Cooper ISD



## Cheerleading Constitution

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Board Approved 1-18-10

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**APPENDIX**

**Centralized Cheerleader Tryouts**

**PHILOSOPHY/PURPOSE**

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

**OBJECTIVES**

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

### **DEFINITION**

Cheerleading year: The rules and procedures outlined in this constitution are in effect from the time the student is selected to the cheerleading squad until the next tryout date. This does not include the academic guidelines. Because of TEA rules, the academic policies are in effect for a school year.

### **ELIGIBILITY - TRYOUT**

A student is eligible to try out for cheerleader must if the following conditions are met:

- At the time of the tryout, the student is enrolled in the Cooper Independent School District
- The student must have an accumulative average of 70 or better in each class.
- Student must sign-up on sign-up sheet located in the front office by deadline. No student will be added after the deadline.
- Must attend the mandatory orientation/parent meeting with a parent/guardian present. No exceptions
- Attend three fourths of the pre-tryout training sessions.

### **COMMITMENT**

Candidates selected to be a member of the cheerleading squad are expected to make a commitment to the activity for the full cheerleading year. Any cheerleader who voluntarily quits the squad before the end of the cheerleading year will not be allowed to tryout for the next year.

### **SELECTION**

The procedures for selection are based on the Board Policies of the Cooper Independent School District and from the guidelines in this handbook. The Cooper Independent School District will hold a tryout for the selection of the junior high, JV and Varsity cheerleading squads. The goal of the tryout will be to provide a consistent, equitable and monitored tryout process for all junior high, JV and Varsity cheerleader candidates across the district. The tryouts will be held on a Friday or Saturday in February or March to be determined by the principals and cheerleading sponsor. The date will not be during the week of the TAKS testing.

### **TRYOUT GUIDELINES**

The sponsor will be responsible for the preparation and distribution of a packet of information to be made available to all candidates. This information will include specific tryout dates, times, attire, and procedures. The principal must approve this information prior to distribution. 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.

High school and Junior High school cheerleaders shall be selected by a scoring method that assigns a weight of 70% to the ratings assigned by a panel of judges and 30% to the ratings assigned by teacher and sponsor evaluations.

Students wishing to try out for the cheerleading squad must file an application, parent permission form, and any other paperwork given in the packet at the parent meeting/orientation, with the team sponsor by the first day of the clinic before the clinic begins. The school may elect to set an earlier date for turn in (ex. at the parent meeting), but no student will be penalized as long as the information is turned in by the clinic date before the clinic begins.

There will be no application fees or tryout fees for students trying out for cheerleader at the high school level.

All candidates are required to attend  $\frac{3}{4}$  of all tryout clinic dates but are encouraged to attend all.

Each campus sponsor and principal will establish a uniform tryout outfit. Every item of clothing should be carefully considered to insure equity, affordability, and safety for the students during the tryout procedure. This uniform should be limited to plain white shirt with no visible logo, a solid maroon or black short (style to be determined by the sponsor), and any type of white athletic shoe.

No previous cheerleading shoes are allowed.

## SQUAD MAKEUP

**The varsity squad** will be made up of the top 12 or 16 scoring incoming freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior students. There will be 1 top scoring mascot from the incoming freshmen, sophomore, junior or senior candidates.

The squad will consist of 12 girls. In the event the point spread between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> ranking candidates is less than 1 point, and the number of candidates trying out will allow, 16 girls will make up the varsity squad. This will be determined by the principal and sponsor at the time of try-outs.

Captains: The varsity squad will have 3 co-captains. The captains will be chosen from incoming juniors or seniors who have served at least one year as a varsity cheerleader. The captains will be chose by squad and sponsor vote, with a principal present, after try-outs.

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**The junior varsity** squad will have up to 10 cheerleaders and 1 mascot. It will be open to incoming freshman, sophomores and juniors only.

Captains: The junior varsity squad will have 1 captain. The captain will be chose by squad and sponsor vote, with a principal present, after try-outs.

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**The junior high** school squad will be made up of the top 12 scoring students. The top scoring mascot candidate will be selected as junior high mascot. There will be no captains for the junior high squad.

