

JUNCTION CITY BLUE JAY CHEERLEADING HANDBOOK

I. Purpose

The purpose of the JCHS Blue Jay Cheer Squad is to understand and develop characteristics consistent with the five main responsibilities of a cheerleader:

- Be a crowd leader by preserving school traditions and coming up with new ways to involve fans.
- Be spirit raisers by displaying enthusiasm before, during, and after school events.
- Be ambassadors by being model students both in and out of the classroom.
- Be physically skilled athletes through practice and training.
- Be entertainers by creating fun and engaging performances that involve students, parents, and the community.

The JCHS Cheerleading Team will:

- Consist of members who conduct themselves with character, integrity, and class.
- Strive to be the best they can be in every area of their lives.
- Be unified.
- Be team-oriented.
- Respect others and themselves.
- Be a respected team by the students, faculty, and administration.
- Promote school spirit inside and outside the school.
- Encourage their teammates and others.
- Work to be the best cheerleaders they can be.
- Practice every time like they are performing for a national championship.
- Be recognized by other schools as one of the best cheer programs in the State.
- Be in top-notch condition.
- Arrive to games, competitions, and other events early and prepared.
- Be on the cheer team because they love the sport of cheerleading.

II. Membership

A. Eligibility

1. Candidates must be enrolled as a full-time student at Junction City High School for the entire school year.
 - o If transferring, the candidate must have an approved transfer on file and be enrolled for the 2024-25 school year.
2. Candidates must be KSHAA eligible.
3. Candidates must have at least a 2.0 GPA.
 - *Please be aware that consideration will be given to an applicant's fall 2023 semester eligibility. This could influence final squad placement or membership.
4. Candidates must submit tryout application form by 4pm on Wednesday, April 10th .

5. All cheerleaders must submit a Physical Examination form signed by a licensed physician (MD), physician's assistant (PA), or nurse practitioner (NP). Physicals must be done after May 1, of the current year and before the first practice.
6. No prior cheerleading experience is required; however, all applicants must be willing to learn tumbling, stunts and routines.

B. Tryouts

TRYOUT CLINICS: Two clinics will be held prior to the official tryout date.

1. Clinics are not mandatory, but it is HIGHLY SUGGESTED that you attend both.
2. Candidates will learn all tryout material at clinics.
3. Participation in the clinics will be taken into consideration when determining squad placement.
4. Required Clinic Attire: T-shirt, athletic shorts, socks, tennis shoes, hair pulled out of face.
ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY OR GUM
5. Students already enrolled at the school during the tryout session(s) must tryout during that time.
6. If new students come to the school, a special tryout will be scheduled, if there is space on the team.
 - If you have a time conflict on the day of tryouts, you must speak with Coach Wylie before clinics begin.

C. Teams

1. The size and number of teams will be officially determined the week of tryouts based on interest, tryout results, and coaches discretion.
2. Alternate positions may be assigned.
3. Any squad member has the opportunity to be placed on the Varsity squad.
4. Seniors will not be assigned to the JV squad.
5. The list of new cheerleaders will be posted on our school web site, Bluejayathletics.org, no earlier than 5pm the day of tryouts.
6. For students who do not make the team, they may request a written assessment of areas of strengths and improvement. Scores will not be distributed.

III. Commitment, Responsibilities, and Expectations

A. General Commitment

1. Being part of the JCHS Cheerleading Team is a year-round commitment. Please do not take this decision lightly.

B. Summer Commitment

1. A detailed calendar of events, practices, and camps will be provided at the parent meeting for April – August activities.
2. Cheerleaders are strongly encouraged to attend all summer camps and practices.
3. Please notify the coach in the Sports You app as soon as you know of all summer vacations and days the cheerleader will not be at practice or other events.
4. Please try to schedule vacations in June.

5. Cheerleaders must participate in at least 13 practices starting on August 19 in order to be eligible to cheer at the first game.

