

Christopher High School Cheer and Dance Team Handbook 2026-2027

(COACHES HAVE THE RIGHT TO ADD, CHANGE OR DELETE ANY RULES IN HANDBOOK)

Being a member of the Christopher High School Cheer and Dance Team (CDT) is a unique opportunity for personal growth, leadership, and participation in a variety of activities. The attitude, dedication, self-discipline, and respect for school and others by all members are just as important as the skills involved in spirit leading and are key to the success of the program. All CDT members and coaches must be dedicated to promoting spirit, enthusiasm, and a positive winning attitude through example. CDT members must also understand that their conduct, both in and out of uniform, directly reflects on the entire team and school.

Participation on the Christopher High School Cheer and Dance Team is voluntary, and membership is a privilege. Membership may be revoked by the coaches or school administration if a team member violates the team or school rules. Consistent enforcement of the rules and regulations in this Handbook is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of each individual member.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Christopher High School Cheer and Dance Team (CDT) will consist of three (3) teams and a Mascot for the 2025-2026 school year. The number of members on each team may vary based on tryout scores.

- **JV Cheer:** 9th – 11th graders
- **Varsity Cheer:** 11th – 12th graders
- **Varsity Dance:** 9th – 12th graders
- **Mascot:** 9th – 12th graders

PURPOSE

- Promote and uphold school spirit, team unity, and school pride.
- Represent the school with enthusiasm and the highest level of integrity.
- Set an example of good behavior and sportsmanship while in & out of uniform.
- Foster camaraderie within the team and positive relationships across campus and with other schools.

PARTICIPATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- ALL CDT members are required to cheer for **both** Football & Basketball seasons
- Attend Spring and Summer practices including one Saturday Bootcamp (May, July, and Mid-August).
- Attend a 4-day/3-night Summer Cheer and Dance Camp.
- Participate in all assigned games, including Playoff/CCS games, including:
 - Football (August-December)
 - Basketball (December-March)
 - Other sports as assigned (e.g., wrestling, soccer, field hockey, volleyball).
 - Attend all rallies
 - Participate in additional school events such as the First Day of School Walk-Thru, Teacher Welcome, Cougarpalooza, and Cougarfest.
 - Engage in community events such as the Gilroy Rodeo, Veterans Day Parade, Christmas Parade, Little League Opening Ceremony, and National Night Out.
 - Attend Fall and Winter practices, plus 2-4 Saturday practices.
 - All Cheer members are required to stunt.
 - All CDT members must participate in fundraising activities.
 - Download and regularly check the BAND app for team communication.

ELIGIBILITY

- All team members must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA with NO “F” grades to be eligible.
 - Year-end (2nd Semester) Grades from the 2025-2026 school year determine eligibility for the first eight (8) weeks of the Fall Season (excluding incoming freshmen).
 - Grades will be checked again at 1st Quarter (October) for continued eligibility.
 - 1st Semester Grades (2026-2027) will determine eligibility for Winter season.
- Members receiving two (2) or more “N” marks in Citizenship will be ineligible.
- If ineligible 2 consecutive grading periods, you are ineligible to try out the following year.
- Additional eligibility requirements:
 - Completed physical packet and emergency clearance card submitted by the school’s deadline.
 - Once cleared, CDT members must provide an emergency clearance card to the coaches.
 - Fulfill all required community service hours completed per grade level.

Ineligible Members

- Cannot participate in games, rallies, or other school or community events.
- Must still attend practices and games (dressed in practice attire) unless excused by Coach.
- Are NOT allowed to wear their uniform or warmups to any game, school and/or community event. However, team jackets can be worn.

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CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

- **Professionalism:** CDT members must cooperate with coaches, game officials, faculty, and team members at all times.
- **School & District Rules:** CDT members must obey all school, district, and team rules.
- **Sportsmanship:** No booing, inappropriate language, gestures, or arguing.
- **Character:** No bad talking team members, coaches, complaining about performance material or placement, etc.
- **Public Conduct:** CDT members must maintain a positive image, both in and out of uniform. Inappropriate language, gestures, or behavior are not tolerated.
- **Public Displays of Affection:** Excessive PDA in uniform is not allowed.
- **Practice Attendance:** Leaving practice or a game without dismissal from a coach is prohibited.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

This policy has been developed as a tool to promote teamwork, equality, self-discipline and responsibility. Any individual whose attitude detracts from the smooth functioning of the team because of continual lack of participation, effort, or consistent disagreement, with other team members or advisors/coaches will be subject to discipline. Coaches may discipline and/or bench (no participation in game or rally) any Cheer and Dance Team Member.