## CAPTAINS

### Varsity Captains

The Varsity captains will have the following responsibilities:

- The captains will help set the schedule for the summer workouts.
- The captains will help with communication.
- The captains will help lead the planning of pep-rallies.
- The captains will be in charge of controlling the squad on the sidelines.
- Additional appropriate duties may be added by the sponsor.

If a Varsity captain is placed on suspension, he or she will forfeit his or her captain's position on the squad. There would be no replacement after the start of the new school year.

### Jr. Varsity Captain

The Jr. Varsity captain will have the following responsibilities:

- The captain will help set the schedule for the summer.
- The captain will help with communication.
- The captain will be in charge of controlling the squad on the sidelines.
- The captain will be placed in the Varsity cheer class and help the Varsity squad when an absence may occur.

If the Jr. Varsity captain is placed on probation or suspension, he or she will forfeit the captain's position on the squad. There would be no replacement after the start of the new school year.

## **JUDGES**

Judges will be selected from NCA, UCA, ACA other professional cheerleading associations, universities, and/or out of district sponsors. Judges should not be hired to judge tryouts if they have tutored or taught the cheerleader candidates during the current school year. Every attempt should be made to hire judges who have not worked with students. Professional judges with outstanding credential and references will be hired for all tryouts. They will be instructed to judge the candidates based only on the mastery of the skills that they see demonstrated during the tryouts. Tryout results will not be challenged because of prior knowledge of judges and candidates.

CISD cheerleader sponsors may not serve as a judge for cheerleader tryouts.

## **PANEL TRYOUTS**

Panel tryouts will be closed to everyone except judges, principals, tabulators, sponsors and existing senior cheerleaders. There will be no students, or parents in the tryout room/area, nor will they be involved in the collection or tabulation of scores. Any deviation by the candidates from the tryout requirements may result in the disqualification of the candidate.

## **TABULATION OF SCORES**

The sponsor will provide a computer disk that will contain an Excel spreadsheet with the formulas already inserted. It will be the responsibility of the building principal or his/her designee to enter the students' names and tryout numbers on this spreadsheet. Candidates will then be ranked from high to low and the appropriate number selected for each squad.

The judges score will count 70%.

Scores will be averaged and calculated to one decimal point.

Scores will be left in the office of the principal until winners and non-winners are notified. Original scoring sheets will be retained for 30 days following the tryout date.

In the case of a tie, see EXCEPTIONS.

## **EXCEPTIONS**

In the case of a tie, both students shall be selected. The principal must be notified prior to the announcement of winners when a tie is involved.

Video film can only be used after an injury has occurred, and only in the case of recent surgery or broken bones that impair a student from participating in a "specific skill" of the tryout. If video film is used, only a small segment of the film that shows the "specific skill" done by the student prior to the tryout may be judged.

A medical doctor's note indicating the specific skill the student is incapable of performing will be required prior to video use.

## **VIDEO FILM GUIDELINE USAGE**

(Sponsors will make these guidelines available to judges if a video is used for tryout.)

The judges shall be instructed to consider "absence of pressure," lack of physical/respiratory exertion, vocal ability, and note if a cheerleader is using a hard or spring floor when performing specific skills" on video. The candidate must perform each individual "specific skill" required in the tryout to receive credit/points. No score reduction or credit shall be exercised due to the claimed surgery/injury. However, in light of the above considerations, a perfect score for any "specific skill" or category should be rare.

## **NOTIFICATION**

The sponsors will inform the candidates and parents at the parent meeting/orientation, as to how they will be notified of the results the day of try-outs.

No scores will be viewed the day of tryouts by parents or participants. They will be given to the principal and available to view for 30 days after the tryouts. Only the guardian of the participant will be allowed to view the scores of the participant.

Parents may request to see their own child's score (no rank scores) from the principal or his/her designee. By law, all other student scores are protected and cannot be shared with anyone except the sponsor, principal, or principal designee.

