

HAMSHIRE-FANNETT H.S. CHEERLEADING/MASCOT HANDBOOK 2023-2024

Last Update: 2019

CHEERLEADING CONSTITUTION:

The Cheerleading Guidelines outlines the standards of eligibility and procedure for all Hamshire-Fannett HS Cheerleader/Mascot candidates and standards of conduct and behavior to which all Hamshire-Fannett HS Cheerleader/Mascot members are expected to adhere as representatives of their student body and of the Hamshire-Fannett ISD. Acceptance of a candidate to the Hamshire-Fannett cheerleading program or removal from shall be in accordance with this Constitution on the basis of ability, skill, presentation, or any other basis set forth, but shall not be on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability.

PREAMBLE:

The following articles have been developed with the advice and consent of the campus cheerleader coaches for the purpose of communicating the standards of eligibility and procedure which all candidates must meet to be eligible for try-outs and for the purpose of articulating the standards of conduct and behavior to which all Hamshire-Fannett Cheerleader/Mascot members are expected to adhere as a condition of participation in cheerleading activities. Failure to comply with the standards of conduct and behavior outlined in the Cheerleader Constitution may subject the member to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the squad, in addition to any consequences imposed in accordance with the Hamshire-Fannett ISD Student Code of Conduct. This document may be amended by designated administrators at any time and does not limit a coach's ability to make decisions pertaining to his or her program, consistent with the guidelines set forth herein.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The purpose of the Hamshire-Fannett High School cheerleading program shall be to promote, encourage, and lead team spirit and pride at school and in the community, to foster good fellowship and sportsmanship by example, and to engender enthusiasm and loyalty to team and school. Members shall lead by example, shall exemplify qualities of character, and shall uphold the highest moral standards in their service to the school and community as representatives of their student body and Hamshire-Fannett ISD.

CANDIDATE MEMBERSHIP AND ELIGIBILITY:

Eligibility conditions must be met for any student intending to try out for cheerleader/mascot. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be evaluated by a panel of three qualified judges from the Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA), the National Cheerleading Association (NCA), or another cheerleading entity. Participation in the Hamshire-Fannett High School cheerleading program is voluntary, NOT mandatory. Adherence to the rules and regulations is vital to the representation of the Cheer program. All members realize that the manner in which they conduct themselves, in or out of uniform, directly reflects on the entire team, school, and community. It is a privilege NOT a right and may be revoked at any time when a cheerleader violates the rules and regulations.

CANDIDATE MEMBERSHIP:

A. Membership in the Hamshire-Fannett H.S. Cheerleading program is from the date of try-outs to election of the new squad the following school year. Membership may be terminated at any time for failure to comply with the standards of conduct and procedure outlined herein.
B. The Varsity cheerleading team shall be comprised of the top junior and senior members. Varsity membership shall consist of up to 12 representatives. The Junior Varsity cheerleading team shall be comprised of the top freshmen and sophomore members. JV membership shall consist of up to 12 representatives.
C. The Mascot(s) shall be comprised of freshmen, sophomore, junior members for the JV squad and sophomore, junior, senior members for the Varsity team. Membership shall be determined by interest in the program on a yearly basis.
D. No freshmen mascot candidate can be on the Varsity team. No senior mascot candidate can be on the JV team.

ELIGIBILITY:

A. A cheerleader/mascot candidate must be a resident of Hamshire-Fannett ISD and currently enrolled in a Hamshire-Fannett ISD school. However, candidates who are enrolled in Hamshire-Fannett ISD school under an approved inter-district (i.e. out-of-district) transfer will be eligible for try-outs if they meet all other eligibility requirements. Students not currently enrolled, but enrolling in Hamshire-Fannett ISD for the following school year must receive approval from the campus principal to be eligible for tryouts.
B. A cheerleader/mascot candidate must be academically eligible as defined by UIL No Pass No Play rules.
C. A cheerleader/mascot who has resigned or has been removed from his or her squad must attend a hearing with the coach, principal, and parent before the next scheduled try-out application deadline in order to acquire try-out eligibility. The decision of the campus principal is final.
D. All former cheerleaders will submit completed paperwork and try out each year. No one can be automatically reinstated.
E. By being part of an athletic team, you are accepting the fact that your actions are more prominent than those not associated with such an activity. Because of this, exemplary behavior is mandatory at all times, at all school functions, and in the community where you are recognized as a representative of Hamshire-Fannett High School.
F. Promoting good sportsmanship by way of example is required at all times. Members should show exemplary behavior at practices, in school, at games, camp, etc. Members should cooperate with all faculty members, team members, game officials, and coaches.
G. All cheer team members must be physically able to perform all cheerleading skills.
H. Cheer team members must be neat, clean, and well-groomed while in uniform. A cheer team member is a trademark of the school and should act accordingly.

