

Holston Middle School

Cheerleading Handbook 2020-2021

I. The Role of a Cheerleader

- Represent the school to the highest degree.
- Set an example of good behavior and sportsmanship at all times.
- Provide leadership.
- Promote unification of the crowd's involvement during the athletic events.
- Improve life skills in the area of: leadership, emotional maturity, self-confidence, moral and ethical values, decision making skills, cooperation, spirit of competition, character and self-discipline.
- Balance academic requirements and demands with extra-curricular and personal activities.

II. Standards of Behavior for Cheerleader

Cheerleaders by title are **role-models**. Your coach hopes that you will embrace this role.

Remember that there are people watching everything you say and do, because of this, cheerleaders are expected to set high standards for their school and to set a good example for their fellow students.

- All cheerleaders must maintain an attitude of enthusiasm and cooperation with team members and coach at all times. Working together may mean making personal sacrifices at times for the good of the team and doing so with enthusiasm.
- As a representative for Holston Middle School, cheerleaders are expected to uphold all school rules, handbook policies, and state laws while in or out of uniform. Any violation of these rules or conduct deemed improper and unsuitable for a cheerleader - no matter where the incident takes place - will result in consequences administered at the discretion of the coach and/or the athletic director.
- If a cheerleader receives OSS 1 time they will be suspended for two games. If a cheerleader gets OSS again they will be dismissed from the team.
- If a cheerleader receives ISS 1 or 2 times they will be suspended a minimum of 1 game. If a cheerleader receives ISS a 3rd time they will be dismissed from the team.
- If a cheerleader receives RLC they will be suspended for ½ a game.
- Bullying is a serious offense and Holston Middle School has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy. If your cheerleader is bullying in any capacity he/she will be dismissed immediately. If any parent(s) of any cheerleader participates in any form of bullying/harassment they may be prohibited from attending any sporting event and may result in their child's dismissal from the team.
- A student shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation, cyber bullying (social media platforms/text) or manipulation.
- In order to be able to tryout for the Cheerleading Squad a 6th or 7th Grade student must have a 2.0 GPA on their 9 weeks report card right before tryouts. A 5th Grade student must not have any grade below a C to be eligible to tryout on the 9 weeks report card right before tryouts. (Usually The 3rd 9 weeks Grade Card.)

- A Cheerleader must have a 2.0 GPA on their 1st 9 weeks report card of the 2020-2021 school year to be eligible to cheer for the 1st semester of the school year. If Grades are below a 2.0 GPA the cheerleader will be dismissed from the team.
- A Cheerleader must have a 2.0 GPA on their 2nd 9 weeks report card to be eligible to cheer after Winter Break.
- **** The two bullets above also apply for behavior. Cheerleaders are considered to be role models. In order to be a good role model a cheerleader should be one of the best behaved students at Holston Middle School.**

A cheerleader's Grades/Behavior has rarely been an issue in the past, and I don't foresee Grades/Behavior ever being a problem in the future. Holston cheerleaders have always been our brightest and most well-behaved students, BUT we want a plan in place if Grades/Behavior ever become an issue.

III. Communication

- All team communication will be by texts/phone calls, or through a group messaging app.
- All dates will be communicated with a monthly cheer calendar and through group messaging. It is your responsibility to stay on top of messages and emails sent by coaches.
- No social media will be used for team communication.

IV. Attendance Policy

- Cheerleading is a time-consuming sport with practice and events. All cheerleaders are expected to attend ALL scheduled meetings, practices and events. **THREE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES equal dismissal from the team.**
- Cheerleaders must be in attendance at school to be eligible to participate in practice or performances. **The only excused absences are below:**
- Death in the family.
- Medical illness (requires a note from a parent/the doctor stating the illness is contagious)
- Other medical issue (i.e. sprained wrist-requires note from the doctor releasing the cheerleader to participate again.)
- Academic Necessity-(Tutoring or school activity approved by coach 2 weeks prior to missed event.)
- If you are out due to an injury (i.e. sprained wrist) you MUST present a Doctor's note releasing you before you will be allowed to return to practice, a game or competition. Cheerleaders are still required to attend all practices, games or other scheduled events while injured.
- If you are out due to an injury and unable to perform ALL skills necessary for a cheerleader you will be rostered as an alternate for any competition. If the cheerleader is unable to fulfill his/her physical requirements for an extended period (several months/entire season) they may be dismissed from the team.
- Unexcused absences from school are not acceptable. You must be at school to participate in cheerleading activities.
- If you are at school, you are expected to be at practice that day. Please schedule appointments during times that will not conflict with cheerleading practices or events.
- Missing practices that are categorized as "excused" absences can still lead to being removed from a routine, position or stunt, due to not physically being available to practice. IF you miss a practice on a game week you will not cheer at the ball game.
- During game suspensions, the team member will sit in uniform with the coach for the entire game.

- If you are dressed out at any event you are expected to remain with your team/coach at ALL times. You will not sit in the student section, with your friends or parents.

