



Alvin I.S.D.
High School Cheerleader/Mascot Handbook
2020-2021

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1.0 PHILOSOPHY/PURPOSE

It is an honor and a privilege to be a cheerleader. Cheerleaders and spirit groups exist to promote good sportsmanship, good citizenship and wholesome, enthusiastic school spirit. They are first and foremost representatives of their school. Cheerleaders exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their position. All behavior is in accordance with the rules as stated in the AISD Student Code of Conduct and Athletic guidelines and the Alvin ISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct. Group members have a fundamental responsibility to play a leadership role in building teamwork and helping the school achieve its goals and objectives. As a result of these responsibilities, members of the cheerleading squad are expected to maintain a high standard of behavior both on and off campus.

**Note: Whenever the word cheerleader is used, it is assumed that this applies to the mascot as well unless noted.*

2.0 OBJECTIVES

Cheerleaders are expected to be physically and mentally skilled in learning and executing cheers and dances. They are also expected to be able to demonstrate a skill level suitable for the squad position and the timing necessary for group performance. They are to enthusiastically show spirit to all teams through support, personal attitude and attendance at events designated by the coaches and approved by the principal.

3.0 DEFINITION

Cheerleading year: The rules and procedures outlined in this constitution are in effect from the time the student is selected to the cheerleading squad until the completion of the following school year. **This does not include the academic guidelines.**

Coaching Responsibilities: Coaches are responsible for decisions affecting the teams they coach. Such decisions include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Composition of the team
- b. Schedules
- c. Positions and Formations
- d. Practice Time
- e. Disciplinary Action
- f. Other rules not contradictory to the Athletic/Extra Curricular Code of Conduct

General Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Cheerleaders

4.0 COMMITMENT

Candidates selected as a member of the cheerleading squad are expected to make a commitment to the activity for the full cheerleading year. All members of the cheerleading program are required to be enrolled in the designated cheer class period. Any cheerleader who voluntarily forfeits or relinquishes their position before the end of the cheerleading year without the approval of the principal or principal designee and cheerleading coaches automatically forfeits his/her opportunity of trying out the following year. ***The cheerleading year begins when the team is selected and the results are posted. The cheerleading year concludes at the end of the following school year.***

5.0 ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

Academic ineligibility does not restrict a cheerleader from practice. Academic ineligibility continues for three weeks and is not removed during the school year until the student is passing all subjects taken.

Academically ineligible students must continue to attend classes and all practices and must sit out of all games, performances and other cheer events designated by the coaches. Academically ineligible students are not allowed to wear the cheerleading uniform.

If a cheerleader is ineligible for any two grading periods, the cheerleader automatically forfeits their position on the cheerleading squad for the balance of the school year. This does not include courses designated in *UIL Side by Side Manual* or designated by the ALVIN ISD School Board as exempt from the ineligibility rule.

Two Scenarios that would automatically forfeit position in Cheer program:

- Student fails a ineligible/eligible grade check and then fails to regain eligibility at the next grade check. - Students who is failing at an ineligible/eligible grade check, regains eligibility, and during the school year losses eligibility again at anytime.

6.0 TRYOUTS

A. Eligibility

1. Candidates must be officially enrolled in Alvin ISD during the semester of tryouts.
2. Candidates, if a returning cheerleader, must not have voluntarily forfeited his/her cheerleading position in the previous school year or not more than twice while attending any AISD schools.
3. Candidates, if a returning cheerleader, will not be eligible for tryouts if he/she was removed from any AISD cheer squad.
4. Candidates must be eligible as of February 22, must provide print out of grades at first tryout practice.

B. Tryout Process

1. Tryouts will be held in the spring semester of each school year.

2. Tryouts will begin with a mandatory parent/candidate meeting

A parent or legal guardian must attend the mandatory informational meeting conducted by the coaches/sponsors in order to receive the tryout packet. Candidates and parents must fill out, complete and sign all information in the packet by the designated deadline before the student is allowed to participate in the tryout process.

