

MISD Cheer Constitution-2022-2023

Updated: December 6, 2021

Purpose

The Midlothian ISD Cheerleading/Mascot Programs provide students the opportunity to develop and promote school spirit as an individual and as a group through the entire school year. The program's focus is on an appreciation of the techniques, skills, and athletic endeavor associated with cheerleading. The program recognizes and appreciates the inherent benefits of group participation and personal development. The program builds leaders while promoting school and community spirit.

Cheerleader/Mascot Oath

Cheerleaders/mascots will follow all rules and guidelines in the MISD Cheer Constitution, MISD Student Code of Conduct, and respective campus handbook, while at school or while representing the school. ●

Cheerleaders/mascots will be polite, respectful, and courteous to adults and peers at all times. ●

Cheerleaders/mascots will complete and turn in his/her class work and homework on time. ●

Cheerleaders/mascots will bring required materials, supplies, and equipment to all classes including every cheerleading class and activity.

- Cheerleaders/mascots will follow the dress code policy established by the Board of Trustees. ●

- Cheerleaders/mascots will avoid gossiping, and will not fight with other students or squad members. ●

- Cheerleaders/mascots will work closely with their coaches, be cooperative, and support decisions concerning all aspects of cheerleading.

- Cheerleaders/mascots will be cooperative and be positive leaders of their peers at all times, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from the time teams are announced until tryouts the following year.

Article I: Selection Process

A. Eligibility

1. Candidates must be legally enrolled and attending her/his school in accordance with current district policy on the first day of tryout clinic, unless they will be rezoned by the district.

2. There will be 2 available parent informational meetings about tryouts. At least 1 parent/guardian must attend one of the available meetings along with the candidate.

3. Candidates with outstanding cheer balances are ineligible to try out. Outstanding balances include, but are not limited to: uniform/equipment purchases, mandatory fundraising allotments, returned check fees.

4. Candidates that are removed from any school cheer team for disciplinary reasons or quit the team for any reason may not try out the following school year.

B. Tryouts

1. Two or more independent cheerleading judges will judge candidates individually and/or in small groups.

2. The method used to determine the selection process and score sheet categories will be provided at the parent information meeting.

3. Candidates that are selected for the MISD Cheer Squads will be comprised of students according to the following classifications:

- i. FSMS, WGMS and DMS: Incoming 7th and 8th graders

- ii. MHS & HHS:

- Incoming 9th graders will be placed on a sub-varsity “team,” if it exists. The number of girls selected will be based on the natural break of scores.
 - Incoming 10th and 11th graders will be placed on either the sub-varsity team or varsity team, if a sub-varsity team exists. Squad placement will be determined by the candidate score. The number of girls selected will be determined by the maximum number of cheerleaders allowed to compete in UIL Spirit State Championships and the natural break of scores.
 - Incoming 12th graders who successfully complete three full cheer seasons on the varsity squad or sub-varsity team, and who are in good standing, will automatically be placed on the varsity cheer team.
4. Candidate selection posting will be made within 72 hours of the cheerleading tryout unless extenuating circumstances arise due to COVID. Results will be verified by campus administration. Specific instructions (i.e. posting date, posting time, website, etc.) will be communicated before tryout dismissal.
 5. A cheerleader’s/mascot’s term begins the day the squad is announced and ends the first day of tryout clinic the following year.
 6. Selections of captains/officers/leaders are at the sole discretion of the coach.

Article II: Cheerleading Class

A. Cheer Class Expectations

1. Cheerleaders/Mascots are required to be fully dressed (jewelry off, socks and shoes on, hair, make up, etc.) and ready for class 5 minutes after the tardy bell.
2. Cheerleaders/Mascots will wear the following to class every day: assigned shirt, cheer-type shorts, cheer shoes and socks. Hair will be pulled back tightly. Bangs must be pulled back and secured. Absolutely NO jewelry or gum is allowed during practices or performances.
3. Locker rooms will be kept clean at all times. It is the cheerleader’s/ mascot’s responsibility to lock personal items in lockers. Cheerleaders will be responsible for purchasing a combination lock at their expense. Coaches ARE NOT responsible for unsecured personal items.
4. Cheerleaders/Mascots will turn in “assignments” on the due date. “Assignments” may include, but are not limited to, fundraising materials, signed documents, cheer lists, posters, etc.
5. Coaches may administer “tests” as needed. “Tests” may include, but are not limited to, knowledge and execution of cheers, sidelines, or dances, knowledge of constitution rules, etc.
6. Cheerleaders/Mascots must email the coach prior to class in the event the cheerleader will be absent from class.
7. At the coach’s discretion, cheerleaders must be in attendance to cheer class and practices for the week prior to a pep rally, parade, or other specified special performance in order to be eligible to participate in the performance. Cheerleaders not in attendance at school on game day or performance day - Their participation will be at the discretion of the coach and/or administration. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the absence will be evaluated by administration.
8. Cheerleaders will be cooperative and respectful to the coach and teammates during class. Cheerleaders will be respectful and give 100% effort during class.