V. Safety

- Every cheerleader will be required to go through and follow the safety guidelines put into place by The Safety Progression of Stunting.
- Each stunt group and each member of the stunt group will only be allowed to build a stunt they have been signed off on through The Safety Progression of Stunting.
- Nails are to be kept at an appropriate length. Neutral Nail polish ONLY.
- Appropriate practice wear (NO JEANS OR JEAN SHORTS) as well as appropriate game/performance wear (Uniform, Bloomers, Warm Up Pants Under the uniform skirt, bow, socks, and shoes) must be worn at all times.
- Hair must be in a ponytail or braid for all practices, games, and appearances.
- Athletes will NEVER spot another athlete or tumble without supervision of a coach or other AACCA certified staff member.

VI. Cheer Season

- Practices and Event Participation: While every effort will be made to schedule in advance, events may be scheduled and attendance required with short notice.
- Practices during the school year will be up to 2 days per week for 1 hour and 15 minutes to 2 hours on Tuesday and possibly Friday depending on time of year. A Monthly Cheer Calendar will be given out at the end of each previous month with all events, practices, and games for that month on it. **PLEASE KEEP UP WITH THIS CALENDAR!**
- **Arrive** at all practices on time, with hair in a ponytail or braid.
- Parents are **REQUIRED** to pick up cheerleaders from practice at the ending time. If practice ends at 5:00pm parents need to be in the parking lot at 5:00pm to get their cheerleader. **** No Cheerleader should be told by a Parent to call them to come and get them when practice is over. Practice will end at the designated time listed in the Group Messaging App and on the monthly Cheer Calendar.. The Coach will respect your time by ending practice on time. The Coach asks parents to respect her time by not picking up their cheerleader late. (**It is understood things happen sometimes (ex: car wrecks, cars break down, mis-communication, but a cheerleader repeatedly being picked up late from practice, games, or competition will NOT be tolerated.)**
- Every Cheerleader will be expected to cheer all basketball games including post-season.

Practice Expectations

Team members are expected to be dressed (no jeans or jean shorts), stretched, stunts and tumbling warmed up by 3:45 ready to begin practice on time.

- Team members will stand silently at attention, ready for the next activity in between practicing cheers, chants, stunts, tumbling, dancing.
- There is a time to have fun and a time to be serious. Practices are to prepare for events/games/competitions. Practices are not the time for cutting up, laughing, or

giggling with each other. **If you can't take practice seriously then your parents will be notified to come and get you immediately.

- While stunting other team members will support/spot for the group stunting if needed. Team members will NOT attempt to be a distraction to the stunt group stunting in an attempt to cause the stunt to fall.
- Team members are expected to attend every practice. If you're not at practice it is possible for you to be replaced in a stunt for an event, because you can't be there to practice.
- Your cell phones must be turned off and put in your cheer bag during practice.

Game Day Expectations:

- Team members are expected to wear their uniforms to school on game day. **This is not optional.**
- For home games, cheerleaders need to report to Ms. Bright's Room (ISS Rm:121 in the office) and be fed, freshened up, and warmed up by 4:00.
- For away games, the bus will leave Holston Middle School @ 3:15pm, cheerleaders need to be freshened up, on the bus with all their belongings before it leaves.
- **Have complete uniform (Shell Top, Skirt, Leggings, Jacket, bow in hair, bloomers/spandex, and cheer shoes) at all games. If you are missing pieces you will not cheer.**
- **Hair and make-up must be game day ready upon arrival.**
- **On game day, hair is up out of your face with a bow in the correct place. Cheerleaders may be asked to remove makeup if it has been put on in excess.**
- Remain in the cheering area. Do not leave without coach permission.
- No cellphones will be allowed in the gym. They will be kept in Ms. Bright's Room or in your cheer bags on the bleachers during home games. They will need to be in cheer bags at away games.
- Control and lead the crowd through positive cheers and chants. Any conduct deemed unsportsmanlike is subject to disciplinary action at the Coach's discretion, up to and including dismissal from the team.
- DO NOT socialize on the sidelines/court with anyone during the game. **(Expectation: The two Captains picking and calling a cheer or chant)**
- Cheerleaders are to stand silently attention on the sidelines/court/in the performance area unless they are cheering or the National Anthem is being played/sung.
- Cheerleaders are to remain on the side lines AT ALL TIMES unless you are sick or injured (please notify the coach immediately) receive permission from Coach to leave the sidelines/court.
- Cheerleaders must be standing on the sidelines with 1:00 (one minute) remaining on the game clock after halftime and in between games.
- No athlete has guaranteed preferential line or routine placement. All placements are given by the Coach.
- Cheerleaders are expected to stand RESPECTFULLY, completely silent during the playing/performing of the National Anthem. If you cannot do that you will be benched for that game. If it persists you will be dismissed from the team.
- Cheerleaders will **NOT** stunt or tumble without their Coach present.

VII. Demerits

- Demerits will be issued to any cheerleader not following The HMS Cheerleading Expectations listed in the Cheerleading Handbook.
- If a cheerleader receives 28 demerits they will be removed from the cheer squad immediately.
- The Demerit System will be presented at the parent/cheerleader/coach meeting on April 27, 2020.

VIII. Uniforms

Each cheerleader will be responsible for their uniforms.

Your uniforms must be clean for every event.

Each cheerleader is responsible for replacing any lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Uniforms are to be worn for school activities only.

Do not lend your uniform to anyone.