



2024-25

**Cheerleading
Constitution**

2023-2024 Irving ISD Cheerleading Constitution

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Constitution Purpose

The purpose of the Irving Independent School District Cheerleader Constitution is to serve as the purposeful guide for each of the Irving ISD Campus Cheer Handbooks.

The content of the document falls under the jurisdiction of each respective campus coach/sponsor, the respective campus administrator, and the Executive Director of Campus Operations. During the course of the school year, the Constitution may be amended, as needed, under the direction of the Executive Director of Campus Operations.

Purpose of Irving ISD Cheerleaders

The Irving ISD cheerleaders promote and uphold school spirit, develop a sense of good sportsmanship, and improve relationships between schools during competitive events by serving as ambassadors for Irving ISD, their campus and the community.

Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of Irving ISD not to discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability in its educational programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; as amended. Irving ISD will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational programs and services. (*See Irving ISD Board Policy FFH*).

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As official student representatives of their school and Irving ISD, cheerleaders must conduct themselves appropriately. While representing Irving ISD or participating in a school-related activity, they must not engage in inappropriate messaging, dialogue, use of content (pictures, labels, artwork, etc.) on any form of media including social media, email, text, etc.

Irving ISD requires sportsmanship, integrity, and fairness from each cheerleader during tryouts, team practices, games, competitions, and other activities attended by the squad.

If selected or elected as a cheerleading candidate, one must understand the expectations of cheerleading responsibilities. An elected/selected cheerleader will be obligated to attend all practices, scheduled games, competitions, and to perform all other cheerleading duties to the best of their ability.

High standards are necessary to ensure organizational structures are built upon integrity; therefore, it is the expectation of every Irving ISD cheer participant to be a leader on their campus and to set an exemplary example of behavior. Irving ISD cheerleaders are expected to maintain appropriate personal behavior above reproach. Each athlete must be aware that their conduct reflects on the image of the team, the entire cheer program, the school, and ultimately Irving ISD.

When in uniform, representing the campus or district, or participating in a school-related activity, the conduct expectations for Irving ISD cheer participants apply on or off school property before, during, and after-school, including social gatherings connected with the cheer program. Cheerleaders may jeopardize their eligibility to participate if they engage in conduct that violates the Irving ISD Student Code of Conduct.

Social Media

When in uniform, representing the campus or district, or participating in school-related activity, cheerleaders are responsible for their personal websites, social media*, pictures, and postings. Actions that substantially disrupt the learning environment may be considered a violation of this cheerleading constitution and/or the Irving ISD Student Code of Conduct and are subject to disciplinary action, as determined by the cheer sponsor, principal, or other school administrator.

* Any social media including but not limited to Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, Instant Messenger, Group Me, Remind, What's App, Text Messages, Voxer, iMessages, Marco Polo, Facebook, Tik Tok, spam social media pages, group chats etc.

Attire

Jewelry on any part of the body will not be worn. Religious medals and medical medals are not considered to be jewelry. A religious medal without a chain must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert medal must be taped and may be visible.

- Personal grooming in public is not permitted while wearing the uniform.
- Excellent care of uniforms is mandatory. Uniforms must be cleaned immediately after events.
- Tattoos must be covered while in uniform.
- Uniforms will not be worn except for games, pep rallies, and events unless prior written permission is given by the sponsor.

Attendance

Members are required to attend all scheduled games and practices. **Being excused from cheerleading activities will require approval from campus sponsors and/or campus administrators.**

Cheerleaders shall not be tardy to games, practices, or other cheer-related events.

Complaints & Concerns

The chain of contact to address cheer issues is as follows: cheer sponsor, cheer principal, Executive Director of Campus Operations, and Chief of Schools.

NOTE: School boards are no longer required to hear some cheerleader or drill team complaints. The Texas Education Code was amended in 2017 to provide that a school board is not required to address a complaint concerning a student's participation in an extracurricular activity that does not involve a violation of a right guaranteed by Texas Education Code Chapter 26. (See Board Policy FNG (LEGAL) for a list of rights guaranteed by 26.) This does not affect a claim brought by a parent under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (20 U.S.C. Section 1400 et seq.) or a successor federal statute addressing special education services for a child with a disability or any other right that is subject to the District's grievance policy under state or federal law or local policy.

ELIGIBILITY FOR TRYOUTS

Citizenship

The student must have an "A" (90-95) cumulative average in citizenship prior to cheerleader tryouts. This average will be determined by taking every six-week citizenship grade and assigning a numerical grade equivalent to each letter grade (A = 95; B = 85; C = 75). The average is calculated by adding all numerical grades together and dividing by the total number of grades.

A student with a failing grade, regardless of average, is not eligible.

The student cannot try out if they have been to the Secondary Reassignment Center or have been assigned to Out of School Suspension anytime during the year of tryouts.

Scholastic: High School (Including Current 8th Graders)

- Scholastic eligibility determinations will be made based on the criteria established by Board Policy FM.
- Policy FM incorporates UIL rules for eligibility into the local policy for both UIL and non-UIL sports and includes exceptions that are necessary to make sure we accommodate students with disabilities.

