

MATHIS ISD CHEERLEADER CONSTITUTION AND GUIDELINES 2026-2027

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MATHIS ISD

CHEERLEADER CONSITIUTION AND PROCEDURES

ARTICLE I. PHILOSOPHY/PURPOSE

Being a cheerleader is an honor and special privilege. Cheerleaders and spirit groups exist to promote good sportsmanship, good citizenship, and wholesome enthusiastic school spirit and are primarily representatives of their school. Cheerleaders should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their position and by the rules as said in the MISD Code of Conduct and the Extra Curricular Handbook. Members of these groups have fundamental responsibility to play a leadership role in building teamwork and helping the school squad will be expected to keep a higher standard of behavior both on and off campus and academic achievement than that of their peers.

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES

Cheerleaders are expected to be physically and mentally skilled in learning and remembering cheers. They are also expected to be able to publicly prove a skill level suitable for the team position and the timing necessary for group performance. Off the field, they are to enthusiastically support all athletic teams through advertisement, personal attitude, and attendance at events chosen by the sponsor and approved by the principal. Candidates are selected for the full cheerleading year.

ARTICLE III. PREAMBLE

We, the Cheerleaders of Mathis (High/Middle) School, dedicate ourselves and our services to standing for the student body as role models to promote enthusiasm and school spirit at all athletic events to which we are assigned.

ARTICLE IV. SQUAD ORGANIZATION

A. The Varsity squad will consist of the top 16 scoring candidates from grades 9-12. The cut score for varsity will be 75 (out of 100). In the case of a tie for the 16th position, both candidates will make the squad. The judges' decision is final.

B. The cheerleaders selected as co-head cheerleaders for the varsity squad will be the top 2 scoring individuals with 2 years' experience on the varsity squad.
Judges' decisions are final.

- Should there be only one candidate with two-year varsity experience, one head cheerleader will be selected, and no co-head cheerleader will be selected.
- Should there be no candidate with two years varsity experience, the co-head cheerleaders for the varsity squad will be the top 2 scoring candidates with at least one-year experience on the varsity squad.
- Co-Head cheerleader may not be a head position in band including drum major or flag corps captain.
- If a co-head cheerleader is dismissed/quits/etc., their position will remain vacant for the remainder of the school year.

C. There will only be one (1) mascot candidate selected.

D. The Middle School squad will consist of the top 12 scoring candidates from 7th and 8th grades. The Middle School squad will not have a head cheerleader. The cut score for the Middle School squad will be 60 (out of 100). In the case of a tie for the 12th position, both candidates will make the squad. The judges' decision is final.

ARTICLE V. ELIGIBILITY FOR TRYOUTS

A. Cheerleader candidates must be registered in school at tryouts and enrolled in the MISD.

B. Cheerleaders/Mascot will be governed by the State's "No Pass-No Play" rule in effect. All candidates must be eligible on the try-out date.

C. Candidate must have a satisfactory recommendation from the campus administrator on the Eligibility Sheet.

D. Eligibility Requirements include:
   - Grades
   - Attendance: 90% for the academic school year
     - Extenuating circumstances of a serious nature will be reviewed.

E. Candidates must attend a 1–2-week **mandatory** group tryout practice as scheduled by the sponsor. **One unexcused absence from <u>try-out clinic</u> will result in loss of eligibility.** Only a medical excuse from a doctor for the candidate or immediate family member (which may be verified with the doctor's office), death in the immediate family, or attendance in a school sponsored event will be valid excuse. Excused academic absences do not necessarily equate to an excused cheer absence. The immediate family is defined as a father, mother, brother, sister and grandparents. Tardies more than 15 minutes will be considered an absence. **Two** unexcused tardies from try-out clinic will exclude candidates from tryouts. Excused tardies include attendance to tutorials and attendance to a school sponsored practice or event.

F. Candidates must submit a Tryout Packet before taking part on the first day of scheduled tryout practice. Tryout Packet consists of the following:

- Current physical examination (the physical examination that was given to all athletes before the school year is valid)
- Tryout Agreement Form
- Emergency/Health Form
- Cheer/Mascot Agreement Form
- Eligibility Sheet
- Verification Form of receipt of Constitution & Procedures

ARTICLE VI. SELECTION

A. Cheerleaders will be selected by a group of contracted professional judges from outside of the area. Every attempt will be made to hire judges who have not worked with the Cheerleaders candidates. Every attempt will be made and documented to secure a minority judge on each panel and mixed-gender panel.

