BLUE JAY CHEER HANDBOOK

Article I - Team Mission

Section I - Philosophy Statement

Fostering a community of athletes, our mission is to develop leaders through the power of cheer, shaping individuals who adhere to our core values of teamwork, respect, responsibility, integrity, and sportsmanship.

Section II – 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.

Article II - Attendance

Section I - Calendar

A) Cheerleaders will be given a calendar at the beginning of each season. Cheerleaders are expected to schedule work, dates, vacations, and other events around the calendar. The calendar is a working document, events may be added or deleted throughout the year.

B) All team events are MANDATORY, based on squad placement.

C) Cheerleaders should arrive at call times to games, and should be ‘Game Day’ ready. Cheerleaders must be in school the ENTIRE DAY of a game or

performance in order to be eligible to cheer or perform at an event. Leaving for a scheduled appointment will be excused.

D) Cheerleader should arrive at least 5 minutes early to practice and should be stretching by the time practice is set to begin. Practices may be added around performances, times may vary due to facility availability.

Section II – Absences

A) Absences may be classified as Excused or Unexcused for record-keeping purposes; however, an absence is an absence, and all absences count equally toward the total number of absences.

B) Excused absences may include, but are not limited to:

1. Illness
2. Family emergency or funeral
3. Wedding
4. Official college visits
5. Other approved school-related events

C) Unexcused absences may include, but are not limited to:

1. Appointments that can be scheduled outside of practices or games
2. Work conflicts
3. Babysitting
4. Vacations
5. Arriving ten (10) or more minutes late to a practice or game

D) Three (3) or more total absences—excused or unexcused—may result in consequences, which can include sitting out during a game or possible removal from the squad. All consequences will be determined at the coaches' discretion.

E) Excessive tardiness will also result in disciplinary action. Multiple tardies may be considered the equivalent of an absence. Continued or habitual tardiness may result in consequences including, but not limited to, reduced playing time, sitting out during a game, or possible removal from the squad, at the coaches' discretion.

F) All absences must be communicated to the coach via email at least 24 hours in advance. Inability to do so properly will result in an unexcused absence, no

matter the reason behind absence. In case of an emergency, please message the coach directly on the proper communication platform.

G) If a cheerleader is absent for two or more days because of illness, they must bring a doctor's note to the next team event that they attend.

H) Missing practice the day before a game will result in sitting for half of/or the entire game.

Section III - Dual Participation

A) Prior to the season, cheerleader will be responsible for scheduling time to meet with coaches to go over calendars for both programs. At that time any dates with conflicting events will be discussed, the cheerleader and coach will agree to a time-share plan. The cheerleader will then fill out a Dual Participation Agreement and return the form with a parent/guardian signature.

B) Dual Participation is a privilege. Any cheerleader that is unable to balance Blue Jay Cheerleading and other activities may be asked to resign from the squad.

*Please see the Junction City High School Student Information Book (KSHSAA Activities) for more information concerning dual participation (p.24-25).

Article III - Presentation and Attire

Section I - Uniforms

A) Cheerleaders will be responsible for purchasing practice/event uniforms, warm ups, shoes, socks, and briefs, while the program will provide one to three uniforms, as well as bows, poms, water bottles, weather appropriate items, and game day spirit wear.

B) Any school-owed uniform are not to be altered in a way that is permanent. If a uniform is found to have been damaged or permanently altered during the season, or if a cheerleader fails to return all uniform pieces the cheerleader will be responsible for replacement costs, listed below:

1. White Shell – $162
2. White Skirt – $102
3. White liner – $95
4. Black Shell – $152
5. Black skirt – $90
6. Black Liner – $ 30
7. Blue shell – $152

8. Blue Skirt – $90
9. Blue Liner – $30
10. Poms – $12.50/pom
*Male White shell - $121
*Male Black shell - $84

C) Failure to return uniforms will result in an ineligibility for tryouts the following season. A candidate must return all uniform pieces in a clean manner or pay replacement/cleaning fees associated with missing/dirty pieces to become eligible for tryouts.

Section II - Practices

A) Acceptable PRACTICE ATTIRE includes 1) athletic top 2) sports bra 3) shorts or leggings 4) cheer shoes 5) all hair pulled back into a ponytail. ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY MAY BE WORN AT PRACTICE.

B) Cheerleaders are expected to arrive ready in acceptable attire for all practices. Cheerleaders will not be able to participate if they are not wearing appropriate attire and will therefore receive an unexcused absence.

C) Fingernails, including artificial nails, are permitted only if they are kept short and do not extend past the fingertip when viewed from the palm side of the hand, in accordance with KSHSAA and NFHS safety rules.

D) In accordance with KSHSAA Spirit Rules, the midriff area must be completely covered with non-see-through material when standing at attention. This standard applies during all practices, performances, games, pep rallies, and school events.

Section III - Games

A) Acceptable GAME ATTIRE includes designated 1) uniform 2) Spirit Flex Lite Low Cut Brief 3) bow 4) cheer shoes 5) all white, no-show socks 6) appropriate bra that cannot be seen ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY MAY BE WORN AT GAMES.

