

SJA CHEER INFO PACKET



2026-2027

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Important DATES

Tryouts

Date	Event
March 27	Online Tryout Forms Due
March 13 4-6 p.m.	Open Gym*
March 19 4-6 p.m., 6:30 p.m.	Open Gym*, Parent/Athlete Informational Meeting
March 24 4-6 p.m.	Open Gym*
March 30 3:30-6 p.m.	Tryout Clinic
March 31 3:30-6 p.m.	Tryout Clinic
April 1 3:30-7:30 p.m.	Stunt, Material & Tumbling Evaluations

*Open Gym dates are \$5 cash entry.

An up-to-date physical is required **prior** to attending open gyms and tryout clinics.

Important DATES

Team, Competitions & Showcases

Date	Event
April 15 @ 3:30 p.m.	Uniform Fitting with Varsity
June 19-21	UCA Camp @ SJA
July 18-19	Impact Skills Camp @ SJA
July 31-August 4 (TBD)	Choreography
Mid-November (TBD)	Regional Competition
Early December (TBD)	Regional Competition
Early January (TBD)	College Showcase Performances
Mid-January (TBD)	Live Oak Pre-Nationals
Late January (TBD)	SJA Nationals Showcase
January 27-February 1	High School Nationals (Disney World)

TRYOUT INFORMATION

Requirements

- Cheerleaders are chosen based on spirit, motions, tumbling, jump execution, ability to cheer and dance and stunting ability and potential.
- Any tumbling that is performed during the tryout process must be maintained throughout the year.

Parent Meeting

A parent meeting will take place after the Open Gym on March 19 at 6:30 p.m. to answer questions regarding tryouts and/or team responsibilities.

Should you have any questions regarding tryouts or anything included in this packet, please email Lauren Sommer, the SJA Cheer Moderator, at (sommerl@sjabr.org).

Tryout Fee

There is a \$20 tryout fee to pay for the independent panel of judges. All students (current and incoming) will pay on [SchoolCash Online](#).

Tryout Material

Tryout material will be taught during the Open Gym on March 19 and again during the tryout clinic on March 30. Each girl is required to learn the material and perform it during tryouts in front of the judges on April 1.

- Cheer
- Two sidelines
- Jumps (toe touch and right hurdler)

Tryouts will also include stunting and tumbling. For the stunt portion, each athlete will be responsible for making a stunt group amongst other athletes trying out. This will happen during clinic days. If she cannot find a group, one will be chosen for her. For the tumbling portion, each athlete will be asked to show standing tumbling and a running pass. If she is unable to tumble, she will receive a zero for that section of the score sheet.

Dress Code

Each girl will be required to wear a solid white or black fitted t-shirt or tank top with black shorts, white socks and cheer shoes. If you do not own cheerleading shoes, tennis shoes are fine. Please dress appropriately (no bare midriffs, etc.). Be presentable with neatly brushed hair, natural makeup, ponytail with ribbon and a smile! Please do not wear any jewelry (earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings, etc.) as this is a safety hazard.

You may not wear any item of clothing that indicates prior membership on a cheerleading squad (except shoes). For example, shirts that say "St. Agnes Cheerleader" or anything with a competitive logo will not be allowed.

Cheerleader RESPONSIBILITIES

Grades

- Cheerleaders must maintain a 2.0 or higher grade point average.