Attendance Policy Violation (APV)

Any student that has an Attendance Policy Violation (APV) in the semester prior to tryouts that has not been cleared by the Campus Attendance Committee, Policy FEC (Local), is not eligible to try out.

Transfer Students and Former Cheerleaders

New students to the district or current students who transfer within the district cannot join the cheer team until the next official tryout. (Section 4BF of UIL Constitution and Contest Rules)

For a student dismissed or who resigned from a previous cheer squad, tryout eligibility will be established only at the discretion of the cheer sponsor and administration. If such a student is deemed eligible for tryouts and makes the cheerleading team, the student will be placed in a probationary status and must adhere to the requirements of the terms of probation, which shall be written down and agreed upon by the student, the student's parents, cheer sponsor, and the on-site administrator. If a cheerleading candidate is unwilling to accept the terms of such probationary status and written agreement, the candidate will not be allowed to participate in Irving ISD cheerleading.

SELECTION

Tryouts

Cheerleader selection will be determined by ranking candidates according to a committee of not less than three qualified judges. They will evaluate and rank candidates according to the most appropriate cheerleader skills. The judges ranking will determine the selection of the cheerleader squad. Tryouts with the judges will be closed to the public.

Students must be in attendance all day on the days of the tryouts.

Students must participate in their respective attendance zones. This applies to students who have a transfer or who will attend Jack Singley Academy or another district School of Choice program.

There will be no student fees to try out.

Students interested in being a middle school cheerleader with voluntary squads must meet all conditions listed under *Eligibility for Tryouts*.

Squad Structure

- There will be one squad of Varsity cheerleaders at each Irving ISD high school. The size of the squad may vary each year and is to be determined by the cheer sponsor.
- There will be one squad of Junior Varsity cheerleaders at each Irving ISD high school. The size will be determined by the cheer sponsor.
- There will be one squad of Freshman cheerleaders at each Irving ISD high school. The size of the squad will be determined by the cheer sponsor.
- Middle schools may choose to have a volunteer cheerleader squad of unlimited size, or middle schools may have one squad of eighth-grade cheerleaders and one squad of seventh-grade cheerleaders. The size will be determined by the cheer sponsor.

UNIFORMS

Tryout clothing is determined by the cheer sponsor. Simple clothing is required for tryouts (typically appropriate length shorts, top, and tennis shoes).

Uniforms will not be bought, made, or planned in any way without permission from the cheer sponsor.

Those students who participate in the volunteer middle school cheerleading squad will purchase the uniform established by the school administration and sponsors. Efforts will be made by the school administration and sponsors to keep uniform costs to a minimum. If participants are unable to cover the cost of a middle school cheerleading uniform, the parent should speak to the cheerleading sponsor or school principal regarding payment plan or scholarship options.

Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman based uniforms will be paid for by the school district. The district provided uniforms must be returned clean and in proper condition to the cheerleader sponsor at the end of the school year or upon resignation/dismissal of the student from the cheerleading team.

Uniforms damaged due to neglect or misconduct will be paid for by the cheerleader as determined by the cheer sponsor. Some individual pieces of the high school uniform are considered personal items and must be paid for by the parents and members. Such items are the property of the parents and members and are not required to be returned to the school district at the end of the school year or upon resignation/dismissal.

MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

High school members must be enrolled and actively participate in cheerleading for the entire academic year.

If a cheerleader is dismissed or voluntarily leaves the squad, they are *not* eligible for a refund of fees paid and *are* responsible for outstanding balances.

Physicals

Members must have a current physical examination each school year. Members will not be allowed to participate until this requirement is met and all required paperwork is completed.

Medical Support

The nurse/or trainer at each school will provide emergency services to students in the event of an injury while participating in school-related activities and make appropriate referrals for additional medical treatment, as necessary, if injuries occur during the school day. Any sickness or injury incurred while cheerleading *must be* reported immediately to the cheer sponsor. For all emergency situations including a possible back or neck injury, possible heat stress, fractures, cessation of breathing or pulse, and unconsciousness, 911 will be called. Students and their parents must also review and sign the District's Concussion Policy and protocols prior to participating in any cheerleading activity, including tryouts.

Summer Camp

Summer camp is required for all cheerleaders. Summer camp will be a parental expense. Parents who are unable to cover the cost of summer camp should speak to their cheer sponsor or campus principal regarding the options for participation and fees. Summer practice will be required before camp, and cheerleaders are expected to participate in the entirety of summer camp. Non-participation in summer camp may result in dismissal. Practice will be required prior to the opening of school.

Game/Practice Participation

In adherence to Texas Administrative Code 76.1001, cheerleaders are not permitted to lead cheers for two separate contests during the school week. However, cheerleaders may participate in a pep rally prior to a contest and then lead the cheers at the contest, even though both events occur during the school week. In addition, they may cheer for a single contest and cheer during a tournament.

If for any reason a cheerleader is not performing at a game, they may be required to attend the game and sit with the cheer sponsor.