3. The tryout packet will consist of (ex: application, physical, teacher evaluations, assistant principal evaluations, copy of report card from Fall 2019 semester, judges scores, etc)

C. Selection Process

1. A panel of a minimum of 3 impartial judges will be secured for the actual tryout day.

a. The weight of each category will be consistent for high school cheerleading tryouts. b. The cheer coaches/athletic director will determine the weight of the categories prior to the try out information being distributed.

c. Each campus will specify which activities a candidate performs before the judges and communicates this to candidates during the clinic. Activities can include: group cheer, individual cheer, jumps, dance and chants.

D. Tabulations of Results

1. Each judge will score each candidates performance using a numeric scale. The judge will initial any changes.

2. All 3 judges scores will be added up to determine the final score for candidate.

3. Candidates total scores which include: discipline evaluation, coaches' points, judges' scores, grades are ranked in numerical order.

4. In the event of tie, an established tie-breaker procedure will be implemented. (In case of a tie, the first choice will be determined by classification of the student.)

5. Up to 16 candidates eligible for varsity with the highest rankings maybe named the new varsity cheerleaders. Up to 14 candidates eligible for junior varsity with the highest rankings maybe named the new junior varsity cheerleaders.

6. Each campus and principal will establish the manner in which selected candidates are informed, and the results are announced.

7. Decision of the principal/principal designee is final in all try-out results.

8. Appeals for any component of the cheerleading try out process must take place at the campus level.

E. Squad Size and Special Positions

1. Varsity Squad- may consist of seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen. The maximum number of cheerleaders on a varsity cheerleading squad will be 16.

2. Junior Varsity Squad- may consist of juniors, sophomores, and freshmen. The maximum number of

cheerleaders on a junior varsity squad will be 14.

3. Mascots- It is a campus decision to select a mascot. If a mascot is to be selected, the campus will establish the selection procedures and publish information related to selection procedure and job description for the school mascot. A school may select up to two students to serve as mascots; the mascot duties may be shared by students or both may be in costume acting as mascots at the same time.

4. Captains- Captains will be determined during the summer. Each campus will publish the information which delineates the selection process and duties of the captains.

5. Competition Squad- Coach(es) will determine if they will have a competition squad for that school year. The coach will select members of this squad and decide all aspects of competition. Junior Varsity members may be included on the competition team based on need.

6. All squad members must be enrolled in the class assigned for cheerleaders the entire school year and will follow the class guidelines that are set forth by the cheer coach.

7.0 GENERAL RULES, INFRACTIONS, DISCIPLINE

Cheerleaders are expected to behave in a manner that is becoming to the individual, as well as to the organization and school they represent. They are aware that in or out of uniform they are representatives of their high school's cheerleading organization and the Alvin Independent School District.

1. Cheerleaders follow all ALVIN ISD rules, policies, and guidelines.
2. Cheerleaders use proper manners at all times to address adults. Mutual respect and politeness toward members within the squad are basic elements that contribute to the total success of the squad.
3. Cheerleaders respect all school staff members, cheer coaches, chaperones, parents, and others who may have contact with the cheerleading program from time to time.

7.1 School Related Discipline

1. At any time in the school year a cheerleader who is expelled, suspended from school or receives an OSS/ADAPT assignment at an ALVIN ISD school results in removal from all extracurricular activities/programs for the duration of the placement and. (reference AISD Extra Curricular Code of Conduct)
2. A cheerleader who is placed in ISS or OSS twice during the semester shall lose the privilege of participating for the remainder of the semester. The cheerleader is eligible to try out for the next school year but may not participate in any events or practices during that semester.
3. Cheerleaders receiving a ticket/citation or under investigation involving any criminal act are automatically suspended pending the outcome of the legal proceedings.
 - a. First Offense: Suspended from all Cheer activities for 15 days. The length of other

consequences for a 1st offense will be at the discretion of the coach(es).

b. Second Offense: 1 year suspension from all cheer activities for 1 calendar year from the day of the offense.

c. Third Offense: The cheerleader will be suspended and prohibited from participating in ALL extracurricular activities for the remainder of his/her attendance in Alvin ISD.

4. Cheerleaders assigned to ISS may not perform or wear the cheerleading uniform for the duration of time they are in ISS.

