

**MISD High School Cheerleader and Mascot Constitution
2020 – 2021 School Year**

Purpose

The purpose of cheerleading is to: promote and uphold school spirit; to develop a sense of good sportsmanship among students; to improve the student morale; to build better relationships between competing schools; and, to establish the high personal ideals and good character expected of a high school cheerleader in the Mansfield Independent School District.

Objectives

- To promote the type of sportsmanship that will help students acquire the basic attributes of good citizenship.
- To develop a wholesome school spirit.
- To develop school loyalty.
- To promote a cooperative spirit among the student body, the faculty, administration, and other spirit organizations.
- To help the school achieve the objectives of its interscholastic athletic activities.
- To promote competitions in which the school participates.

Article I: Required Qualifications to Tryout

Section 1: Grade Level

- At the time of the tryout, the candidate must be enrolled in the Mansfield Independent School District (MISD) and trying out at the school where the student is approved to attend for the next school year. A candidate may try out for only one MISD School.
- Cheerleader
 - Eligibility for the Varsity squad shall be limited to boys and girls of current eighth grade through junior standing.
 - Eligibility for the Sub Varsity squad(s) shall be limited to boys and girls of current eighth grade through junior standing.
- Mascot
 - Only one (1) person may hold this position.

Section 2: Qualifications

- All candidates must be on credit schedule to meet MISD graduation requirements. Freshmen must have at least 2 ½ credits, Sophomores must have at least 7 ½ credits, and Juniors must have at least 12 ½ credits.
- Any current MISD cheerleading squad member who has either been dismissed from or resigned during the current school year, will not be allowed to try out for the following year without the approval of the varsity cheerleading coach and the building principal.
- Any cheerleader that has not cleared a prior cheerleading financial obligation will not be allowed to try out for a subsequent school year.

Section 3: Physical Examination

Candidates must present proof of a physical examination by a health care professional using a District-approved form prior to the clinic and tryout dates.

The essential physical functions of a cheerleader are:

- Perform jumps and other physical moves that are part of cheerleader routines.
- Perform stunts that may involve climbing, balance, agility, and upper body strength.
- Exhibit rhythm and coordination in performing cheerleader routines.
- Demonstrate stamina in performing regular physical activities that involve physical endurance and fitness.
- Perform routines in both indoor and outdoor setting, in hot and cold weather.
- Demonstrate clear diction and strong vocal qualities.

Section 4: Attendance

Students must be present before the judges in order to be eligible for selection.

Section 5: Pre-Tryout Clinic

Candidates are expected to attend all training clinics at the times designated by the District.

- Each pre-tryout clinic acquaints candidates with the format of tryouts and offers instruction in the routines/skills to be evaluated by judges during the cheerleader selection process.

Section 5: Pre-Tryout Clinic – cont.

- While participation in clinic sessions are not a requirement for a cheer candidate to tryout, students are advised that a portion of the overall tryout score is derived from a student’s participation during the cheerleading clinic.
- Should a candidate not be present at a clinic session, he/she is responsible for learning any missed material on his/her own time.

Section 6: Parent Meeting

A parent or legal guardian is expected to attend an organizational meeting scheduled by the District.

- Any parent or legal guardian who is unable to attend this meeting should contact the high school varsity cheerleading coach prior to the published deadlines in order to receive information regarding the cheerleading selection process.
- In the event a parent or legal guardian is unable to attend one of the District’s scheduled parent meetings, it is their responsibility to ensure that all published deadlines are followed in order for their child to participate in the tryouts.

Section 7: Documents

Candidates must submit all required documents by the designated deadline. Information shall be made available at each of the parent organizational meetings in addition to being posted on the District’s website. Materials that must be submitted include:

- Application
- UIL Concussion Acknowledgement Form
- UIL Rules and Regulations
- MISD Emergency Information Card
- Pre-participation Physical Evaluation and Examination
- Permission forms and other related documents specific to the child’s individual campus program

Article II: Selection Process

All candidates will be evaluated according to the following process:

Section 1: Judging Process

- The high school cheer coaching staff shall complete an evaluation rubric for each candidate prior to the end of cheer clinic. This evaluation shall account for 25% of a candidate's overall tryout score.
- The judging panel will consist of two impartial, professional judges accredited by NCA, ACA, UCA, or the equivalent. The District is responsible for ensuring that the judges are from outside the school district. An ethnically diverse panel of judges is preferred. The combined total of the external judges shall account for 50% of a candidate's overall tryout score.
- The high school varsity cheer coach shall serve as the third judge on the panel for his/her high school. This score shall account for the final 25% of a candidate's overall tryout score.
- All candidates will appear before the judging panel in the designated uniform:
 - white shirt, with no visible logos,
 - black shorts, and
 - any type of white athletic shoe.
- Hair of candidates must be pulled away from the face.
- Candidates, school representatives and judges are the only persons allowed into the clinic sessions and tryouts. Parents, relatives, friends or other visitors are not allowed into the clinics or tryouts.
- The size of each cheerleading squad is determined through the use of a "break point" system.
 - At the completion of the tryouts, the "break point" in scoring will be determined by the cheerleading coach. This will be the official "break point" for determining the final squad size.
 - The squad size will be at least 4 but not more than 30.
- The high school varsity cheer coach shall be the individual vested with the primary responsibility for:
 - assessing the performance of each cheer candidate through the use of the clinic evaluation rubric,
 - serving as a judge during the cheerleading tryout, and
 - making the determination of the "break point" for the tryout.

