

# **Wakulla Middle School**



## **Cheer Handbook 2023-2024**

# Wakulla Middle School Cheerleading Constitution

## 2023-2024

### Cheerleading Candidates:

1. The cheerleading coach sets up eligibility rules. Suspension out of school and/or two or more referrals shall result in ineligibility.
2. The Middle School squad will consist of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.
3. To be eligible for tryouts, a girl must maintain a 2.5 grade point average for the year. Each cheerleader is responsible for showing their report card to the coach for the 9 weeks preceding the tryouts and after every grading period if they make the squad.
4. Classes for the training of candidates will be approximately one week.
5. No candidate for cheerleading who reports to practices later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> day shall be allowed to tryout, unless an emergency situation arises, and the coach excuses her.
6. No cheerleader candidate shall miss more than one practice without being dropped from the roll. The coach must clear any absence.
7. No cheerleader candidate may tryout unless all physical, constitution, liability, and permission forms are turned in on time.
8. All parents/guardians of any candidate must attend the meeting before tryouts begin unless prior arrangements have been made with the coach.
9. For practice, tryout candidates must wear shorts, shirts, socks, and shoes. Hair must be out of the eyes. No cheerleader attire can be worn. On tryout day, the candidates must wear black shorts, white shirts, tennis shoes, and white socks. Hair must be up!
10. The current 8<sup>th</sup> grade cheerleaders will train those who are trying out. Candidates will learn a cheer, chants, jumps and a dance.
11. Method of selecting cheerleaders:
  - a. Judges will evaluate candidates on group chant (15pts), group dance (15pts), voice and spirit (10 pts), jumps (10 pts), individual cheer (20 pts). This is 70% of the score.
  - b. Classroom teacher evaluations and scholastics will make up the other 20%. Teachers will evaluate candidates on leadership, attitude, peer relations, conduct, and attendance. Grade point averages will be added to the score sheet.

- c. Coaches' points will also be given at the coaches' discretion during tryouts. Candidates can earn up to 10 points based on their ability to work well with others during tryouts and their willingness to be involved in the tryout process. This will count for 10% of their score.
  - d. Tryout practice, tryouts, or mock tryouts will not be open to parents or guardians.
12. All candidates must have the correct word count to tryout.

**Official Cheerleader Policies:**

13. It shall be the responsibility of the individual cheerleader to acquire the complete uniform and pay for camp. Our uniform representative will come before the end of school to take the measurements of each new cheerleader for the next school year. A \$300 deposit will be required by that time. The remaining amount will be due by July 30<sup>th</sup>. In order to attend camp, all fees must be paid in advance.
14. Fundraisers will be arranged during the year. The coach will send a letter-message to the parents making them aware of the upcoming fundraisers.
15. Vital to the functioning and unity of a cheerleading squad is punctuality, cooperation, respect for others, respect for coach, respect for yourself, and respect for the school. In order to function properly and orderly, a demerit system will be used. Demerits can range from 1-6, determined by the coaches. The following are examples of how demerits can be earned.
- a. Lateness to an activity, practice, or game.
  - b. Disrespectful speech or action toward the coach or captain.
  - c. Bad sportsmanship.
  - d. Wearing jewelry.
  - e. Not being dressed properly for a game or function.
  - f. Talking to spectators during the game.
  - g. Failure to take part in a squad activity.
  - h. Missing practice without a valid reason approved by the coach.
  - i. Missing a game without a valid reason approved by the coach.
  - j. Referrals.

- k. Any improper actions made by cheerleaders that require the attention of the principal may lead to dismissal from the squad.
- l. Not having a note to ride home with a parent signed by an administrator before leaving school.
- m. Inappropriate display of behavior on social media accounts.