B) Cheerleaders will be asked to wear their hair pulled up on top of their heads for games, but hair on sides of face must be pulled back no matter how it is styled. Cheerleader should be able to move head from side to side without hair moving to cover face or eyes.

C) Cheerleaders should always have pants, crops, and cheer jacket must be packed in cheer bag for every game. In the event of cold weather, all black scarves, gloves, and/or ear warmers may also be worn.

D) Cheerleaders will not be able to participate if they are not wearing appropriate attire and will therefore receive an unexcused absence.

E) On game days, squads may decide to wear uniforms or a coordinated team outfit to school. Cheerleaders are not permitted to wear any other clothing in place of uniform pieces. If a cheerleader is found to have violated the in-school attire policy, they will be benched for the game.

F) Cheerleaders are not to loan ANY UNIFORM PIECES to teammates and/or friends for any reason

Section IIII - Performance Attire

A) Acceptable PERFORMANCE ATTIRE includes designated 1) uniform 2) Spirit Flex Lite Low Cut Brief 3) bow 4) cheer shoes 5) all white, no-show socks 6) appropriate bra that cannot be seen. ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY MAY BE WORN DURING PERFORMANCES.

B) Cheerleaders will not be able to participate if they are not wearing appropriate attire which may result in dismissal from the squad.

C) Fingernails, including artificial nails, are permitted only if they are kept short and do not extend past the fingertip when viewed from the palm side of the hand, in accordance with KSHSAA and NFHS safety rules.

Article IV – Conduct and Discipline

Section I – Good Standing

A) To be considered in Good Standing, a cheerleader must:

1. Pass five (5) classes each semester
2. Demonstrate respect toward fellow students, faculty, administration, and the community (no disciplinary referrals)
3. Serve as leaders in the classroom, school, and community
4. Exemplify responsible behavior both in and out of school
5. Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher from the previous semester

Failure to meet one or more of the above expectations may result in disciplinary action. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, probation, loss of participation privileges, reduced performance opportunities, suspension from

activities, or removal from the squad. All actions will be determined at the coaches' discretion, based on the nature and severity of the situation.

B) Criminal activity or participation in any act punishable by law will not be tolerated and may result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or removal from the squad, as determined by the coaches' discretion and in accordance with school and district policies.

Article V - Communication

Section I - Expectations

A) The CHEERLEADER is responsible for communicating any absence to the head and/or squad coach **via email**.

B) A parent can email a coach at any time to address a question or concern. However, if a parent wishes to have a phone conference, coaches should not be contacted until school hours. Calling a coach outside of school hours should only occur during emergencies.

C) Coaches will respond to email/phone calls within one working day of receipt.

D) If a parent would like to meet with the coach and administrator for any reason, the cheerleader must be present during the meeting. Meetings will be held with one family at a time.

E) All communication with coaches should be professional in manner.

Section II - Social Media

A) Cheerleaders may use their personal Twitter, Facebook, You Tube, My Space, Snap Chat, etc. at their leisure, if posts are appropriate. The following criteria with be considered unacceptable social media behavior 1) sexually explicit, profane, lewd, indecent, or defamatory language is posted 2) derogatory language regarding school personnel, students, or opponents is posted 3) nude, sexually oriented, indecent images or altered pictures are posted.

B) A cheerleader found to have violated the squad social media policy may face consequences at coaches' discretion.

Article V – Safety Assessment

Section I – Injuries and Risk

A) The nature of cheerleading and gymnastics activities involves inherent risks of physical injury. No matter how careful the participants and coaches may be, how many spotters are used, or what type of landing surface is present, the risk of injury cannot be eliminated. These risks may include minor injuries, serious or catastrophic injuries, or, in rare circumstances, death. Participants and families should fully understand and accept these risks. Junction City High School and its personnel supervising practices, games, or events shall not be held responsible for injuries that may occur as a result of participation.
B) If an athlete is injured and unable to fully participate in cheerleading activities, a doctor's note must be provided to the coaches prior to participating in practices or games. Full participation in cheerleading includes, but is not limited to, running, jumping, conditioning, stunting, tumbling, and other physical components of cheer. This requirement ensures the athlete is operating under safe and medically appropriate circumstances.
C) When necessary, coaches may consult with the school's athletic trainer and will follow the athletic trainer's professional recommendations regarding participation limitations, modifications, or return-to-play expectations.

Article VI – Lettering

Section I – Cheerleading Lettering Criteria

Lettering in JCHS Blue Jay Cheerleading is an honor, not an entitlement. A cheer letter is awarded to athletes who demonstrate consistent, full commitment to the program throughout the entire season.

All Articles and Sections of this handbook will be considered in the lettering process, including but not limited to:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Effort and participation at practices, games, and performances
- Adherence to presentation, uniform, and safety expectations
- Conduct, discipline, and good standing
- Communication and social media behavior
- Compliance with injury, clearance, and return-to-play requirements

Lettering reflects an athlete's 100% commitment to the program, which includes reliability, accountability, leadership, effort, and consistency in meeting all expectations outlined in this handbook.

Failure to meet the standards described in this handbook may result in an athlete not earning a cheer letter, regardless of time on the squad. Lettering determinations will be made by the coaching staff based on the totality of the season and the specific circumstances of each athlete's participation.

All lettering decisions are final and at the coaches' discretion.