Article III: Cheerleader/Mascot Expectations

A. Schedules and Notifications

1. Practices outside of the school day are called by the coach when necessary.
2. No practices may be held without a coach or coach's designee in attendance.
3. Practice schedules including dates, times, and places will be published when distribution is possible. Notification of extra practices will be handled during practices/class, email, and/or other approved electronic communication. It is the cheerleader's/mascot's responsibility to know when practices are being held and to attend those practices.
4. All cheerleaders are subject to UIL cheer competition selection. If selected for UIL competition, cheerleaders must participate in all activities related to competition for the season.

B. Practice/Performance Expectations

1. Arrive on time.
2. Cheer/participate at all practices/games/performances.
3. Cheerleaders/mascots must communicate with the cheer sponsor for all absences.
4. If a Cheerleader/mascot is injured, he or she should attend the activity and support their team members. If a cheerleader must sit-out 3 or more consecutive days during the year, a doctor's notes will be required. Absences will only be allowed in extreme conditions (i.e. sick with doctor's note outlining the medical condition that would mandate missing, hospitalization, funeral, etc.)
5. Wear assigned uniforms or workout attire, which will include specifics for hair and accessories. Jewelry is prohibited at all times.
6. Cheerleaders will work cooperatively with coaches and teammates during practice and performances. Cheerleaders will be respectful and give 100% effort during practice and performances.
7. Parents, family and/or friends may not attend cheer camp sessions during camp.
8. Cheerleaders/mascots are required to attend camp in its entirety.
9. Cheerleaders/mascots will follow MISD Travel Guidelines.
10. Sub-varsity cheerleaders will cheer at games designated by the coach.

C. Attire/Dress Code

1. Uniforms will be chosen by the coach.
2. Cheerleaders must wear the designated uniform for each event.
3. Cheerleaders/Mascots uniforms must be clean, in presentable condition, and fit appropriately at every performance. In the event that a uniform is unable to be cleaned or no longer fits, it must be replaced prior to performing at the student's expense.
4. Before any alterations may be made to any uniform, WRITTEN approval must be obtained from the coach. If the uniform is altered too short, too tight, etc. the uniform must be altered back to its original condition at the cheerleader's cost. In the event that this is unsuccessful, the cheerleader will be required to purchase the uniform at full price. If a uniform must be ordered to meet modesty requirements, the cheerleader will not perform until the new uniform can be obtained.
5. Hair will be worn away from the face and eyes while cheering as designated by the coach. Hair accessories will be approved by the coach.
6. Uniforms (including the cheer warm-up) will be worn only when serving as cheerleader/mascot and representing the school. Parts of the uniform are never to be worn separately, with other clothes, unless discussed and approved by the coach.
7. Appropriate undergarments will be worn at all times with the uniform. Undergarments should be discreet (not show) and neutral in color.
8. Cheerleaders/mascots will wear the designated school uniform to school on game days or other days

as directed by the coach.

9. Cheerleaders/mascots are required to participate in events that promote school spirit including but not limited to dress up days, etc.

10. Cheerleaders/mascots will refrain from allowing other students to wear parts of their uniform (including jackets) at all times.

11. ALL jewelry, visible or not, including studs, MUST be removed prior to any cheerleading event or practice.

12. Cheerleaders/mascots may not have disruptive body piercing such as tongue, nose, navel, or eyebrow piercing for safety reasons.

13. Fingernails must be trimmed according to NFHS safety guidelines. *NFHS Spirit Rule: "Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept at an appropriate length (short, near the end of the fingers) to minimize risk for the participants."*

14. Cheerleaders/mascots may not have visible tattoos that are distracting, lewd, vulgar or depict profanity or prohibited items (alcohol, drugs, tobacco).

15. At the end of the season, or in the event that a cheerleader quits or is dismissed from the squad, uniforms and all school-owned equipment must be returned in clean and good condition. Failure to turn in school owned uniforms and equipment will result in being placed on the student obligation list overseen by administration.