**\*\*Any direction given by the coach that is not followed! \*\***

**In any event in which the squad may be participating, the coach has authority to bench a cheerleader in lieu of, or in addition to, demerits.**

- 16. Merits may be earned to make up for demerits. No cheerleader can earn more than 5 merits in a cheerleading year. The coach will determine how many merits can be earned.
- 17. Probation can result from poor grades or demerits.  
**5 demerits= Probation**
- 18. **8 demerits total** at any one time, or during the school year, shall result in removal from the squad.
- 19. If a cheerleader earns an F in any subject on a report card, they will be benched from games/activities until they bring proof from a teacher that the grade has been brought up to a D or better.
- 20. If a cheerleader is withdrawn or transferred to another school, they will lose their position on the squad for the remainder of the year.
- 21. Each cheerleader must participate in every activity in which the squad has decided to participate. Also, games, camp and other functions are school sponsored activities, and all school rules apply.
- 22. The coach will have the final decision about any issue that concerns the squad.

**\*\*\*The coach will deal with any matters not specifically addressed in the cheerleader's constitution! \*\*\***

# Cheerleading Discipline System

**Explanation of Behavior Expectations:** As a chosen member of the Wakulla Middle School Cheerleading Squad, you are responsible to your school and coaches at all times. You are expected to uphold the highest standards of personal conduct both in and out of school. This includes sportsmanship, public displays of affection (PDA), and your manner of dress in and out of uniform.

The merit and demerit system may be changed or amended by sponsors and/or administration as needed. Merits and Demerits are not limited to the following examples but rather give an overview of expected behavior and rewards or consequences.

## Merit System

The merit system is a series of rewards for appropriate behavior and academic excellence. Merits may also be used to "work off" any demerits accumulated.

Merits will be kept on file by the sponsors and are assigned by the sponsors.

### **Classifications of merits are as follows:**

- All As on report card - 3 merits
- A/B on report card - 2 merits
- A/B/C on report card - 1 merit
- Helping a teacher before or after school - 1 merit per hour (must be verified with a note from the teacher)
- Community service - 5 merits (prior sponsor approval required)
- Posters/Banners/etc. - 1 merit

## **Demerit System**

The demerit system is a series of consequences for inappropriate behavior and infractions of the Cheerleading Constitution or Wakulla Middle School Code of Conduct/Handbook. Demerits are assigned by the coaches based on the disciplinary action taken for the behavior.

Demerits may be worked off by accumulating merits. For every 1 Demerit given it will take 2 merits to work off.

Record of the demerits will be kept on file with the sponsors. Cheerleaders will be notified at the time of the infraction and may review the file at any time. Refusal to acknowledge the demerit with a signature or verbal by the cheerleader does not mean that the demerit does not exist.

## **Word Count**

There is a word count that is required for all athletes. If a cheerleader does not meet word count requirements, they will not be able to participate in any games or school events until the word count is met. However, cheerleaders must accompany the squad at games and all school events. The cheerleader must come to each practice and read until the word count is met.

\*It is the Cheerleaders responsibility to meet the word count requirements.

## **Demerits will be assigned for, but not limited to the following:**

Tardy to practice, function, or game: (Excused Tardy denotes a note from parent at the time of the tardy or prior written approval from the coaches.) \*\*This includes cheerleader being picked up late from practice or games.

- Unexcused Tardy 1 demerit
- Unexcused Tardy (more than 5 minutes) 2 demerits
- Continuous Tardiness (4 or more) 3 demerits

**Absences** from practice, function, pep rally, or game: (Excused Absence denotes a note or phone call from parent/doctor at the time of absence or prior written approval from the sponsors.) \*If a cheerleader leaves early or is absent, parent needs to call Coach to excuse absence with a 24-hour notice. Students may not excuse themselves – this is similar to school absences requiring parent calls/notes in order to be excused.