B. Cheerleader tryouts shall occur at an announced date during the Spring Semester. UIL "No-Pass-No Play" guidelines will be followed.

C. An introductory meeting will be conducted by the Cheerleading Sponsor/Administrator to review the cheerleading constitution, needed forms, and tryout procedures. It is **mandatory** for the candidates **AND** at least one parent/guardian to be present, unless the student is participating in a school sponsored activity.

D. Results will be posted upon completion.

E. Teacher Evaluations

The cheerleader candidates will be evaluated on classroom/attitude using a standard by every teacher on the candidate's schedule for the current school year. If a student takes a semester course during the fall semester and no longer has that teacher for the Spring semester, the Fall Semester teacher will be given an evaluation form for the candidate.

A teacher on the designated campus, who has a daughter/son as a cheerleader/mascot candidate, will not complete an evaluation form for **any** of the cheerleader/mascot candidates, including his/her own child.

The teacher evaluation form will count for 20% of the total evaluation. The scores will be averaged and multiplied by 20%.

F. Tryout Practice Rules

- Cheerleader candidates must be on the gym floor dressed in shorts, warm-ups, athletic shoes, T-shirts, etc. by the designated time set by the sponsor. If any candidate uses any type of brace for any type of injury, it must be worn at the time of practice. If any candidate needs to be "wrapped" because of an injury, it is the candidate's responsibility to come in before the designated time of practice.

- Chewing gum, eating food, drinking beverages (other than water) will not be allowed during the practice sessions.
- No jewelry will be allowed, and hair must be pulled back and secure.
- It is the candidate's responsibility to learn each routine taught at the clinic.

G. Judging Criteria: **Mascot 80%**

- One Group Cheer
- One Group Dance/Pom Routine
- One 2- or 3-minute skit routine
- **Teacher evaluations: 20%**

H. Judging Criteria: **Cheerleader 80%**

- One individual cheer
- One group cheer
- One group dance/pom routine
- Three different jumps
- **Teachers Evaluations: 20%**

I. Tryout Procedures

- All candidates will assemble in the school gym at practice the day before tryouts for the random choosing of a number for their tryout order.
- Candidates will wait in a designated area until either the group or individual number is called upon tryouts.
- Candidates are not allowed to have any electronic devices/cell phones during tryouts session. Candidates will turn in electronic devices/cell phones to the sponsor upon reporting to the tryout session. Sponsor will distribute electronic devices/cell phones back to the candidate upon release from the tryout session. Any candidate keeping an electronic device/cell phone in their possession during the tryout session will be disqualified from the tryout.
- Candidates will try out in front of the judges by number, not name.
- Candidates will wear only designated colors for tryouts (only plain/solid black shorts and plain/solid white t-shirt/tank will be allowed). No previous MISD cheer apparel/shoes allowed.
- During tryouts, only those involved in the tryout process will be allowed in the gym, hall, rotunda, locker room, and any other designated area. There will be no students, parents, or existing cheerleaders in the tryout room/area, nor will they be involved in the collection or tabulation of scores. School security will be available to keep crowd control. Family members, friends and anyone else who is **not involved** in the tryout procedures will not be allowed around the designated area for tryouts. Flowers, balloons, gifts, etc. **will not** be accepted in the school office for distribution to candidates. Family members

wishing to give candidates a token may do so after candidates are released from the tryout session.

- Results will be posted when the tabulation is completed and verified.

ARTICLE VII. PARENT REQUEST FOR SCORES

A parent wishing to review their own child's score should make their request to the campus principal in writing. The statute of limitations on requesting scoring sheets is ten (10) instructional days following the tryout dates. Parents may request to see their own child's score (no rank scores) from the principal. By law, all other students' scores are protected and cannot be shared with anyone except the sponsor, principal, or principal designee.

ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS

A. The duties of the Head/Co-Head Cheerleader are as follows, in conjunction with the sponsor:

- Work together
- Coordinate practices and warm-up activities
- Lead the cheers at practice, and games.
- Make decisions as to what apparel to wear and what cheers are performed at pep rallies and games. Submit an agenda to the sponsors before the activity and especially before practice.
- Report conduct, complaints, uncooperative cheerleaders, or any other problems concerning the squad to the sponsor.
- Aid the sponsor in any activities and any other help that is needed throughout the year.
- If an elected co-head cheerleader does not fulfill his/her duties, the sponsor will dismiss the cheerleader from their co-head position. The remaining co-head cheerleader will complete the responsibilities.