Section 2: Cheerleading Tryout Activities

Cheerleader candidates will perform the following:

- one compulsory cheer
- three jumps
- a tumbling series
- a compulsory dance

Section 2: Cheerleading Tryout Activities – cont.

Mascot candidates will perform the following:

- a two-minute routine consisting of mime, pantomime, and dance

All routines must conform to standards of behavior as set forth within the MISD Student Code of Conduct.

Article III: Squad Member Requirements

Section 1: Term

The term for cheerleader participation begins once the results of the tryouts are published and continues until new cheerleaders are selected the following year.

Section 2: Cheerleading Class

- All Squad Members must enroll in and attend cheerleading class.
- All Squad Members are expected to participate in all class activities. Any student absence will be considered unexcused unless the cheerleading coach is given prior notification or an excuse from a health care professional is presented prior to the activity.
- All Squad Members must be dressed and ready to begin each day on time. Designated officers may have earlier report times as designated by the cheerleading coach.
- Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action, probation, or dismissal from the squad.

Section 3: Practice

- All Squad Members are expected to attend all practices, including those scheduled at an off-campus gym or alternate location. Any student absence will be considered unexcused unless the cheerleading coach is given prior notification or an excuse from a health care professional is presented prior to the activity.
- All Squad Members will be required to attend a professionally run cheerleader camp that will be designated by the cheerleading coach. Failure to attend the camp may result in dismissal from the squad.
- Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action ranging from probation to permanent dismissal from the squad.

Section 4: Activities / Performances

- All Squad Members are expected to participate in all events. Any student absence will be considered unexcused unless the cheerleading coach is given prior notification, or an excuse from a health care professional is presented prior to the activity. The varsity squad and mascot will cheer at all varsity games designated by the cheerleading coach. The sub-varsity squads will cheer at all sub-varsity games designated by the cheerleading coach. Exceptions may be made for sub-varsity cheerleaders to cheer at play-off games as determined by the cheerleading coach.
- All Squad Members will also be required to attend pep rallies, special performances, fundraisers and competitions as designated by the cheerleading coach. All of these events are mandatory unless otherwise stated by the cheerleading coach.
- All Squad Members must be at all events on time.
- Due to the year round nature of the activity, participation in other school teams, squads, or other non-academic groups is not allowed without the prior approval of the cheerleading coach. Limited exceptions are possible on an individual basis. While participation on competition cheerleading squads is allowed, Squad Members involved in these activities must place high school cheerleading as their top priority. Scheduling conflicts will not be excused. Squad Members will not be allowed to participate with another squad at camp and will be required to abide by all sponsor-designated schedules/rules at competitions.
- All Squad Members must ride school transportation to any out-of-district school-sanctioned activity. Rare exceptions may be made at the cheerleading coach's discretion.
- Pregnant Squad Members must present written proof from a health care professional as evidence of physical ability to participate in squad activities.
- Each Squad Member will be expected to cheer with maximum effort unless a note from a health care professional has been submitted prior to the activity.
- If a Squad Member expects to be absent from a practice or activity, the cheerleading coach must be given prior notification. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.
- Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action ranging from probation to permanent dismissal from the squad.

Section 5: Conduct

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 cheerleading consequences including probation and dismissal.

Section 5: Conduct – cont.

Cheerleaders representing themselves, or their organization, in an unfavorable, questionable, or illegal manner through electronic media (i.e. websites, personal home pages, blogs, text messages, chat rooms, or similar website/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) will be subject to the disciplinary actions determined by appropriate school officials and/or organization sponsors/directors/coaches, including probation or dismissal.

- Academic Probation
 - A Squad Member will receive 3-week probation if he/she does not meet the state academic guidelines for eligibility (No Pass/No Play).
 - During academic probation, squad members are required to participate fully in class time practices and activities.
 - Squad Members are not allowed to participate outside of class during this academic probation.

- Disciplinary Probation
 - All Squad Members are expected to follow all school policies and to exhibit good sportsmanship.
 - Any Squad Member who misses more than one practice in a week, whether excused or unexcused, may be benched for one activity or event.
 - Any Squad Member who receives a disciplinary consequence from a campus administration of suspension (In-School or Out-of-School) will receive 1 week of probation.
 - Each cheerleading coach will utilize a published set of behavior expectations that will be consistently applied to all of the students participating in the cheerleading program. A student's failure to adhere to those expectations can lead to probation or dismissal from the cheer squad. The behavior expectations set forth by the cheerleading coach shall be in accordance with the District's Extracurricular Code of Conduct (ECC).