C. Practice Expectations

1. Practice Times and Schedules
 - a. Cheerleaders will practice three to five times a week.
 - b. In general regular school year practices will take place 3:15-4:45.
 - c. Schedules will be placed on Sports You.
 - d. Spring and Summer: A detailed calendar of practice and other events will be provided at the parent meeting.
 - e. Fall: A detailed calendar with practices and other events will be distributed in early August.
 - f. Winter: A detailed calendar with practices and other events will be distributed in November.
 - g. Schedules will be based on the best information available at the time the schedule is distributed. Cheerleaders and parents are asked to remain flexible and cooperative when last minute changes to the schedule arise. Coaches are encouraged to limit schedule changes to minimize confusion.
 - h. Cancellations due to inclement weather will be announced as early in the day as possible so that rides home are not compromised. Practices will always be cancelled in conjunction with school district cancellations.
 - i. Coaches may occasionally call additional practices or meetings for special events.

D. Practice Guidelines

1. Cheerleaders must arrive to practice on time and ready.
2. Cheerleaders must be dressed in designated practice clothes.
3. Shoes must be worn during practice.
4. Bring a FULL water bottle to every practice.
5. Hair must be pulled back from face and shoulders. No hair should be in the eyes.
6. No jewelry. It must be removed before practices or games. DO NOT get any new piercings once you become a cheerleader. You WILL be asked to remove all piercings for practice.
7. No gum chewing.
8. Nails must be short. False nails will be asked to be removed.
9. Cell phones must be OFF and you may not text or use the phone during practice or during a break.
10. Please bring a positive attitude to practice.
11. Leave any problems at the door. If something needs to be dealt with in order to have a productive practice, please notify the coach in private, PRIOR to practice starting.
12. Each cheerleader needs to eat healthy throughout the day and drink plenty of water. Please do not arrive to practice with an empty stomach.
13. Violation of any of these guidelines will result in extra conditioning for the ENTIRE team. Repeated violations may result in benching or dismissal from the team.

E. Game Expectations

1. General Guidelines

- a. Cheerleaders MUST know all cheers, sideline dances, and half-time routines BEFORE the first game. A specific date will be set. If a cheerleader does not know all routines, she will be benched from games until she knows all the material. This could jeopardize the cheerleader's ability to letter and compete.
- b. Must attend all games assigned.
- c. Must display high energy and interaction with the crowd. Cheer constantly.
- d. Appearance
 - Must be dressed in the proper uniform (shell, liner, skirt, briefs, socks, shoes, etc.) and ready (hair done, jewelry off, etc.) for the games at the scheduled meeting time.
 - Uniform must be clean and not wrinkled.
 - Hair should be pulled off face and shoulders and out of the eyes.
 - Nails should not be too long.
2. Eat before arriving to the game or before the scheduled time of arrival.
3. Do not leave the game until the end of the game, unless permission is granted.
4. Pay attention during the game.
5. Do not talk on the sidelines.
6. Display good sportsmanship to the opposing team.
7. No gum chewing.
8. Bring water bottles. You may only drink water or a sports drink right before the game and during the game. No energy drinks or sugary drinks or junk food.
9. Do not stretch in front of the crowd.
10. Cheerleaders must know all the cheer sidelines before they can perform at games.
11. Cell phones must be OFF and you may not text or use the phone during games.

F. Competition Season

1. Attend:
 - All designated Competition Season Practices. Some Saturday practices may take place.
1. Additional workouts will be required.
2. Extra practices may be scheduled prior to the competitions.
3. Grades must be well above the minimum standard for cheer eligibility.
4. Attitude, cooperation, and commitment are the most important elements of being part of the competition team.

H. Safety

1. Every precaution will be taken to ensure safety among the cheerleading team.
2. All skills will be taught in a proper progression based on the ability of the team and the coach's judgment of their ability level.
3. Cheerleaders must not perform stunts or tumbling when a coach is not present.
4. In the event of an emergency, a coach will remain with the injured athlete until paramedics arrive.
5. One member of the team will be assigned to call 911, and another will be assigned to go to the front doors to guide paramedics to the location of the injured athlete and coach.
6. Once 911 has been called, the parent will be notified.
7. Treatment will be determined based on the best interest of the athlete and the recommendations of emergency professionals.