ARTICLE IX. UNIFORM AND SUMMER ACTIVITIES

A. The total estimated cost for cheerleader uniform and cheer camp will not exceed $3000. (These costs can be reduced through participating in approved fundraisers). An itemized list will be given by the sponsor to each parent at the introductory parent's meeting.

B. Uniforms may not be altered (decals, ribbons, lettering, numbers, etc.) The squad should look uniform with no distraction calling attention to individual cheerleaders. Only the co-head cheerleaders will wear a star showing their status on the team.

C. Hair will be styled uniformly. If ribbons are worn, they will all be the same color. No barrettes, large clips, crowns, etc.

D. All uniforms and camp wear will be selected by the sponsor only.

E. The location, type and date of summer camp will be selected by the sponsor.

F. All money owed must be paid by the designated day as presented on the payment schedule. Failure to pay the full amount by the designated deadline will nullify the member's cheerleader/mascot participation for the year. No exceptions regardless of circumstances.

G. In the event a cheerleader is dismissed from the squad for whatever reason or voluntarily quits the squad at any time, refunds **will not** be issued.

H. Cheerleading camp attendance is **mandatory!**

I. A cheerleader not advancing to the next grade level will give up his/her position as a cheerleader/mascot on the squad.

J. All cheerleaders must attend practices in the summer when appointed by the sponsor whether it be camp, mini clinic, competition, etc. Scheduled practice is mandatory.

K. Camp wear is not to be altered with decals, letters, numbers, etc.

ARTICLE X. CHEERLEADER RESPONSIBILITES

A. Cheerleading is a year-long sport.

B. Cheerleaders will cheer at all sponsor assigned home and away games, all pep rallies, and any other event the sponsor appointed the cheerleaders to attend.

C. Cheerleaders are expected to attend all practices, including Sunday practices, called by the sponsor. Any member who does not meet performance expectations during practice, or has any absence from practice, may be excluded from participation in that week's performance. Furthermore, cheerleaders may be subject to demerits as per constitution guidelines.

D. Cheerleaders must often cheer at public events. These include community pep rallies, parades, or any other community-based events that the sponsor requires cheerleaders to attend. Each cheerleader must cheer/take part in the designated events.

E. Additional responsibilities are as follows:

- Cheerleaders must cooperate with the sponsor and other cheerleaders.
- Cheerleaders may not leave the squad until the end of the event.
- Cheerleaders must make posters, spirit banners, decorate the gym, clean up the gym after practice and pep rallies, and any other duty assigned by the sponsor.
- Cheerleaders are expected to show maturity and always represent themselves in a proper manner.
- Cheerleaders are expected to behave properly at school, in class, and any other school-related activities.

- Cheerleaders are expected in school and on time on the day of events and on the day after participation in events. Absence from school does not automatically excuse cheerleaders from practice on that day. Cheerleaders must contact the sponsor.
- Cheerleaders are expected to always be on time for every event.
- Cheerleaders are expected to help with any fundraising that may occur with the squad.

F. In case of a member being pregnant, it will be the responsibility of the member and his/her parents to inform the sponsor or campus administration. The member must give medical certification from a licensed United States physician, saying that she is able or unable to take part in the required activities. In addition, the parents must sign a waiver releasing the school district and its employees from liability.

ARTILCE XI. CHEERLEADING CONDUCT

This is especially important, and all cheerleaders must represent Mathis High School and Mathis Middle School in the best manner. Cheerleaders are role models, and they should uphold the MISD Code of Conduct and the Extra-Curricular Handbook.