TRY-OUT QUALIFICATIONS:

A. Candidates must demonstrate exemplary attendance, behavior, and citizenship habits. Candidates must have had at least a 90% attendance rate for the current school year, and must not have been suspended (excluding in-school suspension), assigned more than 3 days of ISS, assigned to DAEP, or expelled at any time during the current school year to be eligible for try-outs.
B. If a candidate has been academically ineligible for two or more 6-week periods on the report card during the application year, try-out eligibility will be determined pending results of an academic review. Any candidate allowed to try out under these circumstances will enter the cheer program with a signed probationary contract as determined by the coach and the principal.
C. Candidates must be in good financial standing with Hamshire-Fannett ISD. Candidates who have outstanding balances, including but not limited to fines for lost or damaged textbooks, library fees, late fees, or other extracurricular fees, will not be eligible for try-outs.

D. Candidates who were previous cheerleaders/mascots must turn in all uniforms, poms, and equipment that belong to Hamshire-Fannett ISD to the cheer coach by the specified time.
E. Candidates must be medically fit to participate in cheerleading activities, as certified by a medical doctor. A current copy of a physical must be provided before the candidate can try out.
F. Candidates must complete all requirements for try-outs prior to try-outs, including but not limited to timely submission of all forms and attendance of all required meetings, practice sessions or clinics. Any candidate failing to complete all try-out requirements, who is otherwise eligible for try-outs, will not be allowed to try out. Extenuating circumstances will be determined by the principal and coach and handled appropriately.
G. The permission slip explaining estimated expenses and other Guideline requirements and the Code of Conduct must be read and signed by the parents and returned to school before the try-outs.
H. All candidates and their parent or guardian must attend the mandatory orientation meeting(s) to be eligible for try-outs. However, if unable to attend, a parent or guardian, with prior written approval from the coach, may designate another responsible adult as a proxy to attend the meeting in his or her place. Failure of the candidate, parent, guardian, or proxy to attend the mandatory orientation meeting(s) will result in the candidate being ineligible for try-outs.
I. Candidates must attend all sessions during the try-out week. Candidates are expected to attend school the entire day in order to be eligible to participate in each of the try-out days during try-out week.

TRY-OUTS:

A. Candidates will be selected by a combined score of the following: Grades and conduct (25%) and judge evaluation (75%).
B. There will be planned clinics prior to try-outs to teach the try-out material.
C. Mascots will create a skit of no longer than 1 minute 20 seconds. Music may be used for no more than 45 seconds of the skit. All music and skits must be approved by the coach. Mascots will also be evaluated on their incorporation of the fight song.
D. Each candidate will wear blue/navy, gold/yellow, black or gray for try-outs specified by the coach. Each candidate will also wear white no-show socks with tennis shoes. Candidates may not wear Varsity brand cheer shoes. Try-out clothing must be pre-approved by the coach at least one day prior to try-outs.
E. No jewelry can be worn (including jewelry not visible-in belly, tongue, or face piercings). No Gum.
F. The cheerleader/mascot candidates will be evaluated by a panel of three qualified judges from the Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA), the National Cheerleading Association (NCA), or another cheerleading entity. All candidates and/or any person acting as a representative on their behalf are prohibited from having any form of communication or personal contact with any judges prior to, during, or after the try-out process. Violation of this guideline will result in the immediate removal of the candidate from the process and/or team if candidate has been selected. Judges are to report any incident of this activity to the campus administrator.
G. All clinic sessions and try-outs will be closed. Only candidates, coaches, administrators, and trainers will be allowed in the building where the try-out is being held. Failure to comply will result in the candidate's disqualification.
H. Candidates perform before the judges individually and/or in randomly assigned small groups.

