

**GOOSE CREEK CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
JUNIOR SCHOOL CHEERLEADER GUIDELINES**

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE OF CHEERLEADING SQUADS

- A. To promote and uphold school spirit throughout the year.
- B. To represent the school district as a positive role model and leader.
- C. To improve relationships between schools during all athletic events.
- D. To encourage good sportsmanship among students.

ARTICLE II: TRYOUT QUALIFICATIONS

Cheerleading tryouts for junior high schools in Goose Creek CISD, consisting of the cheerleader tryout clinic and judging of candidates, will be held during the third nine weeks of the school year. Dates for the tryout clinic and judging of the tryouts will be set by the cheerleading sponsor and principal of each school and the district cheerleading coordinator.

A. Grade Eligibility:

- 1. In order to tryout for cheerleader, a candidate must be in the sixth or seventh grade.
- 2. Candidates must have an overall 70 average for the first two nine weeks grading periods of the current school year. This overall average includes core and elective classes. This average will not be rounded up.
- 3. Candidates must have no grade below 70 in any class for the second nine weeks grading period.
- 4. Grades will be verified by the cheerleading sponsor using the second nine weeks report card.

B. Conduct Eligibility:

- 1. Candidates must have no more than one mark below “S” (i.e., “N” or “U” in citizenship for the second nine weeks of the current school year.)
- 2. Candidates must not have received more than three accumulated days assignment during the current school year to the following disciplinary venues: In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), or POINT Alternative Center.
- 3. Candidates must not be assigned to Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) or POINT Alternative Center at the time of tryouts.
- 4. Conduct eligibility will be verified by the cheerleading sponsor using the second nine weeks report card and principal's discipline files.
- 5. Candidates who were disciplined for serious misconduct (e.g., drug-related offenses, weapons-related offenses, violent offenses, etc.) during the calendar year immediately preceding tryouts are ineligible to try out for the upcoming school year. Any student with a question concerning his or her eligibility to try out following a disciplinary offense should consult with the sponsor and campus principal prior to signing up for tryouts.

C. Return of Forms Eligibility:

Candidates will return the Cheerleader Application Packet (with all forms completely filled out) to the sponsor by the deadline set by the sponsor. The Cheerleader Application Packet includes:

- 1. Cheerleader Candidate Application
- 2. Acknowledgement of Financial Responsibility Form
- 3. Cheerleader Medical Release Form
- 4. Any other documents included in the packet

D. Term of Service Eligibility:

1. Students are encouraged to carefully consider the decision to relinquish their spot on the cheerleading squad. Voluntary relinquishment of a student's spot on the cheerleading squad (*i.e.*, quitting) is non-revocable, and a student who quits cheerleading may not rejoin the squad during the term of service except where the student's relinquishment was outside of the student's control. Furthermore, absent unforeseen circumstances outside of the student's control, a student who voluntarily relinquishes the student's spot on the cheerleading squad will not be eligible to try out for cheerleading the following year. Extenuating circumstances do not include conflict with peers or the sponsor or general dissatisfaction with the squad or the program; students are expected to resolve conflict and address concerns through the proper channels. Sponsors and campus administrators shall determine a student's eligibility to return to the squad or try out for the squad following the student's failure to complete a term of service. The decision regarding eligibility following a failure to complete a term of service is final and non-appealable.
2. A cheerleader in the 8th grade who is removed from the squad for disciplinary reasons or for the accumulation of 15 or more demerits shall be ineligible to try out for the high school squad for the following year.

E. School Zone Eligibility:

1. Candidates for cheer tryouts must live in the appropriate school zone to the school for which they are trying out and must have established this residency for at least 15 days prior to tryouts. Candidates must be enrolled at the school for which they are trying out for this same length of time.

ARTICLE III: TRYOUT PROCEDURES

- A.** The cheerleading squad will have a maximum of (24) cheerleaders.
- B.** Cheerleader tryouts will be held during the second semester.
- C.** Cheerleader selection will be based on judges and teacher recommendations combined scores. (Section F below).
- D.** During the training clinic and judging of candidates, candidates must wear the uniform attire that has been designated by the campus sponsor.
- E. Cheerleader Training Clinic:**
 1. There will be a mandatory candidate/parent information meeting and cheerleading training clinic prior to trying out. The meeting and clinic will be held after distribution of second nine weeks report cards. Dates and times of the meeting and clinic will be determined by the cheerleading sponsor and principal. Any absence from these mandatory events must be approved by the cheerleading sponsor **prior to missing the session.**
 2. The clinic will be held after school hours, within practice time limits set by state guidelines.
 3. The training clinic will be open to candidates, current cheerleaders, cheerleading sponsors, clinicians, and school administrators. The training clinic will be closed to all others, unless approved by the principal or his designee.
 4. No video cameras will be allowed in the training clinic.
 5. Candidates must be present in all classes in which they are enrolled to attend each day of the training clinic unless excused in advance by a campus administrator or cheerleader sponsor.