- The MISD Code of Conduct will be strictly enforced in all cheerleading activities throughout the year.
- School attendance is extremely important.
- Cheerleaders will follow the "No-Pass-No Play" throughout the year. All members are expected to keep eligibility as per UIL/TEA Guidelines. Any member receiving a grade of 69 or below for a nine week's grading period will be suspended from the squad following the UIL "No-Pass-No Play" guidelines. A member failing after three consecutive grade checks as per the UIL eligibility calendar will be dismissed from the spirit organization for the rest of the school year.
- Maintaining a higher standard of conduct will also include ensuring that cheerleader's social media are proper. The internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible form of communication. Any communication such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, photo sharing, etc. appearing on the internet is public domain even if it is marked private. Cheerleaders are responsible for their personal social media pages and postings and for posting on another student's social media pages. The area of appropriateness will include, but are not limited to, language (abbreviated or alluding to), pictures, suggestive poses, clothing, reference to alcohol, drugs and tobacco. Any questions of appropriateness will be decided by the principal and sponsor.

ARTICLE XII. COMPETITION

Competition Squad are neither encouraged nor discouraged, but this activity should not interfere with the regularly scheduled activities of the cheerleaders. Whether to have a squad that enters competition is a decision to be made by the campus principal and cheerleader sponsor.

Qualification or choice to a national competition does not mean the squad will travel to or compete at such competition. The decision to take part will be made by the campus principal and the cheerleader considering the following.

- Financial obligations
- School absences
- Eligibility for other activities

If the decision is made to compete, fundraising activities will be conducted by the sponsor.

Cheerleaders activities/practice will supersede all participation in non-school sponsored activities.

ARTICLE XIII. CHEERLEADER FUNDRAISER

The High School squad will conduct a fundraiser as per MISD guidelines.

All cheerleaders will take part in the cheerleading squad fundraisers. All monies must be turned into the sponsor(s) by the designated due date.

ARTICLE XIV. MONEY COLLECTED BY SPONSOR(S)

Cheerleader sponsors collecting money from students will supply receipts to students saying the amount of money collected and what their money is to be charged towards (trip, uniform, camp, banquet, etc.).

Sponsors will keep a detailed accounting of income and expenditures of students' monies and make it available to parents upon request.

ARTICLE XV. DEMERIT SYSTEM

- Demerits can only be given to cheerleaders by the sponsors.
- Demerit totals will be issued to each cheerleader on scheduled days decided by the sponsor.
- Demerits are issued yearly.

- Ultimately, it is the cheerleader's responsibility to keep up with weekly demerits.
  The following will constitute demerits:

PRACTICE/GAMES/PEP RALLIES/ALL CHEERLEADING ACTIVITIES	**CONSEQENCES**
Cheerleaders must wear proper workout clothing when attending all practices.	**2 Demerits**
Hair must be up and secure.	**2 Demerits**
No jewelry during performances at games or pep rallies.	**2 Demerits**
No chewing gum.	**2 Demerits**
No cursing/arguing with anyone.	**5 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will have needed items on arrival.	**2 Demerits**
Cheerleaders must be on time.	**2 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will not leave practice or the practice area without permission.	**2 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will attend all school practices, school games, pep rallies, meetings, functions, and activities. Any absence must be cleared by the sponsor prior to the practice.	**Excused without prior notice will be 3 Demerits**
EXCUSED: Illness with Doctor's excuse, which may be verified with the doctor's office, death in the family.	
UNEXCUSED: Work, vacation, non-UIL involvement...	**Unexcused: 5 Demerits**
Note: An absence from school does not excuse Cheerleader from the responsibility of calling the sponsors.	
Cheerleader must be in correct/complete uniform prior to the game/pep rally.	**3 Demerits**
No long nails.	**3 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will have needed items on arrival.	**3 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will always keep proper sideline behavior.	**2 Demerits**
• No excessive talking among Cheerleaders.	

• No talking to people in the crowd.	
• Pay attention to the game/pep rally.	
• Stand in correct formation/stance.	
• Cheer/Spirit, Jump and tumble the entire game or pep rally.	
• No taunting the other team.	
• Cheerleaders will show respect during the National Anthem and both school songs.	
All Cheerleaders will stay to clean up after each game/pep rally and will be dismissed by the sponsor.	**2 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will arrive on time at the designated meeting area and will remain for the duration of the game/pep rally	**5 Demerits**
• If a Cheerleader misses the bus, he/she will not be allowed to cheer at the game.	
Cheerleaders will only use halftime/intermission for restroom needs, concession purchases, etc.	**5 Demerits**
The Cheerleader will stay on the field/court for the entire game/pep rally.	**3 Demerits**
Cheerleaders act in an unsafe manner as decided by the sponsor.	**5 demerits**
All cheerleaders/Mascot will attend summer camp.	**Dismissal from squad**
Absolutely no public display of affection.	**5 demerits**
Cheerleaders will respond to all directions provided by sponsor. Cheerleaders will follow all NCA or other professional Cheerleading association and university camp rules and respect all staff members.	**10 demerits**
Cheerleaders will respect each other and all other squad members. No taunting, arguing, or cursing will be tolerated.	**5 demerits**
Absolutely no smoking, or illegal substances will be tolerated.	**10 demerits**
OTHER SCHOOL FUNCTIONS	**CONSEQUENCES**