Attendance

- **PRACTICES:** Attendance at all practices is required. If you must miss a practice, the moderator and coach must receive either an email or text from both the cheerleader and a parent as soon as you know you will miss practice.
- **SJA EVENTS:** Cheerleaders will cheer at all designated SJA volleyball and basketball games or other events deemed necessary by the moderator and/or administration (i.e, pep rallies, incoming freshman events, community service events, etc). There are no "free passes" for games.
- **WORKOUTS:** Cheerleaders will be required to attend team workouts twice a week. If you must miss a workout, the moderator or coaches must receive an email or text from both the cheerleader and a parent as soon as you know you will miss.
- **CAMP:** Cheerleaders are required to attend UCA camp in June and skills camp in July.
- **COMPETITIONS:** Cheerleaders will compete in the regional cheer competitions, showcases and the national competition.
- **SHOWOFFS:** Cheerleaders will show off their Nationals routine at Live Oak Pre-Nationals Showcase in mid-January, and we will also host a showoff at SJA. Other performances, such as college showcases, may be added to the calendar.
- **TRANSPORTATION NOTE:** You must provide your own transportation to and from practices and events. Please be aware of drop-off and pick-up times. SJA policy recommends that parents drive cheerleaders to events outside of 25 miles from the school.

Uniforms

- **COMPETITION UNIFORM:** Cheerleaders will receive one uniform that has been purchased by the school. If lost or damaged, they are responsible for replacing/repairing. It should be clean for every game.
- **GAMEDAY UNIFORM:** Cheerleaders will purchase a uniform that is to be worn for games (unless otherwise specified). It should be clean for every game.
- **PRACTICE UNIFORMS:** Cheerleaders will be notified by their captains each week regarding the practice uniforms needed for that week. If they are out of uniform, the whole team will condition.
- **JEWELRY:** No jewelry is to be worn while in uniform. This is during practices, games and competition. Do not get a new piercing during cheer season, as it will need to be removed.

Alternates/ Competition Divisions

NATIONALS ALTERNATES

It is often the case in all athletic events that team members are pulled out of the game/competition due to injuries, sickness or circumstances which result in the inability to properly execute skills necessary in competition. Like any other sport, it is important to have a team member on the bench ready to go in. This team member must have skills necessary to jump into the game/competition. The Nationals routine will be the most challenging; therefore we will have alternates for this routine who will be ready to step in as needed for competition.

COMPETITION DIVISIONS

The Competition Division we choose to compete in may or may not be the same as previous years. The division will be determined based on team size and skill level at competition time.

Cheerleading **RULES & REGULATIONS**

Safety

Safety is of the utmost importance. To provide the safest environment, we must all be working as a team and looking out for each other. While stunting, you should be focused and serious. It is important to be aware of your surroundings when stunting and tumbling. You must follow the coaches' instructions at all times. Failure to follow the established safety guidelines will result in possible loss of cheering time, suspensions or dismissal from the team (at the coach's discretion).

Rules

All athletes are expected to comply with the rules set forth by St. Joseph's Academy. The rules associated with the student code of conduct can be found in the [student handbook](#), and rules set forth by the LHSAA are located at www.lhsaa.org.

Absences

If a cheerleader has more than three unexcused absences or tardies for practices, games or events, she will be expelled from the team after the third infraction.

- Excused Absences: class trips, makeup tests, sickness.
- Unexcused Absences: hair, makeup or tanning appointments, obligations with friends, too much homework (plan ahead!), last-minute trips, concerts, etc.

Injuries/Illnesses

If the athlete is injured or sick and not contagious, she is required to attend practice but not participate.

Practices

Practices the week before a competition or pep rally are mandatory. Only extremely extenuating circumstances will be excused. In the event of unexcused absences, the cheerleader will not participate.

Cheerleading **RULES & REGULATIONS**

Conduct

Respect yourself, parents, teachers, administrators, coaches, teammates and classmates at all times! Failure to show respect for your coaches, moderator or teammates will result in disciplinary consequences. You must remember you are part of a team.

Be on time! If you are late for practice or an event without an excuse, you will have conditioning.

Communication

EMAILS: Email will be the primary form of communication to parents for updates and information throughout the year from Mrs. Sommer (sommerl@sjabr.org).

GROUP TEXT: There will be a team group text with the coach and moderators for quick reminders.