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6. The day before tryouts, there will be an after school, closed cheerleader mock-tryout to practice the tryout procedures. The mock-tryout will be open to candidates, current cheerleaders, cheerleading sponsors, clinicians, and school administrators. The mock-tryout will be closed to the public.
7. All tumbling and jump skills **MUST** be demonstrated at the mock-tryouts. Candidates may **NOT** perform a skill of a higher level at tryouts than what they demonstrated at the mock-tryout. Candidates may perform a skill of a lower level at tryouts than what they demonstrated at the mock-tryout.

F. The Judging of Candidates:

1. Judging will take place in a closed tryout after school on the day set by the sponsor, principal, and district cheerleading coordinator. Only current eighth-grade cheerleaders, candidates, sponsors, administrative personnel and score tabulators will be allowed in the judging portion of the tryouts.
2. Tryout order will be determined by a random drawing of numbers by the candidates.
3. An effort will be made to ensure that qualified judges are not related to any cheerleading candidate. Examples of qualified judges include, but are not limited to, NCA or UCA-trained instructors, cheerleader sponsors/coaches from other school districts, and college cheerleaders.
4. Candidates will be judged on a scale of one to five (five being highest) in the following categories: Entrance and Tumbling, Jumps, Cheer, Chant, Motion technique, Spirit and Enthusiasm, and Overall Impression. The maximum score a candidate can receive from each individual judge is 35.
5. Candidates will also be given a teacher recommendation form to be filled out by the candidate's current core teachers (reading, math, social studies, and science). Each teacher will score the student on Daily Attitude, Leadership, Respect for Authority, Initiative, and Rapport with Peers on a scale of one to five (five being the highest). The four teachers' scores will be averaged together and added to the judges scores with a maximum combined total score of 110.
6. Judging totals will be used to rank the candidates in order from the highest judging score to the lowest judging score. Candidates will earn judge ranking points based on the total number of candidates and their judge ranking.
7. If sixteen or less candidates tryout, a minimum of 50% of the candidates will form a squad. If seventeen or more students tryout, top scores from each grade level will be taken, with a maximum of twelve eighth graders and a maximum of ten seventh graders to form a maximum sixteen-person squad. If more than sixteen (16) candidates tryout, a squad of fewer than sixteen (16) may be formed due to a natural break in the scores; a natural break will consist of a separation of candidates by ten (10) or more points.
8. Candidates must be present in all classes in which they are enrolled on the day of judging unless excused in advance by a campus administrator or cheerleader sponsor.
9. A designated person will make a video of the tryouts. The video will be used only as documentation for possible use, in accordance with junior high school cheerleader guidelines.

G. Final Ranking of Candidates/Selection:

A panel of scorekeepers will calculate judging ranking points. A maximum of 16 candidates with the highest points will be named cheerleaders. In the event of a tie, the following will be used to determine the winners:

1. In the event of a tie, tabulators look at the **Overall Total Scores** given by each judge. The candidate with the two highest judge's scores will win the tie breaker.
 2. If a tie still exists, the tabulators will look at the "**overall Impression**" score given by each judge. The candidate with the two highest judge's scores will win the tie breaker.
 3. If a tie still exists, tabulators then look at the "**Cheer**" score given by each judge. The candidate with the two highest judge's scores will win the tie breaker.
 4. If a tie still exists, candidates will be re-judged on the cheer and jumps.
 5. Scores will be double checked by the scorekeepers and verified by the administrator on duty. Final tabulations will be written in ink.
- H. Results of tryouts will be shared electronically. Sponsors will notify candidates and parents of the date, time, and location for results to be posted.
- I. Score sheets will be secured after tryouts by a school administrator.
- J. All score sheets will be kept on campus. Parents may view a copy of their child's final tabulation sheet by scheduling an appointment with the principal beginning the first Monday on which school is in session following tryouts.