I. Activities for try-outs may include:
    1. Group chant
    2. Individual cheer
    3. Jumps
    4. Dance routine
    5. Tumbling
J. Candidates will be given a participant number prior to try-outs. During the judging and tabulation of scores, candidates are referred to by number only.
K. Candidates will be notified electronically, whether through email or posting on the school website, as soon as the results have been verified and are certified to be 100% accurate. If try-outs are held on a Friday or Saturday, candidates may be notified the same night. In the event that try-outs are held on a Thursday, candidates will be notified the following day after 4:00 PM.

L. Parents/Guardians must make an appointment with the on-site administrator in charge of try-outs to view their candidate's individual try-out evaluation sheets. Statute of limitations concerning viewing is 10 (in-school calendar) days following the try-out date.
M. Final decisions regarding captains for all teams will be made by the coach.

CHEERLEADER/MASCOT RESPONSIBILITIES

Cheerleading is a time consuming activity and it is the responsibility of each cheerleader to be present at each activity and perform to the best of his/her ability. Everyone must share equally in the behind the scenes work, as well as the cheering before the crowd. Since cheerleading is a team activity, loyalty and dedication to the team is a key ingredient in being successful. Participation in the HFHS cheerleading program is a full year commitment. The responsibilities of cheerleading and consequences for not meeting responsibilities are assumed at the time the selected cheerleaders are announced.

DUTIES:

A. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will attend summer camp.
B. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be responsible for attending all practices both in the summer and during the school year. Arrangements will be made with the coaches of those cheerleaders/mascot(s) who participate in other school related activities. Any absence not approved by the coach is unexcused and will result in disciplinary action.
C. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will create signs to promote school spirit.
D. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will plan, cheer, and lead the school pep rallies.
E. The Varsity team will cheer at all football games, select home volleyball games, home district basketball games, and all play-off games.
F. The JV team will cheer at all Freshmen and JV football games and all home district basketball games.
G. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be dressed in complete uniform and arrive at designated times set by the coach. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will participate in any volunteer or community service the coach deems worthy. All participation is mandatory when adequate time is given by the coach.
H. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be expected to know the rules and official signals in all sports and be able to lead an appropriate cheer corresponding with the call.
I. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) may be asked at various times throughout the year to act as hostess or guides at school and community functions. It is considered mandatory and part of a cheerleader's/mascot's responsibility to perform these duties. Some of these activities include all Homecoming activities and dress up days, Texas Rice Festival Parade, and the Arc of Beaumont Buddy Walk.
J. If it is necessary that a cheerleader/mascot hold a job either in the summer or during the school year, the job must not interfere with practice, cheering at games, or other community service activities. Missing a function due to work is an unexcused absence.
K. In the event that a cheerleader/mascot is taking dance, gymnastics, or private lessons in other sports outside of the district, HFHS cheerleading will take priority over out of district events. Missing practice or games due to out of district obligations is an unexcused absence.
L. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be required to participate in fundraising for the cheer program. All fundraisers must be approved by the cheer coach and HS Principal.
M. Failure to attend all required events may result in removal from the cheer program. A monthly calendar of game/activity dates and times will be provided by the coach whether in paper form or through Google Calendar.