- Disciplinary Probation Process
 - Each disciplinary probation period will be 1 week in duration. The cheerleading coach will determine the week the probation is served.
 - Squad Members will not be allowed to actively participate in any contest, game, activity, or pep rally.
 - Squad Members are required to participate fully in all practices.
 - Squad Members are required to attend all activities and events in full uniform.

- Disciplinary Probation Process – cont.
 - The cheerleading coach shall make every effort to hold a conference with a parent/guardian and the student any time a disciplinary probation is assigned.
 - Any disciplinary action taken by the cheerleading coach may be appealed to the campus principal or designee. Because cheerleading is an extracurricular activity, the decision of the campus administrator is final and may not be appealed beyond the campus level.

- Disciplinary Dismissal
 - A Squad Member may be dismissed from the squad if he/she accumulates 3 probations, academic and/or disciplinary, during the term of participation.
 - Any Squad Member who receives a disciplinary consequence of Expulsion or removal to DAEP (BIC) will be dismissed from the squad.
 - Any Squad Member found in possession, transmittal, sale, attempted sale, using, or under the influence of a controlled substance, dangerous drugs, or alcohol will be subject to permanent dismissal from the squad in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the ECC.
 - Any Squad Member found smoking, using or possessing tobacco products on any school property, at any school function, or while representing the school will be subject to permanent dismissal from the squad in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the ECC.
 - In the event of any discrepancy between this document and the ECC in relation to infractions involving the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco, the provisions of the ECC shall serve as the governing document.
 - Any Squad Member engaging in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct may result in dismissal from the squad.
 - Any Squad Member will be automatically dismissed if he / she organizes or is involved in a hazing incident.

“The term hazing means any assumption of authority by a student whereby another student suffers or is exposed to any cruelty, intimidation, humiliation, embarrassment, hardship or oppression, is required to perform exercises to excess, to become sleep deprived, to commit dangerous activities, to curry favor from those in power, to submit to physical assaults, to consume offensive foods or alcohol, or the threat of bodily harm or death, or the deprivation or abridgement of any right.”(Section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965).

Section 6: Finances

- Squad Members must meet the financial requirements outlined by the cheerleading coach. Installment due dates will be set by the cheerleading coach. Fees must be paid in a timely manner. All Squad Members are responsible for all uniforms, clothing, supplies and camp costs immediately after an order is placed. No refunds will be made for any reason. Supplies will not be distributed until all moneys are received and the Squad Member will not attend camp without full payment of his/her balance. Failure to comply may result in removal from the squad.
- A system of financial assistance is discretely made available to any Squad Member needing such assistance. The expenses related to participation will not preclude any candidate from trying out for cheerleader. Please contact the cheerleading coach prior to tryouts for this information.
- All Squad Members must attend fundraising functions and participate in team fundraisers as designated by the cheerleading coach.

Section 7: Jackets

All Squad Members may purchase a letter jacket during the first full year as a Varsity Squad Member. All violations resulting in removal from the squad may prohibit Squad Members from being able to display or wear their awards.

Section 8: Uniforms and Personal Appearance

- All uniforms for Squad Members must be laundered and cleaned prior to wearing.
- All Squad Members must wear a designated uniform and have designated supplies. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.
- Each Squad Member is responsible for immediately replacing any item that is damaged or lost.
- If removed from the squad, school issued uniforms and supplies must be immediately returned to the cheerleading coach. Squad Members will be held financially responsible for these items.
- All Squad Members are subject to specific grooming and personal hygiene guidelines set by the cheerleading coach. Visible tattoos must be covered and body-piercings, specifically tongue and facial rings, must not be worn during cheerleading activities. Other guidelines of this nature will be determined and explained by the cheerleading coach.
- Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action ranging from probation to permanent dismissal from the squad.

Section 9: Replacement

If a Squad Member is permanently dismissed from the squad, the cheerleading coach and the principal will determine whether or not to fill the position. If the position is to be filled, then the candidate with the next highest tryout score will fill the vacant position.

Section 10: Competition

- An additional selection process to comprise a competition team may be implemented by the cheerleading coach.
- If a competition team is implemented, all Squad Members selected will have the opportunity to tryout for the school competitive team that will be selected at a later date. Information about a competitive team will be distributed at the end of camp.

Article IV: Compliance and the Cheerleading Code of Conduct

- Failure to comply with any of the policies, practices, and procedures as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action ranging from probation to permanent dismissal from the squad.
- The Cheerleading Code of Conduct will be announced and distributed prior to tryouts.