ARTICLE IV: MAINTAINING MEMBERSHIP ON THE CHEERLEADING SQUAD

The term of service for a cheerleader shall be officially recognized as the time immediately following cheerleader tryouts through the of cheerleader tryouts for the next school year. Upon selection to the cheerleading squad, the following criteria for maintaining membership on the squad will hold:

- A. **Grades:**
Eligibility to participate in cheerleading activities will be governed by guidelines set forth in Texas Education Code 33.081 (commonly referred to as "No Pass, No Play"), with the following added guidelines:
1. Beginning with the fall semester following selection to the cheerleading squad, any cheerleader ruled ineligible as a result of receiving a grade below 70 in any class will be placed on **warned status for grades** for the remainder of the cheerleader term of service. **Grading deadlines will align with those set by the athletic coordinator as they pertain to UIL.**
 2. If a cheerleader is to be placed on warned status for grades, a conference with the cheerleading sponsor, parent, student, and an administrator will be required.
 3. Any cheerleader on warned status for grades as a result of Article V, Section A, Part 1, who receives a grade below 70 in any class will be **dismissed from the cheerleading squad** for the remainder of the term of service. **Grading deadlines will align with those set by the athletic coordinator as they pertain to UIL.**
- B. **Conduct:**
1. Conduct eligibility will be verified by the cheerleading sponsor using nine weeks report cards and principal's discipline records.
 2. If a cheerleader receives an N or U in citizenship, the cheerleader will be placed on **warned status for citizenship** and a conference with the cheerleading sponsor, parent, student, and an administrator will be held.

3. **Dismissal from the squad** will result if a cheerleader on warned status for citizenship receives an N or U on a subsequent report card (this N or U does not have to be in the same class that resulted in the cheerleader being placed on warned status). **This includes any report card that follows the initial N or U; not just the NEXT report card.**

C. Character Standards:

A cheerleader:

1. will not skip or be truant for any part of the school day;
2. will not leave class and/or campus without school authorized permission;
3. will not smoke and/or possess tobacco during school hours, during school functions, or in any public place;
4. will not drink and/or possess and/or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time;
5. will not misbehave or be insubordinate during school hours, during school functions, or in any public place;
6. will maintain a desirable attitude and a spirit of cooperation in all classes;
7. will not participate in an will endeavor to control any unsportsmanlike conduct;
8. will be willing to cooperate fully with the other cheerleaders and with the sponsor;
9. will not use social media sites to publish disparaging or harassing remarks about GCCISD community members, fellow teammates, the coaching staff, faculty, staff, school administrators and athletic or academic contest rivals;
10. will use social networks and electronic communication appropriately, will not participate in cyber-bullying, use profanity, or be pictured inappropriately. Anyone who chooses to post editorial content to websites or other forms of online media content to websites or other forms of online media must ensure that their submission does not reflect poorly upon the school.

D. Demerit System:

All cheerleader rules must be followed. All guidelines violations will be documented through the demerit system and kept in the school's cheerleader file. Repeated violations and/or accumulation of demerits will result in suspension from cheerleading activities and/or a hearing involving the cheerleader, parent, sponsor, and principal or designee. Suspension or dismissal will result on the accumulation of 15 demerits the cheerleader term of service. Demerits will accrue for the cheerleader term of service and shall reset with the beginning of each term of service. When a cheerleader reaches a total of five demerits, a letter from the sponsor will be sent to the cheerleader and his/her parent/guardian. Any appeal of the demerits documented in the "five demerit letter" must be initiated within 10 school days of the issuance of the letter (or 10 working days if the letter is issued during June, July, or August). When a cheerleader reaches a total of 10 demerits, a conference with the cheerleader, parent, sponsor, and administrator will be held. Any appeal of demerits documented between the time of the "five demerit letter" and the "10 demerit letter" must be initiated within 10 school days of the conference (or 10 working days if the conference is scheduled during June, July, or August). Suspension or dismissal will result when the cheerleader reaches 15 demerits. Any appeal of the demerits documented between the time of the "10 demerit conference" and the dismissal from cheerleading must be initiated within 10 school days of the dismissal (or 10 working days if the dismissal occurs during June, July, or August).

Demerits will be issued for, but not be limited to, the following infractions.

