

Katy Independent School District

CHEERLEADER GUIDELINES

**SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL**



CHEER

2021-22

Cheerleader Guidelines

Senior High School

2021-22

Purpose

The purpose of senior high cheerleaders is to promote school spirit and a positive school climate by participating at athletic events and extra-curricular activities as deemed appropriate by the campus administration and cheer coach. Cheerleaders are expected to be positive role models, serving as high school ambassadors at school, in the district, and community.

The information provided in this brochure explains qualifications and responsibilities of senior high school cheerleaders. Additional campus cheerleading guidelines, as noted in this document, are created and published by each campus.

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The contents of this handbook are not contractual, and do not give rise to a claim of breach of contract against Katy Independent School District. Furthermore, the contents of this handbook apply to all students of the district, as the contents now appear in the handbook or may be amended in the future.

Required Qualifications to Tryout

Cheer candidates should reside within the attendance boundaries of the campus they are trying out for. Residency and student transfer information will be confirmed at the campus prior to tryouts to determine eligibility. When a new campus is scheduled to open, students should try out for the school they will be attending in the fall.

1. Grade Level:

- Varsity Squad – Open to students in 10th or 11th grade
- Junior Varsity – Open to students in 9th or 10th grades
- Freshman Squad - Optional campus decision which will be made no less than 24 hours before tryouts
- Campuses that do not offer a freshman squad may allow rising 9th graders to try out for the JV Squad. Requirements will be outlined in the campus cheerleading handbook
- Campuses that have a freshman squad will publish tryout requirements in the campus cheerleading handbook for rising 9th graders
- UIL maximum age requirements are in effect

2. Academic Standing:

- Must have a **2.00 GPA**, calculated using all six-week averages of current school year, prior to tryouts
- Earn 5.0 academic credits at the end of the tryout year in order to assume their cheerleader role for the next year
- Students must have good attendance

3. School Behavior: Candidates may not have received any of the following during the school year:

- A “U” in the conduct category on any report card
- More than one N (Needs Improvement) on any report card
- More than two Level II/Level III disciplinary infractions, or a combination thereof **NOTE: for purposes of this criteria only, the campus high school principal may identify specific Level II behaviors which will be excluded from this tabulation for determining eligibility for tryouts**
- Placement in OAC
- Any Level IV/Level V infraction

4. Physical Examination: Candidates must submit a “Preparticipation Physical Evaluation” signed by a physician. The due date for this form will be established by the campus and must be turned in by that date to tryout. Preparticipation forms turned in during the current school year for other activities will fulfill this requirement.

5. Participation in Pre-Tryout Clinic: Candidates should attend each day of the pre-tryout clinic to help them prepare for tryouts. Clinic details will be established by each campus. During the clinic, each campus will specify the activities to be performed at tryouts.

6. Parent Meeting: In order to be eligible for tryouts, each candidate and their parents/guardian must attend the mandatory orientation meeting to discuss the selection process and cheerleader responsibilities. Any parent/guardian who is unable to attend this meeting must contact the cheer coach prior to the date of the meeting to receive the information for their student to be able to participate in the tryouts.

7. **Forms:** All required forms are due on the date stipulated by the campus. Required forms include, but are not limited to, Personal Student Information form, Pre-participation Physical evaluation, Regular Extracurricular Travel and Consent to Emergency Treatment of Student, UIL Concussion Acknowledgement, Student and Parent Agreement to Cheerleading Regulations and Guidelines etc.

Selection Process

High school cheerleader selection is done by impartial judges who observe the candidates in a series of activities performed in a single session. Students must be present at the cheer tryouts in order to be eligible for selection. In addition, students must attend at least one half day of school prior to the day of tryouts in order to participate.