7.2 General Participation / Expectations

1. Cheerleaders wear designated attire for practice, performances, camp, or other events designated by the cheer coaches.
2. Cheerleaders have their hair up and secure as per NFHS rules during practice, performance, camp, or other events designated by the cheer coaches.
3. Only cheer coach approved letter jackets, sweats, sweaters, or other attire are worn with the designated uniform or spirit attire.
4. Cheerleaders are jewelry free at all cheer events including practices, performances, camps, or other events designated by the cheer coaches.
5. Cheerleaders refrain from chewing gum or eating during all cheer events including practices, performances, camps, or other events designated by the cheer coaches unless granted permission by the coaches.
6. Cheerleaders refrain from using cell phones during practices, performances, camps, or other events designated by the cheer coaches unless granted permission by the coaches.
7. Cheerleaders must keep short, near the end of the finger tip nails, with no polish.
8. Cheerleaders maintain control and possession of their cheer items at all times.
9. Cheerleaders have required items upon arrival to practices, performances, camps, or other events designated by the cheer coaches. This includes but is not limited to megaphone, poms, uniform, shoes, clothes, etc.
10. Cheerleaders are encouraged to participate or support the fundraising efforts for cheerleading.
11. Cheerleaders follow all NCA, UCA, ACA, other professional cheerleading associations, camp rules, or other local ground rules at establishments where the squads are practicing, performing, or attending

other events designated by the cheer coaches.

12. Cheerleaders leave all areas used by the team clean. All trash is disposed of properly.

Other items and supplies are stored properly both before and after practices, performances, camps, or other events designated by the cheer coaches.

7.3 “Reminders” to Infractions of “General Participation / Expectations”

Failure to comply with the “general participation / expectations” section result in assignment of physical conditioning exercises including, but not limited to, one or a combination of the following:

1. Correction of the infraction 2. Push-ups 3. 120’s 4. 4 in 15’s 5. Towel/Scooter Pushes 6. Running 7. Frog leaps/Volcanoes 8. Up/Downs 9. Kicks 10. Jumps 11. Lunges 12. Bleacher Mile Physical conditioning exercises are completed in the time designated by the cheer coaches. Failing to complete the physical conditioning exercises in this time frame results in suspension from events until it is complete. *Exception: Fundraising events are still required.*

7.4 Additional Expectations

1. Cheerleaders are respectful and considerate towards everyone during all classes, practices, performances, camps, during school, or at any event in which they participate. Excessive negativity is never tolerated.
2. Cheerleaders refrain from cursing or arguing with anyone during all classes, practices, performances, camps, during school, or any event in which they participate
3. Cheerleaders have required items upon arrival to practices, performances, camps, or other events designated by the cheer coaches. This includes, but is not limited to, megaphone, poms, uniform, shoes, clothes, etc...
4. Cheerleaders maintain proper sideline behavior at all times during games or events.

This includes:

- Displaying cheer and spirit
- Staying focused and devoting attention to the game or event at hand
- Staying in correct formation or stance
- Demonstrating respect during the National Anthem and all school songs

- Tumbling during the entire game or event
- Refraining from excessive talking amongst the cheerleaders
- Refraining from excessive talking to the general public or family members during an event
- Refraining from excessive breaks while in sideline formation (only one cheerleader out at a time for drinks/restroom)
- Refraining from unsportsmanlike taunting of other teams or team members
- Refraining from the display of unsportsmanlike conduct

5. Cheerleaders arrive on time to practices, performances, camps, or other events

designated by the cheer coaches. Cheerleaders do not leave without the approval of the cheer coaches.

6. Cheerleaders act in a safe manner at practices, performances, camps, or other events

designated by the cheer coaches.

7. Cheerleaders do not miss the last practice before a performance, camp, or other event

designated by the cheer coaches.

8. Cheerleaders having any unexcused absence from summer practice are suspended from

the 1st football game.

9. Cheerleaders are on time for the bus.

10. Cheerleaders do not wear a cheer uniform to a non-cheerleading function. *(This includes eating after the game, at the conclusion of your game, Halloween, etc).*

11. Cheerleader's have natural color or highlighted hair which meets the coaches' approval.

12. Cheerleaders do not have any visible tattoos.

13. Cheerleaders turn in all monies, forms and paperwork on dates and times designated by cheer coaches.

14. Cheerleaders do not display any form of public affection during school, at school activities, or while wearing the cheerleader uniform.