Cheerleader Activities

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| 1. | Tardy for any cheerleading activity | 1-5 demerits |
| 2. | Inappropriate attire for practice/game day | 1-2 demerits |
| 3. | Untidy uniform | 1-4 demerits |
| 4. | Incorrect dress when in uniform (wrong socks, bow, etc.) | 1 demerit |
| 5. | Infractions of Article V, Section E | 1-2 demerits |
| 6. | Insufficient knowledge of cheers | 1-4 demerits |
| 7. | Unauthorized use of a personal cell phone during games/practices | 1-4 demerits |
| 8. | Unsportsmanlike behavior during cheerleading activity | 3-10 demerits |
| 9. | Inappropriate conduct during cheerleading activity, in public or on social networks | 3-10 demerits |

Attendance

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| 1. | Three pre-approved absences from any cheerleading activities | 5 demerits |
| 2. | Unexcused absence from any cheerleading activity | 6 demerits |
| 3. | Leaving a required cheerleader activity without permission | 10 demerits |
| 4. | Leaving early (with pre-approval) from a required cheerleader activity | 1-5 demerits |

Violations of Student Code of Conduct

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| 1. | Assignment to detention class – not to exceed 4 demerits for one offense | 2 demerits |
| 2. | Insubordination, disrespect, disobedience toward sponsor, school personnel, or other adult | 3-10 demerits |
| 3. | Use or possession of any tobacco product | 10 demerits |
| 4. | Assignment to ISS or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) not to exceed 12 demerits for one offense | 3 demerits
(per day served) |
| 5. | Use, possession, or under the influence of marijuana or other controlled substance, alcohol or any alcoholic beverage, abusable glue or aerosol paint, or any other mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs | 15 demerits |
| 6. | Participation in the illegal activities of stealing, fighting, indecent exposure, or public lewdness. | 15 demerits |
| 7. | Assignment to DAEP (POINT, High Point, etc.) | 10 demerits |
| 8. | Truancy | 5 demerits |

The sponsor retains the authority, with approval of the principal, to add demerits as needed for incidents which may not be specifically mentioned in the list above. The number of demerits will be determined at the cheer sponsor's discretion of severity. In addition, the sponsor may assign a cheerleader to a school detention class or refer an incident to a campus administrator.

The sponsor will obtain approval from the principal before issuing five or more demerits for any one incident.

E. Removal from the Cheerleading Squad:

1. A cheerleader may be removed from the squad for accumulating fifteen (15) demerits during the term of service or for any serious disciplinary infraction, as determined by the sponsor and the campus principal.

2. A cheerleader may be removed for any other reason stated in this Constitution or any other reason deemed inconsistent with the student's role as a cheerleader by the sponsor and the campus principal.
3. A cheerleader who is removed from the squad may not wear official cheer apparel to school.
4. A cheerleader who is removed from the squad will not be eligible to tryout for the following school year. Seventh grade students will not be eligible to try out for their eighth grade school year, and eighth grade students will not be eligible to try out for their ninth grade school year.

F. Vacancy on the Cheerleading Squad:

If a cheerleader moves, quits, or is removed, the next cheerleader candidate *may* be moved into that position *if* the sponsor and campus administrator determine that the candidate meets eligibility criteria and the candidate wishes to do so. The sponsor is not required to fill a vacancy created on the squad.

1. The next cheerleading candidate will be determined by the official documentation of scores from tryouts that show the candidate being considered is next in the line by points.
2. The new cheerleader will be responsible for paying for a new uniform and accessories (ex: shoes, bow, poms, etc.) as determined by the sponsor and campus administrator.

G. Health and Well-Being:

1. All cheerleaders will be required to have an athletic physical as required by GCCISD and the UIL before participating in any cheerleading activity.
2. Medical documentation – The cheerleading sponsor may request a medical release for any condition that may be affected by the cheerleader's participation in cheerleading activities. The referral must be signed by a physician and returned to the sponsor. The student will not be allowed to participate in practices until the release is return
3. Student safety will be a prime concern at all times.

ARTICLE V: CHEERLEADING ACTIVITIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

Cheerleaders must realize the commitment involved as a representative and leader when selected. A cheerleader who is a participant in any other extracurricular activities, outside of school related events, will be expected to fulfill his/her cheerleading requirements before fulfilling other extracurricular requirements. Conflicts between other non-school extracurricular activities and a cheerleading activity (game, fund-raising event, practice, etc.) may not be sufficient reason to be excused from the cheerleading activity. Listed below are some of the responsibilities and duties of a junior high school cheerleader:

- A.** Junior school cheerleaders will be limited to cheering at a maximum of two activities per week (Monday through Thursday) in accordance with University Interscholastic League regulations. The activity, or activities, will be determined by the cheerleader sponsor.
- B.** Junior school cheerleaders are limited to cheering at on-campus events only; junior school cheerleaders do not "travel" to road games. Games scheduled at Goose Creek CISD alternate sites (Stallworth Stadium and Sultis Stadium) will be considered a home site for both schools participating.