1. **Tryout Format:** The tryout process is organized and facilitated by the cheer coach. In addition to the judges, the cheer coach, senior cheerleaders, up to three designated faculty members may be present in the tryout room for giving directions.
 - Cheerleading tryouts for all squads of the school will be scheduled on the same date, time, and location.
 - Cheer tryouts are closed to all spectators.
 - A minimum of three judges will be used for tryouts. Judges should be members of UCA, NCA and/or UDA staff.
 - Judges may not be Katy ISD employees, relatives of any candidate, or private coaches. (Exceptions to these guidelines may be made in extenuating circumstances by the campus administrator.)
 - At least one campus administrator must be present to observe the selection process.
 - During the tryouts, each judge will assign points based on candidate demonstration of cheerleader skills and functions. These skills and functions can include, but are not limited to:
 - Spirit/enthusiasm/poise
 - Sharpness/synchronization
 - Voice projection
 - Motion/jump techniques
 - Gymnastics/tumbling/dance routines
 - Team spirit/group cheer/individual cheer
 - Neatness/appearance/audience appeal
 - The scoring template for each campus will be distributed to candidates at that school prior to tryouts.
 - Candidates draw a participant number prior to tryouts. During the judging and tabulation of scores students are referred to by number only.
 - The required uniform for tryouts will be specified by the campus and published in advance. No item with cheerleader identification may be worn or displayed.
 - Candidates and/or any person acting as a representative on their behalf are prohibited from having any form of communication or personal contact with any judges before, during, or after the tryout process. Violation of this guideline will result in the immediate removal of the candidate from the process and/or squad if candidate had been selected. Judges are instructed to report any incident of this activity to the campus administrator.

2. Tabulation of Results:

- Each judge will score each candidate's performance using a numeric scale (1-10 for example). The judge must initial any change to a rating or sum of ratings.
- Scores from each judge are tabulated to yield one total score for each candidate.
- Candidate's total scores are ranked in numerical order.
- Candidates with the highest rankings are selected as cheerleader according to cheerleader numbers specified at each campus.
- In the event a tie needs to be broken to determine the final position on the squad, an established tie-breaking procedure will be implemented. The decision of the judges is final.
- Each campus will establish how tryouts/selection results will be communicated to candidates.
- Appeals for any component of the cheerleading tryout process, including final results, must take place at the campus level. Grounds for appeal may be made in reference to mathematical calculations or procedural impropriety only. Appeals must occur within five (5) school days, and during school business hours once final results have been announced.
- Appeal results/decision will be final at the campus level.

3. Size of Squad and Special Positions:

- **Size of Squad** – The maximum number of cheerleaders for any squad is 14.
- **Alternates** - Alternates are not named. If a vacancy in a cheerleading squad occurs two or more weeks prior to the first day of school, the vacancy may be filled by naming the student with the next highest composite score. At the time a vacancy is filled, uniform and accessories will be ordered at parents' expense. The tryout results are maintained in an administrator's office for use if this circumstance arises.
- **Head Cheerleader(s)** – The cheer coach selects the head cheerleader. Each campus will publish information regarding selection and responsibilities of head cheerleader.
- **Mascot** – Having a mascot is a campus decision. If a mascot is to be selected, the campus will establish and publish a job description and selection procedures. There can be up to two students selected to serve as mascots.
- **Duties** – Required Cheerleader events are determined by the campus.
- **Expectations after selection** - All candidates selected for any squad must continue to meet the "Required Qualifications to Tryout" for the remainder of the present school year. Failure to do so will result in immediate loss of position on the squad.

Loss of position at any time will result in the forfeit of any allocated or expended funds. Unallocated funds and items already purchased will be refunded/returned to the student in a timely fashion as circumstances permit, or no later than the end of the school year.

Responsibilities of Cheerleaders/Parents/Guardian

Time Commitment: Cheerleading is time consuming and it is the responsibility of each cheerleader to be present at each activity, and perform to the best of his/her ability. Before scheduling out of school activities, such as dance/gymnastics a cheerleader must carefully evaluate the time demands of schoolwork and cheer. The responsibilities of cheerleading, and consequences for not meeting responsibilities are assumed at the time the selected cheerleaders are announced.