Infractions Leading to Disciplinary Action Include:

- Tardiness, Attendance Issues, Improper Attire (includes jewelry, long nails), lack of commitment, or uncooperative attitude.
 - If a coach must address a CDT member three (3) times for rule violations listed above, they will be removed from the team on the 3rd offense.
- Unsportsmanlike behavior -includes bad talking team members/coaches at school, practice, games/events.
 - If a coach must address a CDT member two (2) times for rule violations listed above, they will be removed from the team on the 2nd offense.

Grounds for Immediate Dismissal:

- Possession/use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or steroids.
- Inappropriate behavior on social media - any bullying, offensive language, substance promotion (i.e. appearing in images where alcohol/drugs/vaping is present), inappropriate photos - A single infraction is immediate dismissal from the team.
- Discipline issues on campus such as suspension.
- Physical altercations.

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PRACTICES

Practice Attire Guidelines

- To maintain a unified and professional appearance, all team members must adhere to the designated practice attire:
 - Approved Athletic Attire:
 - Approved colors for clothing - Black, white, & teal.
 - T-shirts, tank tops, shorts, yoga pants, or leggings. (No crop tops or pajama pants)
 - Athletic or jazz shoes
 - Winter Exception: Sweats may be worn for warmth but must be removed during stunts for safety
 - All attire must be free of logos (CHS logos are ok), and allow for full range of motion
 - Additional Requirements:
 - Hair must be secured away from the face in a ponytail.
- Failure to follow practice attire guidelines may result in participation restrictions or additional conditioning.

Practice Expectations

Commit to being present, your team depends on you. Bring a positive attitude, give your best effort, lift up your teammates, and challenge yourself to grow stronger every day.

- All practices are **MANDATORY**
- Extra practices (morning, lunchtime, extended, or Saturday) may be scheduled for rallies, homecoming, or playoffs.
- Bathroom & Water breaks – will be scheduled by coaches. The restroom should be used before the start of practice and during designated break times. Breaks should not be taken during active practice time.
- Phones must be put away during practice unless approved by a coach.
 - If left out during practice, phones will be held by coaches until the end of practice.
- If you miss a practice, you are responsible for learning what was missed before attending the next practice.
- Failure to attend practice could result in removal from a routine.
- No jewelry of any kind are allowed during practice
- No gum during practices
- Nails must be kept at an athletic length for safety

Coaching & Supervision

- Under **NO circumstances** may a CDT member practice stunting under the supervision of a parent, unless they are approved by the CDT Head Coach or school.

GAMES

- All games are **MANDATORY**, including playoff/CCS games/State.
- Members are required to attend any designated playoff/CCS games/State, whether on JV or Varsity. Coaches will determine attendance requirements for each game.
- Members must arrive 1 hour before game start in full uniform “game ready” with all required gear (shoes, bows, accessories, poms, cheer jacket, pants/warmups in bag).
 - All taping must be done prior to arriving at the game.
- Failure to bring required items and failure to come game day ready will result in disciplinary action.
- Game Expectations:
 - All members must know cheers, sidelines, chants, and routines.
 - Hair must be pulled back in a coach-designated style before arrival.
 - CDT members must wear performance makeup.
 - No jewelry, gum, or long nails are allowed.
 - Varsity -must be in cheer lines immediately after the football run through for the National Anthem.
 - If National Anthem is not played, all teams are to be ready in their cheer lines at the 2-minute mark
 - All teams are to be ready in their cheer lines at the 2-minute mark returning from halftime
 - Etiquette: Store cheer bags in the dance room or at the far end of the football stadium near the student section. Walk together in a uniform and orderly manner when getting water and when returning to cheer lines. Clean up all garbage prior to leaving the game.
- Benched members will sit with the coach and assist where needed.
- Socializing with friends/family is not permitted during the game.
- Socializing with each other on the sidelines during the game is not permitted.
- Members must gain control of the crowd by doing a cheer or chant when the crowd becomes unruly, such as booing or shouting at the officials.
- Members may not enter the stands or leave without coach permission.
- Restroom use requires the buddy system—no member can go alone and a coach must be notified before using the restroom.
 - Restrooms should be used before the start of the game and during halftime to avoid disruption during game time.
- Members cannot purchase food at the snack shack during the game or halftime. Please plan accordingly!
- Members are responsible for bringing cheer boxes to and from the stadium, as well as any necessary signs, banners, or flags.
- Any game-related issues should be reported immediately to a coach or administrator.