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- C. Junior school cheerleaders who attend off-campus sporting events in a non-official capacity are not allowed to wear any part of their cheerleader uniform to the off-campus event. Violation of this policy will be considered an act of insubordination and demerits will be assigned.
- D. Junior schools in Goose Creek CISD will be allowed to participate in one Houston-area competition each year. Participation will be contingent upon principal, sponsor, and district cheerleader coordinator approval. The competition must be within a 50-mile radius of Baytown and require no loss of instructional time. The Director of Fine Arts will monitor competition costs to ensure equitable opportunity for participation by all GCCISD junior schools. All costs to participate in the competition will be the responsibility of the squad members.
- E. While in Uniform or at practice:
1. No heavy make-up
 2. No jewelry
 3. Hair must be pulled back in a secure ponytail, off of ears, cheeks, and forehead (out of face)
 4. Uniform team hairstyle may be altered for special events as designated by the cheer sponsor
 5. Hair must not distract from the cheer environment or be dyed an unnatural color (in alignment with GCCISD Student Dress Code)
 6. No gum chewing
 7. No obvious display of affection
 8. No false fingernails, long fingernails, or colored nail polish
 9. No visible tattoos
- F. **Camp**
1. Each cheerleader **MUST** attend the training camp held during the summer. If there is any conflict in schedule, it must be resolved as the importance of the camp to the group as a whole is the prime consideration.
 2. Per the Financial Agreement in the Cheerleader Application Packet, camp expenses are the responsibility of the cheerleader. All cheer expenses are due the last day of the tryout school year. This stipulation not being met will result in automatic dismissal from the squad. If further time is needed for extenuating circumstances, a meeting must be held with the principal, sponsor, and parent or guardian to sign off on a time extension.
 3. There will be required practices before camp and before school starts.
- G. **Games**
1. Cheerleaders will attend all assigned games and school functions unless **prior approval** for excused absence is **granted by the sponsor**.
 2. Cheerleaders will be required to travel to all games on district provided transportation and must be picked up from the appointed game location on time.
 3. Cheerleaders are to be at the stadium or gym for games at the time set by the sponsor.
 4. The manner of presentation and choice of yells will be planned in advance. This includes the style and techniques to be used throughout the year.
 5. Individual cheerleaders may not take part in the following:
 - a. Conspicuous actions that draw the crowd's attention to any individual cheerleader.
 - b. Anything that would reflect negatively on the school and group.
 6. All policies (disciplinary) of the school will be upheld and all actions and statements made before the student body are to be for the purpose of promoting school spirit.

7. Cheerleaders will be required to master all required cheerleading material before cheering at each game. Cheerleaders who fail to demonstrate mastery of all required material may be required to attend the game but not perform, per cheerleading sponsor's discretion.

H. Uniforms:

1. All uniforms (for pep rallies, games, etc.) must be approved by the sponsor and/or administrator.
2. Uniforms are to be worn only at assigned activities.
3. All parts of the uniform are to be worn.
4. Permission from the sponsor is required if anyone other than cheerleaders are to be allowed to wear any part of a uniform.
5. Each cheerleader will be responsible for caring for his/her uniforms (including poms).
6. "Uniform" mentioned in these guidelines includes any matching cheer attire.
7. No alterations to the uniform are allowed without the approval of the sponsor(s) first.

I. Practice:

The cheerleaders are required to practice on the assigned calendar dates and at other times when practices are deemed necessary by the sponsor. Unexcused absences from practice may result in suspension from participation.

J. Pep Rallies:

Cheerleaders and sponsor(s) plan all pep rallies in advance. A copy of the program will be given to the band director, participating teachers, and school administration.

K. Personal Responsibility:

1. Cheerleaders are responsible for notifying their parents of all activities.
2. Cheerleaders are responsible for turning in all forms, money, etc., on time.

ARTICLE VI: MASCOTS

- A.** The principal of each junior high school will make the final decision to allow the cheerleading squad to have a mascot. If a squad is to contain the additional member as a mascot, the student will be required to meet all eligibility requirements set forth in Article II of these guidelines.

- B.** The mascot will be determined using the regulations set forth in Article III, Sections A through E of these guidelines and the judging process explained in Article VI, Section C.

C. The Judging of Candidates for Mascot:

1. Each candidate for mascot will be required to perform an original routine not to exceed two minutes using props and/or music supplied and/or approved by the cheerleading sponsor.
2. Candidates will be judged in the following categories by each judge:
 - a. Originality of performance
 - b. Spirit and enthusiasm
 - c. Showmanship and crowd appeal
 - d. Use of props