BAND APP: We will use the BAND app for parents and cheerleaders to communicate and for the cheer calendar.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY: We expect the cheerleaders to communicate directly with the coaches and moderator. If a serious issue should arise, parents can contact Mrs. Sommer. However, we want to put the responsibility of communication regarding most things on the cheerleaders.

You must communicate with your coaches/moderator. If you must miss practice, you must notify the moderator at least 24 hours in advance. If you are asked to pick something up, drop something off or see her for any reason, you are expected to do so.

Priorities

While participation in all-star competitive teams is allowed in addition to SJA cheer, athletes understand that SJA cheer comes first. Athletes promise to provide any additional cheer calendars to prevent conflicts but understand that if conflicts arise, SJA cheer is their priority.

Profanity

Profanity at school, during practices, games, events or within the community does not represent SJA Cheerleading. Remember you are an ambassador for our school; please conduct yourself in a manner that represents our school in a positive light.

Cheerleading **RULES & REGULATIONS**

Statement of Understanding and Agreement

(signed as part of the online packet)

- I understand that competing at high-level competitions is an earned privilege, not a right.
- I understand that holding the position of a cheerleader demands priority, commitment and dedication.
- I understand that competing may require additionally called mandatory practices.
- No cheerleader is irreplaceable. The coaches, moderator and administration will do what is best for the team as a whole at all times.
- Both the prospective cheerleader and a parent/guardian have read all statements, fully understand the rules and regulations and agree to abide by them.
- I understand that if any of the rules/regulations are broken, or if cheerleader responsibilities are not being met, extra conditioning will be assigned.
- I understand that serious infractions may result in additional disciplinary consequences, such as probation or dismissal from the team. The moderator/coach will determine the length of any disciplinary probation.

Annual Events

Date	Event
March/April 2026	• Open Gyms • Tryouts
April/May 2026	• Uniform Fitting • Practices Leading to Camp
June 2026	• Practices Leading to Camp • UCA Camp (June 19-21) • College Combine Fundraiser **
July 2026	• Practice resumes July 15 • Impact Skills Camp (July 18-19) • Practices Leading to Choreography
August 2026	• Choreography (ETA July 31-August 4) • School Practice Schedule Begins
September 2026	• Volleyball Games • St. Jude Fun Run • Sticker Skills Clinic Fundraiser **
October 2026	• Volleyball Games • Volleyball PINK OUT Game • Fall Pep Rally • Open House (Thursday, October 15)
November 2026	• Baton Rouge Regional Competition (TBD) • Volleyball State Playoffs • Sticker Skills Clinic Fundraiser **
December 2026	• Magnolia Regional Competition (TBD) • Basketball Season Begins
January/February 2027	• Basketball Season Continues • College Showcase • Live Oak Pre-Nationals Showcase • SJA Nationals Showcase • High School Nationals, Disney World (Jan. 27 - Feb. 1)
March 2027	• Spring Challenge Day Pep Rally

Last-minute, unplanned trips are not excused and will result in disciplinary action.

Reminder: November/December is peak competition season! Any vacations during Thanksgiving or Christmas break must be finalized by June 1 (and coaches/moderator notified) so that we can plan around conflicts and have full-team practices. Anything planned after this date will be unexcused.

** Possible fundraising events. Mandatory for all cheerleaders.

Financial RESPONSIBILITIES

All prices are approximate and subject to change. Other fees may arise during the year (sweatshirts, t-shirts, Disney trip, posters, competition fees, etc.). Girls who were on the squad previously do not have to purchase items they received last year.