TEAM UNIFORM & APPEARANCE

Uniform Pieces:

- **Cheer Uniform:** Skirt, shell, liner, briefs, shoes, jersey, poms, bows, bag, pants and jacket.

- **Dance Uniform:** Pants, shell, liner, dress, shoes, jersey, poms, bows, bag, jacket, and accessories.
- **Mascot Uniform:** Must wear the provided mascot uniform with appropriate clothing underneath.

Uniform & Appearance Guidelines

- All members must maintain a consistent uniform look as directed by the Coaches.
- Performance makeup is required for games and events.
- Team pants/Warmups are used at school and if necessary, during games due to extreme weather.
- Members are responsible for cleaning and maintaining their uniforms, warmups, and athletic shoes.
 - It is your responsibility to have alterations done in a timely manner if uniform pieces do not fit correctly
- Hair must be styled uniformly per Coaches instructions.
 - Extreme hair colors such as pink, purple, blue, green or similar shades are strongly discouraged to promote uniform appearance.
- **ALL** CDT members must wear their designated outfits to school on game, rally, and other specified event days.
 - Team members are allowed to wear white athletic lace-up shoes and/or their team shoes to school (Uggs and Birkenstocks are not permitted).
 - Failure to wear the designated attire to school will result in disciplinary action.
- Members must remain in uniform at all times during games where they are participating.
 - Members are not allowed to change out of their uniforms to watch games as spectators.
 - Members may change into team pants, jersey, and jacket.

Uniform Restrictions

- No loaning of uniforms or warmups without coach approval.
- Uniforms may only be worn for official CDT activities.

ATTENDANCE & TARDINESS

- Attendance is critical—**one absence affects the entire squad.**
- Members must be on time to all practices, games, and events.
- Appointments, work, and social events must be scheduled to not conflict with CDT obligations.
- Absences/tardiness must be reported by the member (not parents or friends).
- Each member is required to track their own absences and tardies.

- **Reporting an Absence**

SICK MEMBERS must notify coaches via email or direct message to all coaches and captains on the BAND App by noon ***before the practice/game***.

- Doctor's notes should be emailed to coaches.
- Three (3) sick absences require a note
- **PRACTICES:** If you are unable to attend a practice for reasons unrelated to sickness/emergency, you must **email** coaches at chscheeranddance@gmail.com **five (5) days prior to the missed practice** AND you must also notify your team captains.
- **GAMES:** If you are unable to attend a game, you must **email** coaches at chscheeranddance@gmail.com **ten (10) days prior to the game** AND you must also notify your team captains.
- *Failure to provide notice by the required deadline will result in the absence being considered UNEXCUSED.*
 - The team needs ample time to make necessary changes for the missing member.
- All EXCUSED absences require Prior Approval from the Head Coach.
 - **Excused Reasons:**
 - **Illness/Emergency** – Must be communicated to all coaches and your captains as soon as possible.
 - **Pre-Approved Events** – School-related or exceptional personal commitments that have been communicated in advance and approved by the coach. These may include major family obligations, college visits, or trips/events planned prior to tryouts.
 - Approval is at the coach's discretion and must not be excessive or impact overall team participation.
 - Pre-approved events must be submitted at the start of the season for Head Coach approval.
 - **School-Related Events** – (e.g., field trips, choir performances, academic competitions, or required class events).
 - Must be communicated as soon as you are aware of the absence and no later than ten (10) days prior to the absence.
 - **Consequences:**
 - Missing the practice immediately before a game/event will result in removal from the routine unless excused by Coaches.
 - If you miss a choreography practice, you will not be placed in the routine unless approved by Coaches. If allowed to participate, your placement in the formation will be impacted.
 - **UNEXCUSED Absences Will Result in Disciplinary Action:**
 - 3 tardies = 1 unexcused absence.
 - 2 unexcused practices= Sit out next game.
 - 4 unexcused practices = Removal from team.
 - 1 unexcused game = Sit out half of the following game.
 - 2 unexcused games = Removal from team.