### REPLACEMENTS

If a member of the cheerleading squad moves (or there is an opening for any reason), the principal and sponsor may fill the opening based on the tryout rank scores. Any replacement will take place on or before the first day of the first school term and is at the principal's and sponsor's discretion.

### ELIGIBILITY—MAINTENANCE

The UIL rules regarding eligibility will be enforced.

### 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 or junior 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 tryouts for the next school term.

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. Anyone sent to the ISS, given licks or given out of school suspension for any reason will be subject to the following actions:

- First Offense – Benched for next event, Principal/Sponsor Review, placed on probation for duration of school year.
- Second Offense –Removal from squad.

Students assigned to the ISS or given out of school suspension may not perform, wear the cheerleader uniform, or practice with the squad while in ISS or while suspended plus one calendar school day. 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 sponsor and principal. Dismissal from the group may result from that review. Any member who is expelled from school will be removed from the cheerleading squad for the remainder of the school year. Any member placed in the Alternative Education Program will be removed from the cheerleading squad for the remainder of the school year.

### SPECIFIC GUIDELINES/RULES UIL, CISD Regulations and Policies

#### DEDUCTION SYSTEM

A. PRACTICE	CONSEQUENCE
1. Cheerleaders (CL) must wear appropriate workout clothing when practice begins.	2 pt. deduction
2. Hair must be up and secure.	2 pt. deduction
3. No jewelry during performances games or pep-rallies.	2 pt. deduction
4. No chewing gum.	2 pt. deduction
5. No cursing/arguing with anyone.	5 pt. deduction
6. CL will have required items (forms, signs, etc.) at the beginning of practice.	2 pt. deduction
7. CL must be on time to cheerleading events (games, meetings, pictures, etc.)	2 pt. deduction
8. CL must be on time to all in/out of school practice.	2 pt. deduction
9. CL will not leave practice or the practice area without permission.	2 pt. deduction
10. CL will attend all in/out of school practices. Any absence must be cleared by the sponsor prior to the practice. Excused: Illness with a doctor permit, death in the family. Unexcused: Work/vacation, appointments, non-UIL involvement (orthodontist, doctor, dentist, hair, other)	Excused w/o prior notice will be benched ½ game. Exception: death in the family. Unexcused: Benched 1 game

11. All cell phones will be turned off during the entire practice. CL will not be permitted to check phones during breaks!	5 pt. deduction
12. CL cannot miss the last practice before a game. Exception: illness with a doctor appt. or death in family	Benched 1 game
13. CL will attend all summer practices.	Benched ½ game per miss
14. CL will follow practice rules # 1-11 for summer practice.	5 pt. deduction

1) GAMES/PEP-RALLIES/ALL CHEERLEADER ACTIVITIES	CONSEQUENCE
1. CL must be in correct/complete uniform at school on game/pep-rally days. Only garmets designated by sponsor sweats/sweater/ shoes may be worn with uniform or spirit attire.	3 pt. deduction
2. CL will be in correct/complete uniform 30 minutes prior to game or pep rally.	3 pt. deduction
3. Hair will be up and secure as per sponsor.	2 pt. deduction
4. No jewelry during performances games or pep-rallies.	2 pt. deduction
5. No chewing gum.	2 pt. deduction
6. No cursing/arguing.	5 pt. deduction
7. No colored socks. (white only)	1 pt. deduction
8. CL will have required items upon arrival.	2 pt. deduction
9. CL will participate in all spirit days	2 pt. deduction per day
10. CL will maintain proper sideline behavior at all times. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No excessive talking among CL.</li> <li>• No talking to people in the crowd. (including parents)</li> <li>• Pay attention to the game/pep-rally.</li> <li>• Stand in correct formation/stance.</li> <li>• Cheer/spirit, jump and tumble the entire game or pep-rally.</li> <li>• Only one person out of formation at a time for drinks.</li> <li>• No taunting the other team.</li> <li>• CL will show respect during the National Anthem and both school songs.</li> <li>• Cell Phones will be turned off during games.</li> </ul>	5 pt. deduction
11. All CL will stay to clean up after each game/pep-rally and will be dismissed by the sponsor. CL are not permitted to talk to parents, boyfriends etc. will be dismissed by sponsor.	2 pt. deduction.
12. CL will arrive on time and at the designated meeting area and will remain for the duration of the game/pep-rally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsor will specify time to be at game, pep-rally, any cheer event, or departure destination.</li> <li>• If a CL misses the bus he/she will not be allowed cheer at the game.</li> </ul>	5 pt. deduction
13. CL will be back on the field/court ready to cheer 1 minute before half-time ends.	Benched 3rd Qtr., pushups or jump series after game per sponsors discretion.
14. CL will stay on the field/court for the entire game/pep-rally.	3 pt. deduction