CAPTAINS/CO-CAPTAINS:

A. A Captain and/or Co-Captains may be selected for each cheer team on campus. The captain/co-captains will be selected based on the following requirements:
    a. Requirements:
        i. **Varsity** captain/co-captains:
            1. Must have been an HFHS Varsity cheerleader during junior year and be a senior
            2. No more than 4 demerits during junior year as cheerleader
        ii. **JV** captain/co-captains:
            1. Must have been an HFHS Junior Varsity cheerleader during freshman year and be a sophomore
            2. No more than 4 demerits during freshman year as cheerleader
    b. Selection:
        i. Judges score during tryouts – 50%
        ii. Eligible candidates will prepare an essay (typed) that will be ranked by four (4) HF employees based on the following criteria: explain what makes a good captain, why she/he is qualified to be a captain, why she/he wants to be a captain, and anything else she/he would like to include. – 50%
        ****Essay will be due Monday of the week of cheer clinic.
B. In the event of tied scores or close scores, more than one captain may be selected.
C. Being named captain or co-captain of a team is a special privilege as well as a responsibility. These individuals will be expected to set an example for the rest of the team. The captains are expected to support in words and in actions all guidelines set forth by the cheerleading handbook, HFHS code of conduct, and coach.
D. A captain may be removed from his or her leadership role if he or she is unable to uphold the guidelines and regulations set forth in this handbook. If this happens, the coach may appoint a new captain.

DUTIES:

A. Set a good example for the team to follow.
B. Plan pep rallies with the help of the team.
C. Be responsible for cheer and chant lists at games.
D. Show no partiality towards members of the team.
E. Make final decisions on debate topics with the advice of the coach.
F. Take charge of all practices, teaching yells, pom routines, and stunts.
G. Inform team members of any changes in schedule or uniforms.
H. Inform coach of infractions.
I. Assist coach as needed.

SUMMER CAMP:

A. Summer camp is required for all high school cheerleaders/mascot(s) (unless extenuating circumstances approved by the principal and coach).
B. Any team attending a cheerleading/mascot camp is representing its school and must act accordingly.
C. Everyone must attend classes and competitions as a team.
D. Each cheerleader/mascot will be required to pay the camp deposit (usually $100). This leaves the remainder to be raised by the group. The deposit is due on the date specified by the coach.
E. Summer camp will be in June or July. Camp dates and location will be designated by the coach.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITES:

A. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be responsible for paying their camp deposit (usually $100) on the date specified by the coach.
B. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be responsible for purchasing camp clothing, shoes, warm-ups, backpack, and other necessary clothing and accessories as required.
C. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will have his/her uniform/costume cleaned and returned to the sponsor immediately upon retirement of his/her position.

D. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be responsible for the replacement of any school owned uniforms/accessories should a mishap occur.
E. An estimated list of expenses will be given prior to try-outs.
F. Failure to make timely payments or meet the deadlines set forth by the coach, even for fundraising, could lead to dismissal.

CHEERLEADER/MASCOT EXPECTATIONS

Certain standards are necessary for the integrity and reputation of any organization. Each athlete should be a leader within the school and should set a good example before the public at all times. Athletes in the cheer program are expected to have and maintain a character above reproach. Personal appearance, habits and actions of which there can be no criticism, are required. Each athlete must be aware that his/her conduct reflects on the image of the cheer program, the high school, and ultimately HFISD.

Both coaches will be working with all teams. Decisions will come from both coaches. Coaches will also evaluate performer readiness and determine appropriateness of signs, stunts, routines, and cheers.

BEHAVIOR:

A. All cheerleaders/mascot(s) will abide by the Hamshire-Fannett High School Student Code of Conduct, in addition to the High School Athletics Code of Conduct, AACCA safety regulations, NFHS, UIL, and the HFISD Cheerleader/Mascot handbook. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) must also follow the written and oral directives of all HFISD employees.
B. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) shall be on time, dressed and prepared for all cheerleading activities.
C. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) shall be neatly presented in appearance, with hair neatly groomed and pulled back from face. No gum.
D. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) shall attend and perform all required duties at all practices, games, events, or functions, including any required camp or activities. Members who miss a required practice or fail to perform a required duty will be subject to disciplinary actions as stated in the Discipline section of the HFISD Cheerleading/Mascot handbook. (unless the absence is approved by the coach)
E. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) shall participate in conditioning and stretching exercises necessary for the safe involvement in cheerleading activities.
F. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) shall maintain their eligibility status under UIL No Pass No Play Rules. Members must maintain a grade of 70 or above in all classes, other than identified honors or advanced class, to be eligible to participate.
G. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) shall comply with all TEA-UIL Side by Side Guidelines for Cheerleading and Drill Teams.
H. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) shall respect authority in all situations. Disrespectful, rude, or inappropriate behavior in the classroom, at practice, on the field or court will not be tolerated. If at any time the coach feels that a cheerleader/mascot is no longer representing herself/himself, her/his squad, or his/her school in a manner that is acceptable, disciplinary action may be taken.