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- **Game/Practice Passes**
 - Members will get ONE game pass for football season and ONE game pass for basketball season.
 - Game passes cannot be used for Homecoming, Severance Bowl, or Senior Nights.
 - Game passes must be approved by Head Coach and require a minimum of 10 days' notice to be considered an excused absence.
 - Members will get TWO practice passes for Summer through Football season and ONE during basketball season.
- **Final determination of whether an absence is excused or unexcused is at the discretion of the coaches.**

TRANSPORTATION

- CHS does not provide transportation for away games.
- Students CANNOT drive themselves to away games unless the game is within our district. If caught driving, the student will be immediately dismissed from the team.
- Members must be driven by their parent/guardian or an approved driver.

CAPTAINS & MANAGERS

- Captains & Co-Captains will be chosen for each team per season.
- Team members with specific jobs will also be chosen (i.e. stunting, tumbling, JV assistant, choreography, ASB liaison).
- Captains & Managers must communicate with coaches for final approval & keep team members informed of decisions..
- Captains oversee pregame/halftime routines and choreography.
- Captains may NOT discipline team members.
- Coaches may reassign captains and managers between seasons if necessary.

PARENTS

- Parents must follow CDT rules and support team/coaches.
- Parents may not withhold participation in games/practices as punishment. This punishes the entire team. If there is a problem, please contact the head coach.
- Please do not talk or yell at your child while they are performing.
- Communication regarding team concerns will be handled between the CDT member and coaches.
- Communication regarding schedules, events, fundraising, and volunteer opportunities will be made to parents via the BAND App & on occasion via email.
 - Parents will receive an invitation to the BAND App at the beginning of the season.
- To avoid any sickness or dehydration, please make sure that your child has eaten before they arrive at games or practices and always has plenty of water.
- If you have a surprise event planned that you do not want your child to know about, communication to coaches via email at the start of the season is needed for pre-approval. Please refer to the Attendance & Tardiness section.

- One parent must participate in fundraising.
- At CHS Football games only clear bags will be allowed into the stadium. No outside food or drinks allowed. Canopies and large umbrellas are not permitted in the stadium.

Parent involvement is a vital part of our team's success! Your support helps create a positive experience for all CDT members, ensuring they have the resources and encouragement needed to thrive. Thank you for your anticipated support!

Ways to Get Involved:

- **Approved Driver for Team Events**
 - Parents are encouraged to become approved drivers to help transport athletes to games, competitions, and events.
 - To become an approved driver, visit the CHS website under "Athletics → Volunteer Driver Info & Release Forms." All volunteer drivers must be processed as a volunteer before they can be approved to drive.
- **Other Volunteer Opportunities**
 - **Team Parent(s)** – Assist coaches by coordinating parent communications, organizing team snacks and water for long practices and game days, sending sign up reminders, and helping with event logistics.
 - **Senior Parent** – Coordinate Senior Night celebrations (Fall & Winter), including decorations, gifts, special recognitions, and ensuring a memorable send-off for our graduating members.
 - **Game & Event Support** – Help with setup, team check-ins, decorations, and assisting coaches as needed for games, community, and team events.
 - **End-of-Year Banquet** – Is to celebrate the team's hard work and accomplishments. Assist coaches with planning and setup/cleanup.
 - **Photography/Videography** – Capture moments from games and performances to share with the team and the team social media manager.
 - **Fundraising** – coordinating or assisting with booster events, sponsorships, merchandise sales, or team fundraising events