15. CL will attend all required in/out of school games, pep rallies, meetings, functions and activities. Any absence must be cleared by the sponsor prior to practice. Excused: Illness/doctor permit, death in family. Unexcused: Work/vacation, appointments non-UIL involvement (All-Stars, etc.) Note: An absence from school does not excuse CL from the responsibility of calling the sponsor.	Excused w/o prior notice will be ½ game/pep-rally. Exception: Death in the family. Unexcused will be benched for 1 game
16. CL acting in an unsafe manner as determined by sponsor.	First offense: 5 pt. Deduction Second offense: Benched one game. Third offense: Benched 2 games and principal/sponsor review with possible dismissal from the squad.
17. Absolutely NO public display of affection in uniform!	Benched the next game or jump series at sponsors discretion.

2) SUMMER CAMP

CONSEQUENCE

1. All CL will attend summer camp.	Benched 3 games
2. CL will be on time to all camp activities.	5 pt. deduction
3. A CL may not leave the campus with anyone at any time unless approved by the sponsor	Sent home, and possible squad dismissal
4. CL may not talk to family/friends when engaged in a squad activity. Absolutely no public display of affection.	5 pt. deduction
5. CL will respond to all sponsor's directions. No disrespect will be tolerated.	10 pt. deduction
6. CL will follow all NCA/UCA/ACA or other professional cheerleading association & university camp rules and respect all staff members.	10 pt. deduction
7. CL will respect each other and all other squad members. No taunting/arguments or cursing will be tolerated.	5 pt. deduction
8. Absolutely no smoking, drinking, or illegal substances will be tolerated.	Sent home, reported to the principal and possible dismissal from the squad.

3) OTHER SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

CONSEQUENCE

All CL are encouraged to participate or support the CL fund-raising activity which goes to support CL functions/costs.	Those not participating will pay for their portion from their own funds.

4) UNIFORM GUIDELINES

CONSEQUENCE

1. CL will not wear uniform to a non-CL function. (Eating after a game	Benched 1 or more
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may be approved by the sponsor as an exception to this guideline.)	games or dismissed from the squad.
2. CL will not lend out uniforms, sweats, pompons, etc. to someone who is not a cheerleader.	5 pt. Deduction
3. Uniforms may be altered, but no fabric may be cut without prior approval from sponsor.	Replacement of uniform
4. CL are responsible for damage to or loss of any part of a uniform.	Replacement of uniform or repair cost

#### 5) GENERAL CONSEQUENCE

1. CL hair will be a natural color. (No pink, blue, orange, or any color that will draw specific attention to a specific cheerleader.)	Benched until returned to a natural color.
2. No visible tattoos	Benched until no longer visible.
3. CL will not leave food, trash, or mess in the dressing room, practice area, halls, or any performance area.	2 pt deduction
4. CL will not participate in any public display of affection during school, at school activities or while wearing the CL uniform. Example: no hand holding, hugging, kissing, etc.	5 pt. deduction /office referral
5. CL will follow all school rules and CISD policy, including the dress code.	5 pt. deduction /office referral
6. CL will respect/respond to all sponsors at all times. Rudeness/insubordination will not be tolerated.	Benched
7. CL will respect all teacher/staff members at all times.	Benched
8. CL will not receive an office referral for any reason.	Benched and sponsor & principal or principal designee review.
9. CL placed in ISS or given out of school suspension for any reason.	First Offense – Benched for next event, Principal/Sponsor Review, placed on probation for duration of school year. Second Offense – Removal from squad.
10. CL receiving an N in conduct from any teacher.	Sponsor & principal review
11. CL receiving a failing grade for any class.	UIL policy will be enforced