PARENTS:

A. Stay informed of the rules, regulations, and procedures that are applicable to HFHS Cheer.
B. Provide transportation, as needed, to ensure that the student arrives on time for practices, games, activities, etc.
C. When student participation in certain activities is considered “optional” by the coach and/or principal, parents will often be responsible for providing/arranging transportation to and from the event. District representatives or activity sponsors are not permitted to provide transportation for students in their personal vehicles or arrange/coordinate transportation for students to attend “optional activities”.

D. Pick up students on time after practice and events.
E. Attend parent orientation meetings, as appropriate.
F. Cooperate with school administrators and coach in establishing and maintaining a quality organization.
G. Submit any concerns, ideas for improvement, and/or guidelines/procedural changes directly to the coach.
H. Execute proposed changes or challenges to organizational rules/procedures in an orderly and responsible manner through appropriate channels.
I. Encourage student adherence to established rules, regulations, procedures, etc.
J. Insure fulfillment of all financial responsibilities required of the student as a member of the team. Any financial concerns should be addressed with the coach and/or campus principal.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

PRACTICES:

Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) must be in attendance at all practices for all games, activities, and events. The practice schedules and time will be established by the coach. A monthly calendar of practice dates and times will be provided by the coach through paper form or Google Calendar.

A. Summer practice – There is pre-camp practice, cheerleading camp, and post-camp practice. Generally, these activities can cover from three to five weeks of summer. No summer activities should be scheduled until after summer camp and practice dates are set. Failure to participate in scheduled summer practice sessions may result in removal from the team.
B. Work, doctor appointments, out of district activities or sports are NOT EXCUSES for missing practices. Cheerleaders are expected to schedule any appointments and activities on days when no cheerleading practice is scheduled. Cheerleaders are expected to refer to their monthly calendars to schedule after school appointments/activities.
C. Proper attire is expected at all practices. No jewelry is allowed and hair is to be pulled back and out of face. No gum.
D. Arriving on time to practice is very important. Being tardy may be counted as an unexcused absence.

ATHLETIC EVENTS:

A. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) must be in attendance at all athletic events AND activities. A monthly calendar of game/activity dates and time will be provided by the coach whether in paper form or through Google calendar.
B. The Varsity squad will cheer at all football games, select home volleyball games, home district basketball games, and all play-off games.
C. The JV squad will cheer at all Freshmen and JV football games and all home district basketball games.
D. Excessive failure to attend games and activities my result in suspension and/or removal from the squad.
E. Work, doctor appointments, out of district activities or sports are NOT EXCUSES for missing games/activities. Cheerleaders are expected to schedule any appointments and activities on days when no games/activities are scheduled. Cheerleaders are expected to refer to their monthly calendars to schedule non-school related appointments/activities.
F. If you are in school and must check out on a game day, you are to notify the coach BEFORE leaving school.

TARDIES TO PRACTICES/GAMES/ACTIVITIES:

A. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) are required to arrive at all practices on time.
B. Tardies to practices will result in disciplinary action as follows:
    1. 1st tardy – selected amount of jumps decided by coach.
    2. 2nd tardy – benched for 1 quarter of the next game.
    3. 3rd tardy – benched for 2 quarters of the next game.
    4. 4 or more – you will be benched for a full game and it will count as an unexcused absence. Two unexcused absences may result in removal from the team.

C. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) are required to arrive at all games/activities 30 minutes prior to the start of the game OR at the time specified by the coach.
D. Tardies to games/activities will result in disciplinary action as follows:
    1. 5 minutes late – benched for first quarter of that game.
    2. 10 minutes late – benched for first half of the game.
    3. 15 minutes or later – cheerleader/mascot will be sent home and given an unexcused absence. Two unexcused absences may result in removal from the team. If sent home, cheerleader/mascot may not stay at the game/activity. He/She must leave the event.