16. Cheerleaders/mascots may earn a letter jacket by making the varsity squad. Letter jackets are available for purchase by the cheerleader/mascot during first uniform fittings for the year the student has made varsity. All patches and lettering must be approved by the coach prior to purchase. Jacket orders must be made through the designated company at the time designated by the coach. Letter jackets will be presented to cheerleaders/mascots by the cheer coach.

17. If a uniform is lost or stolen, the cheerleader/mascot must pay to replace it.

D. Equipment

1. Cheerleaders/mascots are required to bring necessary equipment to games and events, which includes but is not limited to, poms, signs, props, rain coats, etc. as instructed by the coach.

E. Violations

1. Violations of the above listed expectations can result in missing performances and/or other consequences as determined by the coach. The discipline will correspond with the severity of the offense as deemed by the coach.

F. Fundraising

1. Cheerleaders/mascots will be required to participate in group fundraising projects and activities.
2. All fundraisers will be approved by the coach with district administration approval. Independent fundraising is prohibited.

Article IV: Behavior Standards

A. Any violations of Article IV Behavior Standards may be subject to disciplinary action. Coaches and sponsors will review all the facts and circumstances surrounding a particular violation and impose appropriate disciplinary action. Coaches and sponsors will strive for consistency in consequences for extracurricular code of conduct violations, but will also exercise sound professional discretion. Violation of any of the below-mentioned rules by a student participating as a cheerleader/mascot will be subject to disciplinary action.

B. Standards

1. Cheerleaders/mascots will be held to the highest standards of conduct.
2. Cheerleaders/mascots will follow all school rules as outlined in MISD Code of Conduct, the Cheerleading Constitution, and the MISD student handbooks.
3. Cheerleaders/mascots must not be present at any time at underage parties where alcohol or drugs are being consumed by her/his peers.
4. Cheerleaders/mascots must not smoke, use tobacco or vaping products, drugs, or alcohol at any time.
5. **High School Cheer** - First time Choices placement will result in an automatic probation period at the discretion of the coach. Second Choices placement will result in dismissal from the team.
Middle School Cheer - First time ISS placement will result in sitting out one game. Second ISS placement will result in an automatic probation period at the discretion of the coach. Third ISS placement will result in dismissal from the squad. First time Choices placement will result in an automatic probation period at the discretion of the coach. Second Choices placement will result in dismissal from the team.
6. Cheerleaders and mascots placed in Disciplinary Alternative Education Placement (DAEP), or are expelled, will be removed from the cheerleading squad.
7. At all times, cheerleaders/mascots will refrain from posting, submitting, sending, or publishing inappropriate, derogatory, sexually suggestive, sexually explicit, or any form of negative comments, photos, texts, etc. to any social media or any electronic, public, or private entity which includes, but is not limited to: FaceBook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok, Discord, YouNow, Kik, personal email accounts, personal web pages, personal or private chat rooms, personal texting/cell phone accounts, etc. Sending any form of district-deemed inappropriate photos, comments, etc. will not be tolerated regardless of who the intended recipient may be. Violations that result in school consequences will also result in additional consequences in cheerleading. Violations that do not result in school consequences may result in disciplinary action that may include suspension or removal.
8. Cheerleaders/mascots are expected to maintain excellent attendance at school, meetings, and practices. All cheerleaders/mascots must be able to cheer at football games during the fall and basketball games during the winter. Other school activities will be accommodated with prior approval from sponsors. Cheerleaders and mascots may be involved in another school organization, sport, or activity with prior approval from the coach. A schedule for accommodating both teams will be worked out. It is the cheerleader's responsibility to communicate all conflicts as soon as they arrive with the cheer coach. Coaches will not go through parents to work out conflicts. Cheer coaches will work with athletic coaches, band directors, etc. and the STUDENT. Non-school related activities will not be accommodated. Family or individual vacations, trips, etc. will not be excused.
9. In the event of gross negligence, or a severe inappropriate action or behavior by the cheerleader/mascot that negatively affects the squad, school, or district, a cheerleader/mascot may be removed from the squad. The building principal will be the sole authority in deciding whether a student's action is grossly negligent or severely inappropriate.
10. Bullying will not be tolerated from any cheerleader/mascot. This includes but is not limited to: verbal harassment, verbal threats, written threats, cyber bullying. In addition, any substantiated acts of hazing may result in removal from the squad. Cheerleaders/mascots will be cooperative and respectful to adults and teammates at all times. Cheerleaders/mascots/parents/students may anonymously report issues to See It. Say It. Stop It. or they may let the cheer sponsor or administrator know.