8. An accident report will be written up by the coach within 24 hours of the injury and placed on file with the school.
9. Coaches will follow up with athlete and/or parent within 24 hours of injury.
10. When an injury is serious enough to warrant a visit to the trainer, doctor, or hospital, the athlete must provide either a note from her doctor or verbal communication between the coach and the trainer before she will be allowed to actively participate in practices again. Until that time and depending on the injury, member must still attend all practices, games and events in uniform, but remain on the bench or sidelines.
11. If the injury does not warrant a 911 call, the coach will notify the parents during or after practice, depending on the situation.
12. No coach may dispense medication of any kind to a student.
13. If a student has a life threatening medical condition and requires prescription medication, an inhaler for asthma, or an epinephrine pen for allergies, the parent must notify coach of the health plan in writing. (Refer to student handbook for proper protocol).
14. Student will be responsible for being aware of any allergen or activity which may trigger a life threatening reaction and for keeping inhaler, epinephrine pen, medication, etc., readily available for an emergency. Neither coach nor the school will be held responsible for ambulance ride, hospitalization, doctor's fees, etc., if student develops a life threatening situation as a result of her own negligence or by not keeping necessary medications readily available. Parents are responsible for providing any Health Plans to the coaching staff before the season starts.
15. If injured, treat injuries promptly and fully.
16. Although injuries are unfortunate accidents, an injury may result in being removed from certain routines. Just because a cheerleader is cleared to participate the day of an event or competition, does not mean she will automatically be put back into the routine. It is important to have proper practice prior to a performance. This decision will be made by a coach on a case-by-case basis.

I. Health and Nutrition

1. Maintain a healthy diet.
2. Keep in good physical condition.
3. Get proper rest.
4. Water and sports drinks are the only beverages allowed during practice, camp, games, and competitions.
5. Members are encouraged to eat lunch at school and bring a snack to eat before or during practice during a break.
6. Members are also encouraged to increase calcium intake during cheer season as female athletes between the ages of 15-19 are twice as likely as male athletes to suffer stress fractures.

J. Injuries

1. If a cheerleader is injured for any reason and needs to sit out of practice or performance, he/she must have a doctor's note. The note must specifically say what the cheerleader is cleared or not cleared to do in the following four categories: cheers/dances, jumps, stunts, tumbling. Be SPECIFIC with the doctor about what your role is on the team. Describe what you do. Doctors in general are not educated on cheerleading.

2. You MUST be cleared for two of the four activities to cheer on the sidelines. You MUST be clear of ALL activities to compete.
3. When a cheerleader is cleared to participate again, the coach will work to put the cheerleader back into the routine based on the following: length of time sitting out for an injury, safety of the team, adequate practice time prior to next performance, and a number of other factors.
4. The coaches will not tolerate one cheerleader's situation being compared to another's. Please respect the decision of the coaches as the safety of the cheerleader and the entire team needs to be considered.
5. The coaches cannot guarantee the cheerleader will have the same spot in the routines when returning from injury.
6. Adequate practice time must take place prior to cheering at a game or performing at a game or competition. This will be left up to the coach by assessing the circumstance.
7. Should injury and sitting out happen frequently, the coach may need to re-evaluated the cheerleader's position on the team.

IV. Conduct and Discipline

A. Conduct

1. By accepting the privilege and honor being a cheerleading the student accepts the fact that her actions are more prominent than those not associated with such an activity.
2. Because of this prominence and because members represent the school, exemplary behavior is mandatory at all times, anywhere in the community of the school and at all functions where members are recognized as representatives of the school.
3. Any member of the cheer team who participates in any kind of activity whether in school or outside school that damages the reputation of cheer team in any way may result in consequences and possible removal from the team.
4. Any member who violates the student and/or athlete code of conduct will also warrant involvement of parents, administration, and possibly police.
5. Proper appearance is required at all times, with appropriate clothing for the occasion.
6. All members must show the utmost respect for the coaches, school staff, and most of all each other. Disrespectful attitudes will be addressed on an individual bases. If problems continue or worsen it may result in a benching or removal from the squad.
7. Be the best you can be in practice, at games, and competitions.
8. Show good sportsmanship.
9. No foul language should be used in practice, at camp, games, competitions, other school events, or when in any uniform or clothing representing the school and/or the cheer team.
10. Members must display proper behavior even in cyberspace. Any information revealed on an internet site like Instagram or Facebook may result in school sanctions. Any photos of cheerleaders deemed inappropriate will result in an established consequence and must be removed immediately.
11. Any public displays of affection are never considered appropriate especially in uniform, at games, or in school. Excessive physical contact is unacceptable and warrants a consequence established by the team and coaches at the beginning of the season.

12. Alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs are not allowed at any time. If engaging in these activities it may result in removal of the team.

B. Absences and Tardies

1. Cheerleaders will condition for being tardy.
2. Cheerleaders absent from a practice for any reason will be required to do additional conditioning before the next practice.
3. If a cheerleader is absent from school, they will need to fill out the absence form on SportsYou.
4. When a member is absent, it is her responsibility to call the captain to find out what was missed. This includes material that was taught on the day the member was absent.
5. The cheerleader must make every effort to learn the material before the next scheduled practice.
6. Excessive tardies and/or absences may result in being benched, placed on another team, or may be removed from the team.

C. Excused Absences

1. Personal illness or accident
If a cheerleader is injured and misses any practice or performance because of the injury, she must provide a doctor's release before she may resume cheerleading activities. Injured cheerleaders must attend practices and performances in uniform and support their squad unless they are physically unable to attend.
2. Funeral or death in the family
3. Weddings in the immediate family (parents, grandparent, siblings)
4. Special school activities which are approved in advance by the coach
5. If a cheerleader has had 4 or more excused absences, the coach will discuss this with a parent and cheerleader.

D. Unexcused Absences

1. Out of town trips and vacations during the school year
2. Work
3. Social gatherings
4. Babysitting
5. Failure to inform coach in advance (exceptions are made if the situation does not allow for this).

E. Consequences

1. A cheerleader may be benched upon not being in compliance with any part of this handbook.
2. Conditioning will be applied for not arriving ready for practice, including, but not limited to wearing jewelry, not having shoes, not having a water bottle, etc.
3. Consequences will be applied for not respecting the rules, talking during practice, or a disrespectful attitude.
4. An unexcused absence equals one bench from the next day or evening games. After two unexcused absences, the coach will discuss this with a parent and cheerleader. It may

result in being moved to a different team, being benched, or removed from the team or competition team. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

5. Three unexcused tardies equals one bench from the next day or evening of games. Excessive tardies will be discussed with the parent and cheerleader and further consequences may be enforced.
6. Disrespect or insubordination will result in additional conditioning, one bench from the next day or evening of games and/or another consequence based on the situation.
7. If a cheerleader is ineligible for grades, she will not be allowed to wear her uniform to school or to games, but will be required to attend all games and competitions wearing her warm ups and sit with the coach. An ineligible cheerleader can attend practice and participate, but will work with the coach to see if time spent doing homework and studying would be more worthwhile.
8. If a cheerleader is ineligible for grades more than three times, she will be removed from the team.
9. Excessive absences, even if they are excused, are detrimental to the team. It may result in being moved to a different team, being benched, or removed from the team or competition team. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
10. Repeated insubordination or an uncooperative attitude may result in dismissal from the team.
11. All unexcused absences may be under review on a case-by-case basis.
12. If a cheerleader continually breaks the rules set forth in this handbook it may result in dismissal from the team.
13. Every attempt will be made to make consequences fair and equal and to make consequences of actions known ahead of time. Parents will be informed of problem situations.
14. Because all situations may not be foreseen and thus outlined here, each will be dealt with in a manner decided upon by the coach with assistance from the administration if deemed necessary.
15. Any absence from a practice the day before a game will result in a cheerleader being benched for that game. This is for the safety of all cheerleaders and will not be up for discussion.

