

Descriptor Term: CHEERLEADER POLICY

Descriptor Code: JHI

Rescinds: JHI

Board Approved: 7/16/2012

Previously Approved: 8/6/1990

Definition

Cheerleading is defined as a school-based activity of a character similar to student government, a choral ensemble, a string quartet, or a band flag corps. The cheerleading program requires gymnastic, teaming, and acting or "showmanship" skills. Cheerleading is a coordinated group performance activity for which instruction, practice, and attendance of the entire group of cheerleaders are essential requirements for which each cheerleader must accept full responsibility. As an activity, cheerleading is not itself a sport, but it specifically relates to athletic sports as a long established tradition in the form of a special public relations function at sports events such as football and basketball games. The cheerleading milieu includes uniforms, symbols, pom poms, bull horns, acrobatic dances and routines, chants and cheers, and spatial needs in stadia and gyms for performances.

Supervision

The supervision of cheerleading in the Gulfport School District is the responsibility of the school principal. The principal is obligated to assign a teacher-coach-sponsor to train and manage all aspects of the group of students who become selected as cheerleaders. The relationship of this person is effectively that of a teacher who has been given a contractually compatible assignment for which the teacher receives some form of monetary compensation above and beyond other assignments. The teacher-coach-sponsor is responsible for assuring that cheerleaders adhere to rules, procedures, and policies governing cheerleading. Disciplinary actions if needed will follow the normal flow of authority - i.e., sponsor, principal or designee, Superintendent or designee, Board of Trustees. Because cheerleading is supervised by the principal, it is necessary that the principal plan with appropriate team coaches and the District athletic director for cheerleader units to be appropriately involved with appropriate sports events and to be fully aware at all times of what plans have been made regarding the participation of cheerleaders with sports events.

Admissions

All admissions to any athletic events (tournaments, etc.) will be paid by the Athletic Department.

Camps

Camps are not required and no District money will be spent on them. A student's eligibility to remain on any cheerleader squad will not be affected by attendance or non-attendance at summer camps.

Election/Selection

The principal and staff will develop selection/election procedures and criteria which will be printed in the school hand book and approved by the Superintendent and Board of Trustees.

Eligibility

Cheerleaders must be in good academic standing throughout the school year as defined by the MHSAA. In order to be eligible for tryouts a student must be a bona fide student of the Gulfport School District which means properly enrolled and attending class.

*Exception No. 1

Rising 7th graders from private or parochial schools (For example: St. Patrick, St. James, Westminster) will be eligible to try out if they have properly completed registration forms for the 7th grade at a Gulfport School.

*Exception No. 2

Students moving into the District for the first time may be allowed to try out in any grade level on a case-by-case basis if approved by both the principal and the Superintendent or his designee.

Insurance

All cheerleaders will be required to produce proof of family insurance coverage or be required to purchase the student insurance offered through the Athletic Department. Cheerleaders will be required to complete the parent consent form.

Meals

If meals are necessary they will be paid for by the Athletic Department. Cheerleaders will have the same meals as the teams.

Number

The number of cheerleaders on each squad will be determined by the sponsor and principal.

Practice

All official practices, summer or otherwise, will be supervised by the principal, sponsor, or a certified staff member approved by the principal. All official practices will be held on school grounds and the schedule approved by the principal.

Representation

It is the policy of the Board that each cheerleader squad at each school site include representation from the majority and minority races.

Safety

Rules regarding skits, routines, and other performance activities will be those adopted by the National Cheerleader Association. Specifically, the Board prohibits the use of mini-tramps and pyramids which are more than 2 persons high.

Supplies

Each school will be provided a budget for supplies, including paint, paper, and pom-poms, which will be administered by the Athletic Department. Schools may supplement this budget or cheerleaders may do it through fundraisers

Travel

All travel which is approved by the principal will be paid out of the athletic budget. Arrangements for travel will be made by the Athletic Department with the cooperation of the building principal.

Uniforms

A set of uniforms will be purchased by the Gulfport School District Athletic Department. If other uniforms are purchased by individual cheerleaders, these uniforms are the property of the individual.