15. Cheerleaders are fully prepared for all cheer activities.

16. Cheerleaders do not leave cheer events with anyone at any time unless approved by the

coaches.

17. Cheerleaders will not have morally questionable material or words, as determined by the coach(es) and/or administration, on any social media site such as, but not limited to, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, Texting, Tumblr, Kik, GroupMe etc.

7.5 “Reminders” for Infractions of “Additional Expectations”

Failure to comply with the “additional expectations” section will result in Physical Reminders AND/OR:

1. Suspension from participation
2. Suspension for one event
3. Suspension from current event
4. Forfeiture of position

Suspension: Cheerleader will be required to attend the event, will not be allowed wear cheer uniform, must be in dress code, and remain with coach for the entire event.

Any cheerleader accumulating 3 unexcused tardies is suspended from one event.

8.0 SCHOOL OWNED UNIFORM GUIDELINES

1. Cheerleaders do not alter a uniform without prior approval from the cheer coaches.
2. Cheerleaders return all uniforms (undamaged) after following coaches approved cleaning instructions. Uniforms are not to be dry-cleaned.

9.0 CHERLEADER SAFETY

1. Cheerleaders follow the guidelines established by the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS). The handbook is available at (www.NFHS.org).
2. Cheerleaders unable to meet the physical requirements of cheerleading do not participate without the written approval of a physician. Cheerleader’s physical ability must be in accordance with National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS).
3. Cheerleaders who have an injury/illness which prohibits them from practicing must provide a written note from their doctor or school trainer stating the reason. This note includes the nature of the injury/illness, the length of time of the restriction, the specific task that cannot be performed and any other special instructions. Lack of participation as result of injury/illness is categorized as an unexcused absence if a note is not provided.
Parents/guardians cannot excuse a student from practicing due to illness or injury.

10.0 TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to all required events is provided by AISD. Any deviation from this follows board policy. Occasionally there will be events that coach(es) allow alternate transportation. At these special events, alternate transportation forms will be provided by the coach(es) and are to be turned in to the coach(es) prior to the event. Alternate transportation will not be honored if proper forms are not received by this deadline.

11.0 MONEY COLLECTED BY COACHES

Cheerleading coaches collecting money from students give receipts stating the amount of money collected and what the money is to be charged toward (trip, uniform, banquet, etc).

12.0 ATTENDANCE

Cheerleaders attend all practices, performances and other events scheduled by the cheer coaches.

Camp Cheerleaders absent from summer camp are suspended from the 1st football game.

Practice and Performances

1. The cheer coaches are to be notified for absences prior to the absence occurring.
2. Failure to notify the coaches in writing, regardless of the reason, prior to a practice or event is an unexcused absence.
3. Absences may be excused for illness or family emergency and in some cases medical appointments.
4. Absences are not excused for work, vacation, appointment, non-UIL activity involvement, All-Stars, etc...
5. Absence from school does not release the cheerleader's parent or guardians of the responsibility to notify the cheer coaches.
6. Each unexcused absence results in a suspension from one event.
7. Cheerleaders accumulating more than 3 unexcused absences to events/practices more than 8 *total* absences per semester, or more than 3 suspensions automatically forfeit their position on the squad.

Total absences include excused and unexcused absences to cheer practices and events.

13.0 CHEERING ACTIVITIES

13.1 Varsity Cheerleaders/Mascots may be required to

Participate at the following:

- Varsity home and away football games
- Varsity home volleyball games (as assigned)
- Boys and Girls home basketball games (except during holiday break)
- Playoff games in which AISD Varsity athletic team participates (football, volleyball, and basketball)
- Summer camp
- All fundraisers
- Junior High, Elementary, and Middle School Clinic(s)
- Yearbook, football program and poster pictures
 - Other events scheduled by the cheer coaches

13.2 Junior Varsity Cheerleaders/Mascots may be required to

Participate at the following:

