

2023-24
Fruitvale ISD
Cheerleader
Handbook

PARTICIPATION

Cheerleading is under the athletic handbook. Therefore, all policies in the athletic handbook apply to cheer, please refer to the athletic handbook in addition to cheer handbook policies and procedures below.

PURPOSE

- To promote school spirit throughout the year.
- To encourage good sportsmanship among the fans.
- To uphold positive relationships between schools during all athletic events.
- To establish the high personal ideals and character expected of a High School Cheerleader in the Fruitvale Independent School District.

TRYOUT QUALIFICATIONS

- **Grade Eligibility:** A candidate must meet UIL requirements for passing, or UIL required improvement to passing at 3 weeks in order to try out.
- Students must meet the 90% attendance rule for all classes, they will not be able to participate until all time is made up to meet this rule. Waivers may apply for school activity absences or medical absences waived by the principal.
- A permission slip explaining estimated expenses and other constitutional requirements must be signed by the parents or legal guardians and returned to the school prior to tryouts.
- Any student going into the 7th grade through senior year may be permitted to try out for cheerleader.
- Demonstrate competency of tryout material at the discretion of the coach and judged by outside judges.
- Teacher evaluations will be turned in at the time the coach sets.

TRYOUT PROCEDURES AND JUDGING

- **Junior High:** The number of cheerleaders on a squad will be a maximum of 10 members plus 1 mascot.
- **High School:** The number of cheerleaders on a squad will be a maximum of 14 members plus 1 mascot.
- Tryouts will be held in the spring.
- Those trying out will perform as a squad and as an individual in front of the judges. Numbers will be drawn so that all participants will have an equal opportunity before the judges.
- Tryout material and specific format will be at the discretion of the coach.

POST SELECTION PERIOD PROCEDURES

- The coach must choose all uniforms for cheering and camp.
- A cheerleader is required to abide by the handbook immediately upon selection.
- Cheerleaders should be familiar with the athletic and cheer handbook, school song, and fight song.
- All University Interscholastic League (UIL) guidelines will be followed. A six weeks grade below 70 will result in a suspension from all activities for the given period of time as defined by the "No Pass/No Play" guidelines.
- Cheerleaders will continue to be responsible for all duties for the school year.

SUMMER CAMP

- Summer camp is required for all cheerleaders, cheerleaders must attend all of the summer camp.
- The coach will notify cheerleaders of camp dates prior to summer.
- Any group attending a cheerleading camp is representing its school and must act accordingly.
- Everyone must attend classes and competitions as a group.
- A special day clinic for junior high cheerleaders can be held.
- Sponsors will attend camp and/or clinic.
- Hazing will not be tolerated. Hazing will be defined at the sponsor's discretion.

PRACTICE SCHEDULES

- Summer practice is required.
- Only cheerleaders, mascot and coach will attend practice sessions. Others may attend at the discretion of the coach.
- Summer duties will be set by the coach prior to the end of the school year.
- The cheerleading squad will follow established UIL regulations limiting the out-of-school workouts to 8 hours per week during the school year.
- Practice sessions will be called by the coach.
- Practices are Sundays from 2-4pm. The coach will put out a more detailed schedule at the beginning of the school year.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- Every possible effort will be made to accommodate conflicting schedules.
- Cheerleaders are expected to attend all practices, meetings, and games they are required to attend unless conflicting school events approved by the coach.
- They are also expected to report on time, and remain for the duration of the event.

TRAVEL

- Cheerleaders traveling to football games must ride the bus to and from the activities or ride home with their legal guardian after being signed out. If there are special arrangements made 24 hours in advance the athlete may ride home with parents. The sponsor must be notified by the parents or legal guardian prior to the departure of the squad.
- Written permission slips can be used at the games with coach/administration approval.

ROLE OF THE MASCOT

- Work with all spirit groups.
- Attend all practice sessions.
- Use game antics and pantomime to increase spirit.
- Be organized at all times.
- Know cheers and chants.
- Wear appropriate uniforms.
- The mascot must never be left alone in the mascot suit.

PEP RALLIES

- Cheerleaders and mascots will wear proper uniforms.
- The purpose of the pep rally is to instill good sportsmanship and to motivate those individuals in attendance.
- Cheerleaders will be expected to give 100% of their energies at all pep rallies.
- Post-season play in all sports - organized pep rallies with the approval of the administration.
- All pep rallies will be pre-approved by the administration.

GAME RESPONSIBILITIES

Pre-Game

- Be on time.
- Be ready to help (hang posters, set up megaphones, etc.).
- Use stretch time wisely (warm-up, tumbling, stunts, jumps, etc.).
- Restrooms and getting dressed for games are not considered pre-game activities. These activities take place before you get to the game.

Game-Time

- Stand at attention (hands behind back or fists on hips as a squad).
- Pay attention to the game (know when we are on offense and defense).
- Know all cheer and chant material.
- Small motion practice cheer/chant on the sidelines.
- Enthusiasm, crowd involvement, and school spirit are a must.