F. Challenge Resolution

1. Any and all problems that the students may have with the squad or the coach need to be addressed by the student first.
2. Always allow at least 24 hours for the coach to make a decision and readdress the problem. If talking to the coach does not change the problem a parent may then become involved in the situation. (Again, allow at least 24 hours for the coach to think about the problem and make a decision or answer a question.)
3. Proper chain-of-command is as follows:
 - Student/coach
 - Student and parent/coach
 - Student and parent/ school administrator
4. Problems between cheerleaders are encouraged to be resolved by each other or with the assistance of captains. If the situation does not change then the coaches need to be notified and will deal with personal relationships between team members according to the situation.

5. If any cheerleader feels her personal safety is threatened, she needs to notify the coach, school counselor, the school police officer, or an administrator immediately.

V. Awards and Lettering

A. Awards

1. Cheerleaders will be recognized in March each year at an awards ceremony.
2. Special awards will be given to cheerleaders who display excellence in cheerleading.

B. Lettering

Varsity cheerleaders must cheer at 85% of all games and competitions assigned AND 85% of practices during the school year.

It is possible for a JV member to letter. This will be based on contributions to the Varsity squad and coaches discretion.

VI. Uniforms

1. Cheerleaders will be provided a uniform by the school. It must be well taken care of and in good condition when it is returned. If a uniform is lost or cannot be worn, the cheerleaders will be financially responsible for replacement.
2. Cheerleaders will be responsible for purchasing socks, shoes, briefs, sports bra, and bows.
3. It is important shoes are taken care of. They must be in good condition for competitions. A cheerleader may be asked to buy another pair of shoes if they are not in good condition.

VII. Financial Information

Financial Commitment

1. Cheerleading is a financial commitment.
2. Fundraisers
 - Fundraisers will take place throughout the year to help offset the cost of cheerleading.
 - Individual fundraisers are not mandatory and will benefit that individual to help offset some costs associated with cheerleading. Anything leftover may be used to help cover general team expenses.
 - TEAM fundraisers are mandatory. All members are required to participate.

VIII. Parents or Guardians Expectations

1. Parents/guardians are expected to support the coach in following this Handbook understanding it is put in place for the best interest of the team.
2. Parents/guardians are expected to make sure their cheerleader arrives to practices, games, and other activities at the designated time.
3. Parents/guardians agree to notify the coach as far in advanced as possible or as soon as they know about absences or tardies to practice, games, events, etc.
4. Parents/guardians agree to carefully check the website calendar and notify the coach if they see a conflict with another school activity or if they see a mistake on the cheer calendar.

5. Parents/guardians need to help encourage their cheerleader conditioning at home. Conditioning is important to prevent injuries and to make sure the cheerleader is in the proper condition to attempt a progression of skills at practice.
6. If a parent/guardian has a concern, it is important they take the concern directly to the coach and not discuss with other parents or cheerleaders.
7. Parents/guardians understand decisions regarding the team and each individual cheerleader are made in the best interest of the team.
8. Parents/guardians understand if they create conflict among the team, other parents, coaches, or administration, and it cannot be worked out with the coach, it will be taken to the administration.
9. Parents/guardians will not drink alcohol, partake in tobacco (smoke or smokeless), or other drugs in the presence of school cheerleaders at scheduled team events. This includes when a parent/guardian is driving cheerleaders to an event.
10. Parents/guardians will not drink alcohol, partake in tobacco (smoke or smokeless), or other drugs when wearing any school cheerleading apparel.
11. Parents/guardians will understand the coach will have the final say in how funding and fundraisers will be spent and distributed.

Captains

A. Captains

1. Shortly after tryouts, a captain and/or co-captains will be named for the team.
2. A good captain leads by example. She respects and encourages her team members. She respects her coaches, teachers and others in authority over her. She is reliable and someone the team naturally looks to as a leader.
3. The position will not automatically be given to the most senior member of the squad.
4. Team members interested in this position must fill out an application.
5. The entire team needs to respect the captain position.
6. The captain(s) leads the team on the sidelines.
7. The captain(s) will help lead practices including warm ups and conditioning.
8. The captain(s) will be given a list from the coach of specific responsibilities.

**** The coach reserves the right to make adjustments to this handbook during the season and will notify the team in writing of any changes.

**** Please be sure to sign the agreement in the tryout packet and return prior to tryouts.