FUNDRAISING REQUIREMENTS

- ALL CDT members and one parent/legal guardian are expected to participate in fundraisers to help cover costs for uniforms, travel, and special events.
- Coaches may add, substitute, or eliminate fundraisers throughout the year.
- Parents are expected to participate in a minimum of TWO fundraiser events. Team members are required to participate in designated fundraising and events
- Fundraisers may include:
 - Junior Cheer & Dance Camp
 - CHS Snack Shack (Booster)
 - Popcorn/Cookie Sales
- . Events may include:
 - Gilroy Rodeo
 - Levi Stadium Events
 - Gilroy Garlic Festival

UNIFORMS, CAMPS, & MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

Team Uniform and Camp Attire

- Approximate cost of uniforms/accessories and camp attire is approximately \$650 for returning members and approximately \$1,700 for new members.
- Camp clothes will consist of three (3) outfits for three (3) days of camp. Uniforms will be worn on day four.
- Members will receive purchase deadlines and an online link for ordering uniforms and camp clothes. Orders must be placed by early May 2026 to receive items in time for camp.
- School-owned uniforms may be provided if a team member does not purchase their own, but they must be dry cleaned upon return.
- Members will be charged for any damage to a school-provided uniform.
- If a team member does not plan to purchase a uniform, they must inform the Head Coach as soon as possible.

Camp

- Camp is **Mandatory**
- CDT members will receive USA and/or UCA staff instruction at camp, covering new cheers, routines, stunts, technique, band sidelines, and team bonding.
- The cost for USA/UCA Summer Camp is approximately \$650, not including transportation (as costs vary each year).
- A \$100 deposit is required by late April 2026, with the remaining balance due in early July.
- This cost covers a 4-day, 3-night camp, including three (3) breakfasts, two (2) lunches, and three (3) dinners.
- If a team member cannot cover the full amount, they should speak with the Head Coach as soon as possible to discuss options.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Additional costs throughout the year may include:

- Optional team gear.
- Accessories such as bows or earrings.
- Poms or socks for Cancer Awareness events, or other themed events
- Big/Little Sister/Brother gifts.
- Secret Santa exchanges - Halloween Boo Basket - Camp Basket
- Senior-related items.

RISKS & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Cheerleading and dance are physically demanding sports that require strength, agility, coordination, and focus. With this level of athleticism comes inherent risk, and safety is our top priority. Every athlete must take personal responsibility for following all safety protocols to protect themselves and their teammates.

Non-Negotiable Safety Rules

- Warm-ups & stretching are mandatory before any CDT activity. **No exceptions.**
- Stunts may only be performed under CDT approved supervision. Unsupervised stunting is strictly prohibited.
- No stunt or skill should ever be attempted unless it has been properly introduced, trained, and approved by the CDT coaching staff.
- If you are injured, **you must immediately report it to a coach** - ignoring an injury can put you and your teammates at greater risk.
- CDT follows strict concussion and injury protocols in accordance with school policy.
- Injured Members must be cleared by a medical professional before returning to practice or performances.
- If a CDT member is unable to participate in 2 consecutive practices, a doctor's note is required in order to excuse non-participation.
- Reckless behavior will not be tolerated. Any member who does not follow safety guidelines may be removed from stunting, routines, or the team.

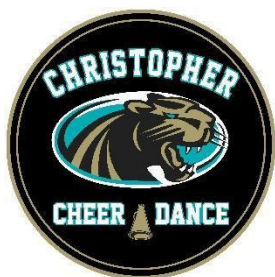
Coach Supervision & Stunting Rules

- ALL Cheer members are required to stunt.
 - If a team member is unable to stunt, a doctor's note is required.
- Stunting and tumbling require 100% focus - distracted or careless participation puts everyone at risk.
- No exceptions will be made for practicing stunts without an approved coach present.
- Team rules and safety protocols must be followed at all times - failure to comply may result in restricted participation or removal from the team.

Acknowledgment of Risk

By participating in CDT, all athletes and parents acknowledge the potential for injury and agree to follow all safety rules. The best way to prevent injuries is through proper technique, strength training, conditioning, and discipline - safety starts with you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND SIGNATURE REQUIRED ON NEXT PAGE



CHS Cheer and Dance Team

STUDENT & PARENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We have read the Tryout Packet Information and Christopher Cheer and Dance Handbook thoroughly, and we understand and acknowledge all that is required to be a CDT Member. Permission has been granted to try out for a Christopher High School Cheer Team Member position and participate throughout the season.

Dated: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____