- Spiriting after cheer/chants.
- Basketball players' chant during time outs and in between quarters, must perform during halftime, and yell and spirit after each point is made.
- Smile and yell loud.
- No phones at all during the games.

Post-Game

- Clean up area and/or bus.
- Pack up run-through.
- The squad must check out with the coach before leaving.

At no time is socialization with students or parents permitted before, during, or after a game unless dismissed.

UNIFORMS

- Uniforms must be clean and neatly pressed at all times.
- When in uniform or at practice, the sponsor shall establish appearance guidelines and have final say.
- All uniforms at any required function will be exactly alike in its entirety, including, but not limited to: socks, jackets, wind suits, warm-up tights, etc.
- Cheerleaders will be expected to show no affection to friends/boyfriends while in uniform.
- Skirt length will abide by the school dress code.
- All uniforms will be approved by the administration.
- Uniforms worn during regular class periods will be approved by the sponsor beforehand.

COACH DUTIES

- The cheerleading coach is selected by the administration and considered the leader of the cheerleading squad. All decisions made by the coach are in the best interest of the squad and shall be considered final. Any suggestions are welcome with the understanding that the coach will use that information to make their own decisions.
- Squad members who are having difficulties in school work, problems with other squad members, or any other problems should immediately discuss the matter with the coach. The coach will offer advice and help in seeking the resources needed to make the squad a success, using all administration services as appropriate, of which to include parents, the Campus Principal, as well as the Counselor.
- Responsibilities include but are not limited to:
 1. Responsible for organizing the cheerleader tryout.
 2. Makes decisions about absences and member removal.
 3. Arranges all transportation according to travel guidelines.
 4. Scheduling and notification of all practice times.
 5. Assigns duties for all activities.
 6. Screens and has veto power on all ideas, cheers, stunts, skits, signs, etc.
 7. Responsible for supervision of all items ordered and for collection of money, to be handed

over to administration for accounting and distribution.

8. The coach shall get approval for all fundraisers.
- The coach will be in attendance for:
 1. Summer Camp
 2. Tryouts
 3. Practice Sessions
 4. Games
 5. All functions that the cheerleaders are responsible for attending.
 - The sponsor may have an approved representative fill in her vacancy with approval from the campus principal.
 - The coach will be responsible for issuing all cheerleading equipment, mascot uniform, etc.
 - Recommend to the administration if a cheerleader is to be suspended or dismissed from the squad.
 - Responsible for informing all cheerleaders of changes in schedule, upcoming events, etc.
 - Shall designate the area in which cheerleaders shall stand at basketball, and volleyball games.
 - Administration shall have the final say in all cheerleading activities.

CAPTAIN/CO-CAPTAIN CHEERLEADER

- Captain and Co-Captain will be chosen during cheerleader tryouts in the spring. A cheerleader must have at least two years of cheer experience before they can try out for head cheerleader.
- Responsibilities:
 1. Plan pep rallies with the help of the squad and approval of the sponsor.
 2. Be responsible for the cheer and chant list at games.
 3. Take charge of all practices, teaching yells, pom pom routines, dance routines, and stunts.
 4. Assist the coach as needed.
 5. Work with sponsors on all major decisions.
 6. Responsible for setting up a schedule for completion of signs and posters.
 7. Show no partiality toward other members of the squad.
- If the head cheerleader fails to abide by any of the above rules continuously, the coach may appoint a new head cheerleader.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Prior to try-outs, parents must attend a general meeting which will outline cheerleading duties and responsibilities. The parents must sign a form accepting financial responsibility for cheerleading expenses.
- Financial Responsibilities:
 - All items not provided by the school district including but not limited to:
 - Camp Clothes
 - Shoes
 - Practice fees
 - Supplies for pep rallies, etc.

1. Cheerleader expenses may be paid by cheerleader fundraisers. All cheerleaders are

required to participate in group fundraisers with a minimum number of items sold, since the squad is required to split funds between girls. Cheerleaders are not allowed to have personal go fund me pages set up online, money must be raised for the squad not individual members online.

2. If there is enough money raised, then all uniform items, camp clothes, as well as summer camp expenses will be paid, or as available toward those items. Each cheerleader is responsible for any remaining balance of cheerleader expenses.
- The cheerleading squad will have all fundraising approved by administration.
 - It is the responsibility of each cheerleader to ensure that all required funds are turned in prior to any deadline. Failure to comply may prevent items from being ordered for that individual.

All disciplinary issues will be handled through the athletic handbook with guidance from the athletic director.

LETTER JACKETS AND LETTERS

Letter jackets can be earned by serving as a varsity cheerleader for two full years provided no previous letter jacket has been awarded for other activities. The final decision on awarding a letter jacket and/or letter will be made by the coach with the approval of the administration.