All Cheerleaders will take part in community parades as chosen by the designated sponsor.	**5 demerits**
UNIFORM GUIDELINES	
Cheerleaders will not wear uniform to a non-cheerleading function.	**5 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will not lend out uniforms to someone who is not a cheerleader.	**5 Demerits**
Cheerleaders' uniforms may not be altered unless approved by the sponsor.	**5 Demerits & replacement of uniform at members' expense**
GENERAL	**CONSEQUENCES**
Cheerleaders' hair will be natural color.	**Suspended until returned to a natural color**
No visible tattoos and/or piercings.	**3 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will not leave food, trash, or mess in the dressing room, practice area, or any performance area.	**3 Demerits**
Cheerleaders will follow (not always agree with) the head cheerleader's instructions at cheerleading activities. Cheerleaders will always respect all teachers/staff members. Cheerleaders will always adhere to a higher standard of conduct.	**1 quarter suspension/dismissal**
In School Suspension issued by campus administration	**3 Demerits**
Out of School Suspension issued by campus administration	**5 Demerits**
Discipline Alternative Education Placement issued by campus administration	**10 Demerits**
DEMERIT PENALTIES	
1-10 DEMERITS	Warning by sponsor(s)
11-14 DEMERITS	Suspended from one pep rally
15-19 DEMERITS	Suspended for 1-week activities as an MHS/MMS cheerleader

	but must practice, attend all group activities and be in uniform.
20-25 DEMERITS	Suspended for 2-weeks activities as an MHS/MMS cheerleader, but must practice, attend all group activities and be in uniform. A parent conference will be held.
25+DEMERITS	Dismissal from the squad for the rest of the academic school year.

Merit System

The cheerleader/mascot can only work off 10 demerits by earning MERITS from the list below.

The cheerleader must consult the coach for approval prior to any merit work being performed in order to award the merit.

Volunteer to assist with a school academic/athletic event that you are not an active member or participating in. • Event sponsor and cheer sponsor communication required. • Event sponsor note required	**4**
Run 40 laps in the gym	**2**
100 jumps (2 jumps of your choice.)	**2**
Run 2 miles on the track (8 laps)	**3**

NOTES:

- Repeated/excessive offenses may result in a sponsor/principal review. Repeated/excessive is defined as repetition of the same offense three or more times during a year.
- Any sponsor and principal review of student's actions may result in dismissal from the squad.
- Cheerleader/mascot who have been dismissed from the squad, or those who voluntarily quit, two times, will not be eligible to try out for the squad for the remainder of their high school career.
- Cheerleader/Mascot who have been dismissed from the squad or those who voluntarily quit keep no rights to cheer awards, recognitions, etc., which are received after dismissal/quitting.

Guidelines: There are general rules and guidelines for all MISD cheerleaders. Failure to comply may at times require judgment calls to be made. These decisions will be left up to the individual sponsors for each squad. Sponsors reserve the right to upgrade any penalty (immediate benching, office referral) depending on the severity of the situation.

ARTICLE XVI. CHEERLEADER AWARDS

Varsity cheerleaders will be eligible for varsity athlete jackets at the end of their first completed year as a varsity cheerleader. If a varsity cheerleader takes part and lettered in another UIL sanctioned sport or activity during the same year, they have the choice to decide which to receive the jacket from. If the jacket is not selected from cheerleading, then they will receive a letter from each year they were on the team.

ARTICLE XVII. VETO POWER, RATIFICATION

The principal and the sponsor(s) will have the power to veto any decision made by the squad.

All grievances or appeals will be handled by the committee as per SB 1566 Section 26.0111 of the Education Code which states: "The board of trustees of a school district is **no longer required** to address a complaint concerning a student's participation in an extracurricular activity that does not involve a violation of a right guaranteed by Chapter 26."
(Policy FNG Local)