Date	Event
April/May 2026	- UCA Camp: approximately \$350 - Uniform and Camp Wear: approximately \$1000-\$1200
June 2026	Skills Camp: approximately \$150
July 2026	Choreography: approximately \$200
August 2026	- SJA Cheer Sweatshirt: \$40 - SJA Athletic Fee: \$50 - Coaches' Fees: TBD
October 2026	Regional Competitions Fee - \$90
November 2026	1st Nationals Balance Due - Nationals Total: \$1,800 (includes flight, hotel cost and comp fee)
December 2026	2nd Nationals Balance Due - Choreography Clean-up #1: approximately \$75
January 2027	3rd Nationals Balance Due - Choreography Clean-up #2: approximately \$75 - Nationals T-Shirt: \$25 - Nationals Gifts for Team: \$100
February 2027	- Nationals - End-of-Year Banquet: TBD

Coach payment for the 2026-2027 season will be per month for a total of ten months. Cost to be determined. It will be paid with your SJA fees at the beginning of the year. Official payment date to be determined.

Time Commitment

Tentative schedule for summer and school-year practices:

April & May

Anticipate mandatory practices after school at SJA. The purpose of these practices will be to start looking at stunt groups, prepare for camp and get to know one another.

Summer

Anticipate mandatory practices through the month of June to prepare for UCA Camp (June 19-21). All athletes will also be required to attend a certain number of summer workouts at SJA (more information will be provided at the Parent Meeting). Anticipate July practices leading up to the Impact Skills camp (July 18-19) and to prepare for Choreography in August.

School Year

We have a full set of hard mats, so we will be having practice at SJA after school 3-5 days a week. Additional practices will be added as necessary, especially during competition months. Days and times are yet to be determined. In the event that we are unable to practice at SJA due to gym availability, practices will be held at Bengals.

Parent STATEMENTS

- My daughter has my permission to try out for a position on the St. Joseph's Academy cheerleading squad.
- I fully understand the nonrefundable financial obligation and responsibilities of being a cheerleader.
- I understand that displays of poor sportsmanship and disrespect towards sponsors, coaches, team members, other parents and other teams will not be tolerated.
- I agree to provide my own transportation for my daughter to all events for cheerleading.
- I understand that this form must be completed in its entirety by Friday, March 27, or my child will not be allowed to try out.
- I understand that there is uncertainty regarding future dates but agree that my daughter will attend all mandatory events to the best of her ability.
- I understand by the very nature of the activity that cheerleading and gymnastics carry a risk of physical injury.
- No matter how careful the participant and coach are, how many spotters are used or what landing surface is used, the risk cannot be eliminated. I understand these risks, and I hereby expressly waive and release any and all claims against St. Joseph's Academy and its officers, directors, employees, agents, affiliates, members, successors and assigns (collectively, "Releasees") on account of illness or injury arising out of or attributable to my child's participation in the cheerleading tryout or as a member of the St. Joseph's Academy cheerleading team, whether arising out of the negligence of St. Joseph's Academy or any Releasees or otherwise. I covenant not to make or bring any such claim against St. Joseph's Academy or any other Releasees, and forever release and discharge St. Joseph's Academy and all other Releasees from liability under such claims. I hereby agree to absolve, exonerate, defend, indemnify and hold harmless Releasees from liability for any harm or injury or any property damage associated with or resulting from my child's participation in the cheerleading tryout or as a member of the St. Joseph's Academy cheerleading team.

Cheerleader STATEMENTS

- I am interested in being a cheerleader at St. Joseph's Academy. If selected, I have read and agree to abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the moderators and administration of St. Joseph's Academy.
- I have read and understand all of the requirements and costs involved in becoming an SJA cheerleader.
- I have looked over the tentative calendar and am aware of practice dates and competition dates.
- I also agree to attend all home volleyball and basketball games that I am assigned to, along with any other team events, and will provide my own transportation to all events for cheerleading.
- I understand that switching of assigned volleyball and basketball games is not allowed. If there is an important reason I cannot cheer at my assigned game, it will be discussed with my coaches and will result in an assigned game in addition to a makeup game. If there are no more games, I understand I may not be allowed to participate in the pep rally.
- I promise to cooperate and follow the instructions of the cheerleading coaches and moderator.
- I promise to show respect to fellow teammates, the coach, the moderators and administration at all times.