Athletes who suffer injuries or illness must consult a doctor or trainer within 24 hours. If an injury or illness hinders or limits an athlete's performance and/or practice capabilities, that athlete will be required to provide a doctor's note outlining the specific limitations.

Injured athletes are expected to attend all events and practices in accordance with their doctor's note. An athlete with a concussion must follow the Irving ISD Concussion Policy until the athlete is cleared to participate under the standards set forth by the Irving ISD Concussion Policy.

High school cheerleaders must ride the bus to and from all home and away games, functions and performances. Any deviation from this rule must be approved 24 hours in advance by the sponsor except in case of emergencies.

If a member is absent from the last practice before a performance or school on the day of a performance, they may not perform.

Awards

Varsity cheerleaders will receive one letter and one jacket the first year they are on the Varsity squad. Jackets will be ordered by the cheer sponsor.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Game Probation

A member may be placed on probation for one or more games for any of the reasons listed below. The length of the suspension will be determined based on the severity and frequency of the infraction(s) at the sole discretion of the cheer sponsor and principal.

- Citizenship grade below "B" (85) in any grade reporting period
- Citizenship average below "A" (90) in any grade reporting period
- Unexcused absence from practice or game
- More than three unexcused activity absences within a six-week period
- Violation of the Irving ISD Code of Conduct
- Any member may be placed on probation by the sponsor or principal as disciplinary action for any unacceptable conduct (excluding dismissal offenses)

If placed on probation, a cheerleader will not wear the uniform at any time during the probationary period. Even though on probation, a cheerleader will practice and attend any event the sponsor so requires. The length of the probation will be determined based on the severity and frequency of the infraction(s) at the sole discretion of the cheerleader sponsor and principal.

Suspension

A member may be suspended for any of the reasons listed below:

- A six-week grade below 70 in any subject in accordance with TEC 33.081 and Board Policy FM (Local)
- Violation of the Irving ISD Code of Conduct
- Any member may be placed on suspension by the sponsor and principal as disciplinary action for any unacceptable conduct except for those specifically noted as dismissal offenses.

The length of the suspension will be determined based on the severity and frequency of the infraction(s) at the sole discretion of the cheerleader sponsor and principal.

If placed on suspension, a cheerleader will not wear the uniform at any time during the suspension period. Suspension may result in removal from the cheerleader class (practice) as determined by the cheer sponsor and principal.

Automatic Dismissal

A cheerleader will be dismissed from the squad by the cheer sponsor and principal for any of the following infractions:

- Citizenship grade below "C" in any grade reporting period
- Excessive absences/truant conduct as defined in HB 2398
- Possession/use of tobacco, vaping, alcohol, or narcotics
- Probation from cheerleading three times in a school year
- Suspension from cheerleading two times in a school year
- Engaging in conduct that results in assignment to an off-campus Alternative Education Program

Members dismissed from the cheerleading squad will not be allowed to wear any part of the uniform to school or to school functions. Regarding future tryouts, a dismissed member will be subject to criteria outlined in *Eligibility for Tryouts*.

Once resignation or dismissal from the cheer program occurs, for reasons other than academic, reinstatement will not be allowed during the current school year. Upon resignation or dismissal, the former member loses all privileges as a cheerleader and may not be a guest at cheerleading functions.

In the event of dismissal or resignation during mid-semester, the student will be removed from the cheer class and shall return all cheer equipment, including uniform, within seven (7) calendar days.

APPLICATION

_____ has my permission to try out for cheerleader candidacy. The demands of time, energy, and expense are agreeable both during tryouts and thereafter. I agree to see that my child is available for all of the summer practices. I will be able to pay the necessary amount for clothing, equipment, or camp tuition by a date designated by the sponsor. If I am unable to pay the necessary amount for clothing, equipment, or camp tuition by the date designated by the sponsor, I understand that I must apply for payment/tuition assistance in accordance with the instructions provided by the cheer sponsor and that my application for payment/tuition assistance must be approved and signed by both myself and the cheerleading sponsor on or before the date designated by the sponsor. I understand that I must provide my child with transportation to cheerleading events, when necessary. I have read and agree to support the Irving ISD Student Code of Conduct, Irving ISD Cheerleader Constitution and my campus cheer handbook. The rules and regulations begin when a cheerleader is selected. The cheerleading year begins upon selection and extends throughout the academic school year.

Parent's Signature

Date

I, _____, wish to try out for a position on the cheerleader squad. I want to spend my time, energy, and talents to promote school spirit and good sportsmanship. I agree to put the good of the squad above my personal preferences, and I will cooperate respectfully with all others in the cheerleading program. I pledge I will adhere to the rules and guidelines set forth in the Irving ISD Student Code of Conduct, Irving ISD Cheerleader Constitution and my campus cheer handbook. I have read the regulations governing cheerleaders, and I agree to abide by these regulations. The rules and regulations begin when a cheerleader is selected. The cheerleading year begins upon selection and extends throughout the next academic school year.

Applicant's Signature

Grade

Date