#### NOTES

1. After a 10-point deduction, the cheerleader will be benched for one game. When games are not an option, sponsors will assign physical activities. (Laps, jump series, pull throughs, etc.) If he/she accumulates 15 points in different offenses, he/she will be benched for the remainder of the six weeks. Injuries: If an injury occurs that keeps the student out of two 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 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.
2. Accumulation of three or more benchings may result in a principal/sponsor review which could result in removal from the squad.
3. Repeated/excessive offenses may result in a sponsor/principal review. Repeated/excessive is defined as repetition of the same offense three or more times during the duration of a season. Seasons are: Spring/Summer—Announcement of Squad to First Day of School.

Football-- Beginning of School until December 1 or last football game.

Basketball-- December until March 1 or last basketball game.

Violation of the same rule or guideline three or more times in a season will result in the CL being placed on probation for the remainder of that season. Violation of the probation by further misconduct could result in dismissal from the squad.

4. Any sponsor and principal review of student's actions may result in dismissal from the squad.

5. Guidelines: these are general rules and guidelines for all CISD cheerleaders. Failure to comply may at times require judgment calls to be made. These decisions will be left up to the individual sponsors for each squad. Sponsors reserve the right to upgrade any penalty (immediate benching, office referral) depending on the severity of the situation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR CHEERLEADING SAFETY**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- A. Cheerleader squads should be placed under the direction of a knowledgeable sponsor or coach.
- B. The cheerleading coach or other knowledgeable designated school employee will be in attendance at all practices, performances, functions, and will ride with cheerleaders on the bus/van when school transportation is required.
- C. All CL should receive proper training before attempting any form of cheerleading gymnastics (tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps.)
- D. 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.
- E. Training in proper spotting techniques should be mandatory for all squads attempting CL gymnastics; i.e., camp.
- F. Warm-up and stretching should precede all practice sessions, pep-rallies, games, competitions, and other physical activities.
- G. If possible, all cheerleading squads should develop a conditioning and strength-building program.
- H. Sponsors/coaches must recognize the entire squad's particular ability level and adjust the squad's activity accordingly.

### **SPECIFIC SAFETY GUIDELINES**

Cheerleaders will be required to follow the accepted safety guidelines for stunting, pyramids, tumbling, and jumping as outlined in the National Federation of State High School Associations Rule Book.

### **CHEERING ACTIVITIES**

#### **FOOTBALL & BASKETBALL**

##### **A. Varsity Cheerleaders**

- 1. CL will cheer at all varsity football games.
- 2. CL will attend and cheer at the basketball games specified by the sponsor.

##### **B. JV Cheerleaders**

- 1. CL will cheer at all JV football games.

### **COMPETITION SQUADS**

Competition Squads are neither encouraged nor discouraged, but this activity should not interfere with the regularly scheduled activities of the cheerleaders.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Cheerleaders will ride with the squad to all out of town games.

Cheerleaders may ride home with a parent, but must be signed out by parent/guardian or grandparent (with a note from parent/guardian) and approved by the sponsor before the cheerleader leaves. If a CL leaves with a parent without a parent signature and approval, the cheerleader will be benched for the next game.

### **MONIES COLLECTED BY SPONSORS**

A \$200.00 down payment to be used towards ordering of uniforms and camp clothes, will be required the third Friday after tryouts and squad selection. A second payment will be required in April or May and the final payment in May or June. These payments will be set up as per sponsor. Cheerleader sponsors collecting monies from students will give receipts to students stating the amount of money collected and what the money is to be charged toward (trip, uniform, banquet, camp, etc.)

### **STUDENT COSTS**

(Approximate)

TOTAL (APPROXIMATE) STUDENT COST – VARSITY up to - \$1200.00

TOTAL (APPROXIMATE) STUDENT COST – JV up to - \$950.00

TOTAL (APPROXIMATE) STUDENT COST – JR. HIGH up to - \$950.00