ABSENCES FROM PRACTICES/GAMES/ACTIVITIES:

A. Excused absence is defined as an illness, a family emergency, or an academic related function. The cheerleader/mascot is responsible for notifying the coach prior to practice with a phone call, text, email, or signed and dated note from parents.
B. Un-Excused is defined as absences without prior notification and any other commitments that are NOT school related (work vacations, hair/nail appt, babysitting, doctor appt, relationship breakups, alarm clock malfunctions, and so on).
C. Because of the safety guidelines that cheerleaders are expected to follow, having an absence from a practice before a performance may result in the cheerleader/mascot not performing that week.
D. A physician's release is required when a cheerleader/mascot is ready for full performance following an injury.
E. Any cheerleader/mascot that participates in other school related activities may not miss a cheer scheduled game/activity due to practice for the other sport.
F. Members may not leave any function for any reason other than illness, injury, or death in the family.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

A. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) are expected to comply with the eligibility requirements for attendance in accordance with the school handbook.
B. Any cheerleader/mascot absent from school on the day of practice or a game will not be allowed to participate in that practice or cheer at that game or activity.
C. A cheerleader must be in attendance a half school day to be considered present and eligible to practice or cheer. (A half school day means four full class periods.)

INJURIES:

Members of the team who suffer injuries or illness must consult a doctor or the trainer. If an injury or illness hinders or limits a member's performance and/or practice capabilities, that member will be required to provide doctor's notes outlining the specific limitations. Injured athletes are still expected to attend all events and practices in accordance with their doctor's notes. A member with a concussion must follow the concussion policy as set forth by UIL until the athlete is cleared to participate.

TRANSPORTATION

The JV and Varsity team will be expected to ride to football and play-off games (varsity only) in school provided transportation. Special circumstances must be cleared through the coach prior to the game, and the parent must provide written documentation stating the reason the student is not riding with the team. A parent or adult relative must sign the student out at the game. If a cheerleader rides home with someone other than a parent, she/he must have a note signed by the principal. The note must be turned into the sponsor before the game. Cheerleaders will assist in putting away all supplies after each game and be dismissed as a group.

UNIFORMS

Cheerleader/Mascot uniforms are objects of pride and deserve the best of care. They should be worn with respect and dignity. Every cheerleader/mascot must keep his or her uniforms in perfect condition.

A. The proper and complete uniform will be worn at all assigned games and activities as instructed by the coach. This includes: white socks, cheer shoes, blue spandex, assigned hair bow, and assigned uniform.
B. Failure to bring any part of a uniform to a scheduled event (including hair accessories) may result in nonparticipation for part or the entire event.
C. A district uniform will be provided by the school. At the end of the season these are to be returned to the school cleaned and undamaged. Damaged and lost items will be required to be replaced at cost by the member.
D. Practice wear and other items will be provided by the member. All items must be paid in full at the time they are ordered unless other arrangements are made with the coach. An estimated list of expenses will be given prior to try-outs.
E. No one other than cheerleaders will be allowed to wear any part of a current cheerleader uniform. This includes warm-ups, practice wear, etc.
F. No one other than mascots will be allowed to wear any part of the mascot costume.
G. Uniforms will only be worn at coach scheduled events.
H. The coach will select and determine the required uniform to be worn by each member at each event.
I. NO jewelry shall be worn at any time while a cheerleader/mascot is in uniform or attending practice.
J. Nails must be kept short. Polish must be pale or natural during games and events.
K. Sports bras must be worn during practice and performance events. Bra straps may not be visible at any time. Not having the proper uniform items may result in being benched for that game/activity resulting in an unexcused absence.
L. Hair must be pulled back and out of the face during practices, games, pep rallies, etc.
M. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will smile, maintain good posture, be well poised, have excellent behavior, and good manners while wearing the uniform.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising for the cheerleading program will occur under the supervision of the campus sponsor. All monies raised for the cheer teams belong to the school. If this money is used to purchase uniforms, supplies, and materials for cheerleaders/mascot(s), those items are the property of Hamshire-Fannett ISD.