1. **Cheerleading Activities:** Cheerleaders will attend the events specified by their campus. Failure to attend required activities may result in dismissal from the squad. Senior high cheerleader activities can include:
 - UIL competitions that your organization enters
 - Scheduled practices including summer, after school, and weekends
 - Athletic/campus/community events as specified by the cheer coach
 - Summer camp attendance
 - Non UIL cheer contests as designated by campus/program
2. **Practice:** All activities related to cheer practice (amount of practices, time/location of practices etc.) are determined by the cheer coach and the campus. This includes cheer camp dates and all summer practices.
3. **Camp:** Cheerleaders must attend the one-week summer camp selected by the cheer coach. Information and dates for the summer camp are provided by the cheer coach at the pre-tryout parent meeting. Failure to attend and participate in the summer camp activities may result in removal from the squad.
4. **Attendance:** Attendance at assigned events is required. If a cheerleader is unable to attend an assigned activity, the cheer coach or his/her designee must be notified, in advance of the absence with written verification provided. Consequences for missing required events/practices will be established by the campus. All cheerleading squad members are to travel to required/assigned events in Katy ISD provided transportation
5. **Cost to Families:** Maximum required expenditures shall not exceed \$900.00. This amount includes summer camp expenses. Payment due dates are established by each cheer coach and campus. Failure of to meet required financial responsibilities will result in removal from squad.
6. **Academics and Behavior:** Cheerleaders are expected to maintain high standards in academic performance and behavior and to serve as positive role models for the student body. Cheerleaders who do not meet these standards are subject to school disciplinary consequences and/or cheerleading consequences including probation and dismissal.
7. **Responsibilities of Cheerleaders:**
 - Follow all rules and regulations outlined in the Discipline Management Plan and Student Code of Conduct
 - Adhere to appropriate extracurricular contracts, rules, regulations, and established higher standards of behavior
 - Cooperate with the cheer coach and administration in investigations involving disciplinary infractions
 - Exhibit an attitude of respect toward individuals and property by conducting oneself in a responsible manner
 - Serve as an appropriate role model for other students
 - Maintain required standards of academic performance
 - Arrive prepared and on time for all practices and performances
 - Exhibit proper and appropriate wear of cheerleading uniform and/or practice apparel whenever worn and as directed by the sponsor
 - Fulfill all financial responsibilities as required by membership on the squad. Any financial concerns should be addressed with the campus cheer coach and/or campus principal

8. **Responsibilities of Parents:**

- Stay informed of the rules, regulations, and procedures that are applicable to the extracurricular organization
- Provide transportation, to ensure student arrives on time for practices/performance
- When student participation in certain activities is considered “optional” by the campus sponsor and/or principal, parents may be responsible for providing/arranging transportation to and from the event
- Pick up students on time after practice and events
- Attend parent orientation meetings as appropriate
- Cooperate with school administrators/cheer coaches in establishing and maintaining a quality organization
- Submit any concerns, ideas for improvement, and/or guidelines/procedural changes directly to the cheer coach
- Execute proposed changes or challenges to organizational rules/procedures in an orderly and responsible manner through appropriate channels
- Encourage student adherence to established rules, regulations, procedures, etc.
- Ensure fulfillment of all financial responsibilities required of the student as a member of the squad. Any financial concerns should be addressed with the campus cheer coach and/or campus principal

9. **Parent organizations and booster clubs:** May be formed to promote the school program or to complement a particular student group or activity in a way that is consistent with the District’s philosophy and objectives, within adopted Board policies, and in accordance policies, and in accordance with UIL guidelines, if applicable. (PolicyGE).

Discipline and Consequences

1. **Code of Conduct for Students Involved in Extracurricular Activities:**

All students are expected to adhere to the Katy ISD Student Code of Conduct. Cheerleaders who violate the District’s Discipline Management Plan and Student Code of Conduct will be assessed appropriate school disciplinary consequences for the infraction. Disciplinary infractions may also result in a student’s dismissal from the squad or limited participation in an extracurricular activity.

- Any cheerleader on probation or suspension may not participate in any cheer event to include competitions, athletic events, or any public performances. Cheerleaders are still required to attend practices and rehearsals.

2. **Short-Term Restrictions-** Campuses may assign short term (1-3 week) restriction for cheerleaders due to any of the following: poor academic performance, inappropriate behavior, and failure to fulfill published cheer responsibilities as outlined in campus cheer guidebooks.

3. **Academic Probation/Ineligibility** - A cheerleader who receives a grade lower than 70 on a report card will be placed on probation/ineligibility for at least three weeks. Specific dates for regaining academic eligibility are contained in the TEA/UIL Academic Eligibility Calendar.

4. **Exception:** Advanced Courses as designated by the Texas Education Agency and identified by Katy ISD are exempted from the “No Pass, No Play” policy, but students may still be subject to academic probation or dismissal at the campus level if academic progress toward graduation is in question.

5. **Dismissal for academic performance** - Any cheerleader who is academically ineligible for two of the three six weeks during a semester will be immediately dismissed from the squad. This includes those classes identified as "Advanced Courses." Please note that any vacancies will not be filled for the remainder of the school year.
6. **Suspension/Dismissal for behavior** – Cheerleaders will be given due process. Because cheerleader is an extracurricular activity the principal's decision is final. For a given instance of misconduct, a cheerleader can:

- **Receive cheer consequences** (demerits, cheer suspension, dismissal) or school consequences (detentions, ISS, OSS, assignment to a DAEP or JJAEP)
- **Receive both school consequences and cheerleading consequences**

Suspension Definition: A cheerleader who is suspended from the squad is not permitted to perform at any cheer event, or wear uniforms/uniform components/accessories at any time during the period of cheer suspension. Students on suspension are required to attend practice and mandatory cheer events in street clothes, and will sit in a seat designated by the cheer coach. Students on cheer suspension may not attend any overnight trips.