- Absence from practice (summer and school year) 2 demerits
- Absence from function or pep rally 3 demerits
- Absence from game 4 demerits

### **Participation**

- Leave early from practice first time (no more than 10 minutes) 0 demerit
- Leave early from practice two or more times 1 demerit
- Leave early from function or game first time 2 demerits
- Leave early from function or game two or more times 3 demerits
- Failure to turn in form, report card, grade sheet, etc. 1 demerit
- Failure to complete an assigned duty 1 demerit
- Failure to notify sponsor of absence 1 demerit

### **Dress**

- Not dressing properly for practice 2 demerits
- Not wearing correct clothing for function or game 2 demerits
- General Appearance inappropriate or out of uniform 1 demerit
- Wearing jewelry at practice, function, game, or in uniform 1 demerit

### **Conduct**

- Lack of respect for sponsor 3 demerits (i.e., talking while sponsor is talking, acting rudely, back talk, etc.)
- Lack of respect for team members 2 demerits (i.e., arguing, fighting, gossiping about team members, bullying, both in and out of school)
- Detention issued by any teacher/staff 1 demerit
- Disciplinary Referral 3 demerits (If result of Disciplinary Referral is detention or ISD, the demerits will be issued for the consequence. If the consequence is just a conference with Administration/Counselor, the demerits will be issued for the Referral.)
- Any Wakulla Institute placement is grounds for dismissal from the cheerleading squad.
- Inappropriate Conduct 3 or more demerits. Inappropriate Conduct includes these but is not limited to the following examples:

- Inappropriate language, cursing, gestures, or cheers
- Public displays of affection
- Poor sportsmanship
- Bullying

**\*\*Any documented fighting, verbal or physical, will result in automatic benching at the coaches' discretion. \*\***

### **Consequences of Demerits**

- 3 demerits will result in sitting out of one quarter of the next game day (must attend in uniform the entire game)
- 6 demerits will result in sitting out of two quarters of the next game day (must attend in uniform the entire game)
- 10 demerits will result in sitting out of the next activity, game, or pep rally (must attend in uniform)
- 12 demerits will result in a meeting with the cheerleader, parent(s), coaches, and/or the principal. The coach and principal will determine the course of discipline. Possible consequences could be missing an activity or dismissal from the squad.
- Once the determined number of demerits is reached the consequences will follow regardless of the date or if merits could be earned prior to the function in question.
- Regardless of the number of demerits, if a cheerleader is not prepared for the performance she will NOT cheer. This includes knowing dance, cheers, and having the proper uniform.
- A sponsor will notify the cheerleader on a weekly basis in writing and/or verbally when a cheerleader or mascot has reached 2, 5, 9, and 11.
  - The cheerleader will be notified in writing when 12 demerits have been issued to set up a meeting with the coach, parent, and/or principal.
- Note: At any time, a member of the squad may be removed from an activity by sponsor or administration.
- If a member is removed from the squad, all cheer attire must be turned in until the cheerleading season is over.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONSTITUTION AND DISCIPLINE SYSTEM**

Cheerleading is one of many honors a student at middle school can obtain. With that honor comes many responsibilities above the regular student responsibilities. The constitution and discipline system were created as a guide for the expectations of cheerleaders at Wakulla Middle School. It is not intended to be used as a tool against anyone or their beliefs, but instead to protect those who wish to do all they can to keep cheerleading the honorable position it should be. A student's signature signifies that he/she has read and understands the constitution and discipline system and, if selected, will do their best to abide by these rules, expectations, and consequences.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Parents should understand that if their child is selected as cheerleader, their help is vital to the organization's success. Prompt payment on accounts, and support in following guidelines set forth in the constitution and discipline system are expected. Parent signatures signify that they have read and do understand the constitution and discipline system and, if their child is selected, they will do their best to support cheerleading and see that their child abides by these guidelines.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

The School Board of Wakulla County, Florida does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, genetic information for applicants and employees, or any other reason prohibited by Federal and State law regarding non-discrimination. See 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d); 34 C.F.R. 106.9; 34 C.F.R. 110.25.

In addition, the School Board provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. See 34 C.F.R. 108.9.

Disabled individuals needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services, programs, and activities of the School Board are required in advance to notify the administrator at the school/center at which the event or service is offered to request reasonable accommodation. The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to any opportunity or event associated with Wakulla County Schools.

The designated Equity Coordinator, Title IX and Section 504 Compliance Coordinator as required by 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d) is Lori Sandgren, Executive Director of Human Resources, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327; (850)926-0065; [lori.sandgren@wcsb.us](mailto:lori.sandgren@wcsb.us).