A. Each cheerleader/mascot is required to get sponsorships for the program in an amount specified by the coach.
B. Should a cheerleader/mascot not meet the required amount in sponsorships, the cheerleader/mascot will be responsible for paying the difference.

LETTERING

A. A Varsity cheerleader/mascot must have completed the football and basketball seasons to be eligible for a letter jacket. JV squad cannot letter.
B. Any cheerleader/mascot who has been dropped from the team or quits prior to the end of the basketball season will not be eligible for a letter jacket.

DISCIPLINE

Due to the high level of visibility of campus cheerleader/mascot members, members are expected to demonstrate leadership, honor, and integrity both in and out of uniform. Because acceptance into the Hamshire-Fannett HS Cheerleader program is a privilege, not a right, members will be held to higher standards than those imposed on the general student body. Members may incur disciplinary consequences from both the appropriate administrator and his or her coach for conduct that constitutes a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Members must comply with all standards of conduct outlined below, in addition to the standards of conduct and behavior outlined in the Hamshire-Fannett ISD Student Code of Conduct. Members will be subject to the standards of conduct outlined herein at all times regardless of when or where the conduct occurs, whether on or off school property and whether or not school is in session. Failure to comply with the standards of conduct may result in disciplinary action against the member, up to and including removal from the team.

ACADEMIC INELIGIBILITY AND DISMISSAL:

A. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) are expected to maintain a passing grade of 70 or above in all subjects as set forth by the UIL No Pass No Play.
B. Any cheerleader/mascot who receives a grade on the report card lower than a 70 in any subject will become ineligible to participate in any team event as set forth by UIL for three weeks. The cheerleader/mascot will gain eligibility should they have a 70 or higher on the following progress report.
C. Ineligible cheerleaders/mascot(s) must continue to fulfill practice requirements. If the cheerleader/mascot attends a designated activity, he/she is not allowed to wear any part of the chosen team uniform to school or activities during the period of ineligibility.
D. Cheerleaders/Mascot(s) will be removed from the team upon failing a second consecutive grade suspension.

DEMERIT SYSTEM:

The demerit system is a series of consequences for inappropriate behavior and infractions of the HFHS Cheerleading/Mascot Handbook. Demerits are assigned by the coach based on the disciplinary action taken for the behavior. Demerits may be worked off by accumulating merits: For every demerit given, it will take 2 merits to work it off. Records of demerits will be kept on file with the coach. 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 verbally by the cheerleader/mascot does not mean that the demerit does not exist. The demerit system may be changed or amended by coaches and/or administration as needed. Demerits are not limited to the following examples, but rather give an overview of expected behavior and consequences. The coach may bench a cheerleader at any time they deem necessary for safety and/or disciplinary reasons.

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

Absences/Tardies: See also Attendance/Absences Section.

- Failure to notify sponsors of absence **1 demerit**

Participation at practices, games, events, etc:

- Failure to follow instructions **1 demerit**
- Failure to complete an assigned duty **1 demerit**
- Chewing gum **1 demerit**
- Talking excessively **1 demerit**

- Eating without permission **1 demerit**
- Failure to cheer/jump **1 demerit**
- Insufficient knowledge of cheers and chants **1 demerit**
- Goofing around **1 demerit**
- Not paying attention to the game **1 demerit**
- Use of cell phones or other electronic devices without coach approval **2 demerits**
- **Failure to provide parent letter for travel** **2 demerits**
- **Not signing out to leave after games/activities** **2 demerits**

Dress: See also Uniforms

- Wearing jewelry at practice, function, game, or in uniform **1 demerit**
- Hair not pulled back **1 demerit**
- Uniform maintenance (cleanliness of uniform, shoes, etc) **2 demerits**
- **Improper uniform/practice clothing (including nail polish/length)** **1 demerit**

Conduct:

- Lack of respect for coaches **2 demerits**
  (i.e. talking while sponsor is talking, acting rudely)
- Lack of respect for team members **2 demerits**
  (i.e. arguing, fighting, bullying both in and out of school)
- In School Suspension **5 demerits**
- Inappropriate Conduct
  (including language, cursing, or gestures, public displays of affection; poor sportsmanship; bullying) **3+ demerits**
- N or U in conduct 2+ **demerits**
- Suspension or expulsion is grounds for dismissal from the cheerleading team. **10+ demerits**
- Encounter with the law or involvement in unlawful activities that are considered behavior not appropriate for a cheerleader or representative of our school **10+ demerits**

**Any documented fighting, verbal or physical, will result in automatic benching at the coach's discretion or possibly removal from the team.

Consequences for Demerits:

- 3 demerits will result in sitting out of one quarter of the next game, or sitting out of a pep rally, at the discretion of the coach.
- 6 demerits will result in sitting out of two quarters of the next game, or sitting out of a pep rally, at the discretion of the coach.
- 10 demerits will result in sitting out of the next activity, game, pep rally which result in an unexcused absence. Two unexcused absences may result in removal from the team.
- 12 demerits will result in a meeting with the cheerleader/mascot, parent(s), coach and the principal. The coaches 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/mascot is not prepared for the performance, she WILL NOT cheer. This includes knowing dances, cheers, and having the proper uniform.
- The coach will notify the cheerleader on a weekly basis in writing and/or verbally when a cheerleader/mascot has reached 2, 5, 9, and 11 demerits.

- The cheerleader/mascot will be notified in writing when 12 demerits have been issued to set up a meeting with the sponsor, parent, and principal.
- Note: A member of the team may be removed, at any time, from an activity by the coach or administration.

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 and approved by the sponsors.

Classifications of merits are as follows:

- All grades on report card 80-100 **2 merits**
- Helping a teacher before or after school **1 merit/hour**
  (must be verified with a note from the teacher)
- Volunteer with a business/organization **1 merit/hour**
  (must be verified with a letter, signature, email & phone # from business owner)

Standards for Member Removal:

Members must comply with all standards of conduct as outlined in the Cheerleader/Mascot Handbook, in addition to the standards of conduct behavior outlined in the Hamshire-Fannett ISD Student Code of Conduct. Members will be subject to the standards of conduct outlined herein at all times regardless of when or where the conduct occurs, whether on or off school property and whether or not school is in session. Dismissal of membership, whether by a member's own accord or due to some action of a member, shall be for the rest of the school year. If a cheerleader/mascot quits the team it will be considered a dismissal. A student whose membership is terminated gives up all honors and privileges associated with the cheerleading team and may forfeit the right to try-out the next year unless otherwise approved by the coach and principal. Dismissal means that the member is no longer considered a cheerleader/mascot. The cheerleader/mascot is not to wear cheer related apparel or participate in any activity associated with the cheerleading team. This will take effect the day membership is terminated.

If a cheerleader/mascot is dismissed from the team or forfeits his/her position, the district-owned uniform and accessories must be returned, laundered, and on hangers with laundered tags, within 10 school days. Any damage, missing items, or cleaning of the uniform, if not taken care of ahead of time, must be paid before any fines are cleared.

Reasons for immediate dismissal:

A. Failing to maintain requirements for membership.
B. Failing to maintain a passing grade of 70 or above causing a second consecutive grade suspension.
C. Engaging in inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to inappropriate sexual contact, fighting, public intoxication, possession or consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs, sharing of prescription drugs, or other criminal activity excluding minor traffic offenses.
D. Engaging in behavior that warrants suspension from school, removal to DAEP, or expulsion from school.
E. Not attending Cheer Camp. (unless approved by principal and sponsor)
F. Any behavior which the coach and principal deem inappropriate, including but not limited to unsportsmanlike conduct or insubordination.
G. Participating in any activity which meets the definition of hazing or failing to report such activity.
H. Inappropriate use of social media including but not limited to: computers, phones, iPad, iPod, Twitter, Facebook, SnapChat, Instagram, or any other form of electronic communication.