Actions which can lead to cheer suspension:

- **Conduct Grade** – Cheerleaders who receive an "N" in conduct on a report card will receive a written warning from the cheer coach. A cheerleader who receives a second "N" in conduct for the same class or for another class will be suspended from the cheer squad for the duration of three school weeks.
 - **Demerits** – Demerit systems are determined and published by each campus. A campus may set a number of demerits that can lead to suspension from the squad.
 - **Behavior Unbecoming a Student Leader** - Any student member of an extracurricular organization or campus club (e.g. band/dance team/cheerleader/athlete/student council, etc.) representing themselves, or their organization, in an unfavorable, questionable or illegal manner will be subject to the disciplinary actions determined by appropriate school officials and/or organization sponsors/directors/coaches, including probation or dismissal from the organization. This includes unfavorable, questionable or illegal actions documented through electronic media (i.e. websites, personal home pages, blogs, text messages, chat rooms or similar websites/files accessible through a server or internet) or using electronic communication devices in such a way as to bring discredit, dishonor, or disgrace on their organization or members of any other school organization including themselves (i.e. camera phones, digital photos, electronic descriptions).
7. **Dismissal Definition:** Loss of position on cheer squad for remainder of school year.

Actions which can lead to Dismissal (Behavior):

- **Conduct Grades:** A total of (3) "N"s, or a "U" in the conduct category will result in immediate dismissal from the squad.
- **Demerits:** Each campus has its own system of merits and demerits. Campus documents describe the demerit program. Accumulation of a specified number of demerits can lead to dismissal from the cheer squad.

- **Level II – Level III:** Two Level II disciplinary infractions, or a combination of one Level II and one Level III infractions will result in dismissal from squad
- **Level III:** Two Level III disciplinary infractions will result in dismissal from the squad
- **Level IV – Level V:** Any Level IV or Level V infraction will result in dismissal from the squad
- **Alternative School Placement:** Any cheerleader placed in OAC will be dismissed from the squad.
- **Hazing:** Any cheerleader who participates in activity which meets the definition of hazing or who fails to report such activity will be dismissed from the squad
- **Conduct Unbecoming A Student Leader:** Any student member of an extracurricular organization or campus club (e.g. band/dance team/cheerleader/athlete/student council, etc.) representing themselves, or their organization, in an unfavorable, questionable or illegal manner will be subject to the disciplinary actions determined by appropriate school officials and/or organization sponsors/directors/coaches, including probation or dismissal from the organization. This includes unfavorable, questionable or illegal actions documented through electronic media (i.e. websites, personal home pages, blogs, text messages, chat rooms or similar **websites/files accessible through a server or internet) or using electronic communication devices in such a way as to bring discredit, dishonor, or disgrace on their organization or members of any other school organization including themselves (i.e. camera phones, digital photos, electronic descriptions).**
- **Repeated Restrictions (Probations or Suspensions):** A cheerleader who is placed on repeated restrictions (probations or suspensions) for failure to establish/ maintain proper conduct or attitude according to organization by-laws may be dismissed from the squad. Written notification of the possibility of dismissal on the next occurrence will be issued prior to dismissal.
- **Criminal Offenses:** Any cheerleader who pleads guilty, or is convicted of a misdemeanor involving alcohol, drugs, a criminal act, or a felony shall be removed from the cheerleader squad for the remainder of the school year.
- **Deferred Adjudication:** Any cheerleader, who accepts deferred adjudication in lieu of a finding of guilt or innocence in a criminal proceeding, shall be placed on probation until the end of the school year or until a judgment of not guilty is rendered whichever occurs first.

General Travel Guidelines

Review all policies and regulations for student trips to ensure your group is eligible for the type of travel you are planning. Regulations for Fine Arts student travel can be found at <https://help.katyisd.org/help/fmg-regulation>. In addition to Katy ISD regulations, the Fine Arts department recommends the following:

- 1 Chaperone for every 14 students traveling.
- For all overnight travel during the instructional school year, an administrator should be present.

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