- Freshmen/JV home football games
- Varsity home volleyball games (as assigned)
- Boys and Girls home basketball games (except during holiday break)
- Playoff games in which AISD Varsity athletic team participates (football, volleyball, and basketball)
- Some/All Varsity Home Football Games
- Summer camp
- All fundraisers
- Junior High, Elementary, and Middle School Clinic(s)
- Yearbook, football program and poster pictures
- Other events scheduled by the cheer coaches

13.3 Competition Squad

All members of varsity will be on the competition squad. Some members of this squad may be designated as alternates. This will be determined by the coach(es). ***The competition squad is subject to all of the cheer guidelines presented in this document and other requirements determined annually by the coach(es).***

Estimated Financial Obligations

Competitive cheerleading requires a significant financial commitment. To help families with the expense of competitive cheer, the coaches can provide a sponsorship letter upon request for financial assistance from local businesses and/or friends and family. We will also have several fundraising opportunities throughout the fall through our Booster Club.

Competitive Team Commitments

Competitive athletes are expected to attend all competitions and practices as a team. We realize that many of the girls are involved in a variety of activities. However, we cannot make exceptions for schedule conflicts. We expect top priority and 100% commitment and attendance. The coaches reserve the right to remove athletes from the program for failure to adhere to any of the following guidelines.

Competitions Guidelines

1. ALL COMPETITIONS ARE MANDATORY FOR EVERY ATHLETE. This means you must show up even if you're sick. No exceptions.
2. Adjustments can be made if necessary to the routine at the event if athletes are unable to perform certain skills, but they must be present.
3. Every athlete must not only attend every competition, but they must be available the entire week/weekend of the event and the entire week/weekend leading up to the event - no exceptions.
4. Athletes should be prepared to practice the entire week prior to and the week leading up to any event/competition, even if practices are scheduled last minute. Please be aware that once the competitions start, it will be very time consuming.

14.0 SUSPENSION / REMOVAL FROM SQUAD

Cheerleaders are suspended from the squad by the cheer coaches for infractions of the rules, policies, guidelines, and expectations set forth in this document or for the infraction of Alvin ISD's rules, policies, or guidelines.

Cheerleaders suspended from the squad are:

- suspended from an event designated by the coach(es)
- required to utilize team transportation
- required to remain in an area designated by the coach
- required to follow all policies and guidelines in the handbook.

Cheerleaders suspended by the cheer coach more than three (3) times automatically forfeit their position on the squad.

Cheerleaders are suspended from the squad for the remainder of the school year by the cheer coaches for documented, continual infractions of the rules, policies, guidelines and expectations set forth in this document. Upon the determination that a cheerleader is continually infracting the rules, policies, guidelines and/or expectations, parental notification will occur in an effort to avoid suspending the cheerleader. However, if after such notification, the cheer coaches determine that suspension is warranted, the cheerleader is dismissed from the squad.

Alvin ISD High School Cheerleader/Mascot Handbook

2020-2021

I acknowledge that I received a copy of the Alvin ISD 2019-2020 Cheerleader / Mascot Handbook. Further, I understand that I am held accountable for behavior and am subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in this document.

I read in full the Alvin ISD Cheerleader / Mascot Handbook and understand the duties and responsibilities of being a member of an AISD cheer squad.

I agree to follow this document to best of my ability, and if unsuccessful, I accept the disciplinary consequences outlined in this document.

I was given the opportunity to ask questions and receive clarification.

As a parent/guardian of a member of the 2019-2020 cheerleader/mascot, I understand that I am held to the policies set forth in this handbook. I will:

- Stay informed of the rules, regulations, and procedures
- Support my cheerleader/mascot in complying with the rules and regulations
- Provide transportation as needed to ensure that the cheerleader/mascot arrives on time
- Pick up students on time after practice and events
- Attend all required parent meetings
- Follow the chain of commands listed when addressing concerns or issues
- Insure fulfillment of all financial responsibilities required of the students as a member of the squad.
- It is important to the achievement of our goals that staff and parents work cooperatively.
- Sign up to participate in fundraising and bonding events coordinated by the cheer coach.

Infraction of these rules directly or indirectly for any reason will jeopardize my child's position on the team.

Parent's Name Printed:

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

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I was given the opportunity to ask questions and receive clarification.

Cheerleader's Name Printed:

Cheerleader's Signature: _____ Date: _____