C. Action can include counseling sessions, missing performances, missing multiple performances, and/or removal from the squad. The discipline will correspond with the severity of the offense as deemed by the coach.

D. Cheer Discipline Guidelines

1. If a cheerleader/mascot is sat out during a pep-rally for behavior, the cheerleader/mascot will remain seated the remainder of the pep-rally, equaling 2 quarters of a game. If less than 1/2 of the pep-rally is left, this will equal 1 quarter of a game.
2. If a cheerleader/mascot is sat out during a game for behavior, he/she will remain seated for the remainder of the quarter and it will equal one quarter.
3. If a cheerleader/mascot accumulates 4 quarters of sitting, there will be a meeting with the coach, cheerleader/mascot, and parent. Cheerleader/mascot will be put on a growth plan to discuss behaviors and ways to improve.
4. If a cheerleader/mascot accumulates 8 quarters of sitting, there will be a meeting with the coach, administrator, cheerleader/mascot, and parent. The growth plan will be updated, and the cheerleader/mascot will be placed on probation with an understanding that after 4 more quarters of sitting the cheerleader/mascot will be removed from the team.
5. If a cheerleader/mascot accumulates 12 quarters, the cheerleader/mascot will be removed from the team.
6. Definitions
 - i. Game = 4 full quarters
 - ii. Pep-rally = 2 quarters
 - iii. Event = 1 quarter
7. Other consequences may be given for infractions not listed above.

Article V: Academic Standards

- A. Cheerleaders/Mascots will follow the Academic Requirement (No Pass, No Play) outlined by the University Interscholastic League. Detailed information regarding No Pass, No Play can be found in the TEA & UIL Side-By-Side.
- B. Any cheerleader/mascot that fails two consecutive grading periods will be considered for squad removal at semester.
- C. Only eligible students may actually take part in pep rally performances, leading cheers, participating in dance routines, playing in the band, giving speeches, etc. In addition, parades are considered to be public performances, therefore, eligibility is required.
Ineligible cheerleaders/mascots will not participate in any games, pep rallies, performances, competitions, demonstrations, displays, team activities, trips and/or club activities, but will still participate in all practices.

Article VI: Obligations and Commitments

- A. Cheerleaders/mascots must be free to spend the necessary time, as decided by the coach, both during the summer and entire school year.
- B. The cheerleader/mascot yearly term begins the day squads are announced (tryouts) and ends the first day of tryout clinic the following year.
- C. Cheerleaders/Mascots are financially responsible for the following:
 1. Camp payment must be received before participating in camp
 2. Uniforms/supplies as designated by the coach with administrator approval
 3. Fundraising requirements
 4. Yearly approximate costs will be published at the parent/candidate meeting.

Article VII: Parent Expectations

- A. Parents/guardians/parent designees are expected to be respectful and cooperative to other adults, coaches and all squad members. Appropriate language and good sportsmanship are expected.
- B. Parents/guardians/parent designees should understand that the cheerleader/mascot is the first line of communication and should require the cheerleader/mascot to talk to the coach to resolve issues.
- C. Parents/guardians/parent designees are not permitted to call or text message a coach about disciplinary issues, complaints, or concerns after hours. The appropriate forum for these types of situations is district email or phone and should be addressed with the coach before following the appropriate chain of command within the school district.

Article VIII: Amendments

- A. Any other decisions made for the well-being and safety of the cheerleader, may be made at any time at the coach's discretion.
- B. The district reserves the right to amend the MISD Cheer Constitution at any time with the approval of the coaches, building administration and central office administration.
- C. Notification of changes will be handled in writing to all cheerleaders/mascots via email. It is the parent/cheerleader responsibility to review the amendment(s) to the cheerleader constitution. The most up to date cheerleader constitution will be posted online under the Parent/Student tab on the MISD website. If you have any questions, please contact your cheer sponsor.

Midlothian ISD Cheerleader/Mascot Constitution Consent Form

Cheerleading/Mascot Candidate:

I, _____, have read the Midlothian ISD Cheerleader Constitution and hereby agree to follow all rules and guidelines set forth in this document. I understand that if I do not abide by these rules and guidelines in this constitution that it may result in grounds for removal from the cheerleading squad.

Student Printed Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian of Candidate:

I, _____, have read the Midlothian ISD Cheerleader Constitution and hereby agree to follow all rules and guidelines set forth in this document. I understand that if I do not abide by these rules and guidelines in this constitution that it may result in grounds for removing my cheerleader/mascot from the cheerleading squad.

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date