

THE COLONY HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADING Guidelines 2026-2027 Lewisville Independent School District



This document is designed to serve as a set of general guidelines for administrators, coaches, parents, and student cheerleaders. The purpose of the handbook is to communicate these guidelines to help The Colony High School Cheerleading squads be the best possible representatives for their school. Good judgment and professional opinion will be used when events are not covered in this document. The interpretation of this cheer handbook is the responsibility of coaches and school administrators. Each has the right to add or delete items they feel are necessary for the benefit of the organization. Any changes in these guidelines will be communicated in writing to all cheerleaders and their parents prior to going into effect.

PURPOSE

Cheerleaders and spirit groups exist to promote good sportsmanship, good citizenship, wholesome enthusiastic school spirit and are first and foremost representatives of the school. Cheerleaders should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their position and in accordance with the rules as stated in the LISD Code of Conduct. Members of these groups have a fundamental responsibility to play a leadership role in building teamwork and helping the school achieve its goals and objectives through promotion of the student body, community support and involvement in athletic events and school functions. Cheerleaders are expected to be physically and mentally skilled in learning and remembering cheers/routines. They are also expected to be able to publicly demonstrate a skill level suitable for the team position and the timing necessary for group performance. On and off the field, they are to enthusiastically support all athletic teams and TCHS groups through advertisement, personal attitude and attendance at events chosen by the coach

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MEMBERSHIP/COMMITMENT

Cheerleading year: The rules and procedures outlined in this handbook are in effect from the time the student is selected to the cheerleading program until the next tryout date (March to March). These rules apply to cheerleaders, yell leaders and mascots in the program equally.

- Candidates selected to be a member of the cheerleading squad are expected to make a commitment to the activity for a full cheerleading year.
- All members of a cheerleading squad must enroll in the required cheerleading class.
- Cheerleaders will be expected to participate in every cheerleading activity. This includes performances, practices, fundraisers, campus events, social events, competition, community events, decorating, sign-making and other events assigned by coaches.
- Any squad member that quits or is removed from the team will not be allowed to try out the next year without coach and administrator approval. Additionally, the squad member will not be allowed to attend the end-of-year cheer banquet as a squad member or as a guest of a squad member without prior approval from coaches and administration.
- Members who make a team, but quit, are removed, or leave the team for any reason, will not be refunded.
- The Coach has the right to approve seniors to graduate early if approval was given at the time of tryouts and the early graduation contract is signed with the tryout paperwork. Anyone that does not try out for the team the following year or does not make the team at tryouts will be removed from the cheer period at the end of that grading period.

ELIGIBILITY

Tryout Eligibility: A student is eligible to tryout for cheerleader if the following conditions are met:

- At the time of tryout, the student is enrolled in LISD and is trying out at the school the student is registered to attend for the next school year.
- If the student is not currently enrolled in LISD but is registered to attend the TCHS campus for the next school year, the student may tryout at that campus with documentation to support residency within the boundaries of TCHS for the upcoming school year. Campus Administrative approval will be needed.

Academic Eligibility: To be eligible for tryouts, students must have either passed all subjects the preceding grading period or regained UIL eligibility prior to tryouts. Any student that is ineligible per UIL guidelines, will **not** be permitted to try out for cheerleading.

SELECTION/EVALUATION PROCESS

Selection: The procedures for selection are based on the Cheer Coaches Policies of The Colony HS and from the guidelines in this handbook. The coaches' decision for squad selection is final. Parents will not be allowed in the building during any phase of the tryouts.

Tryout Guidelines:

- The coaches will be responsible for the preparation/distribution of a packet of information to be made available to all candidates. This information will include specific tryout dates, times, attire, and procedures.
- Candidates and parents must sign a form stating that they understand and will comply with all information in the packet before the student is allowed to participate in the tryout process.
- TCHS cheerleaders shall be selected by an evaluation made by the coaches during the clinics and tryout.
- Students wishing to try out for the cheerleading squad must fill out all required paperwork with the team coach by the first day of the clinic before the clinic begins.
- A physical exam or proof of prior exam is required before a student is allowed to participate in tryouts. A parental permission form is also required. These must be completed before a cheerleader, yell leader, or mascot can participate in any activity.
- Each student trying out must attend the tryout evaluations to be considered for a team.
- A candidate will not be allowed to tryout if they fail to meet the Coach's expectations for behavior or directives during the clinic or on the day of tryouts.

Evaluation Process:

- Candidates will be evaluated on jumps, tumbling, spirit, voice, enthusiasm, motion techniques, game day performance, dance, stunting, attitude, participation, and anything else the coach determines.
- The coaches will watch them during the two clinic days and the tryout day to determine if they execute the skills, attitude and work ethic to be placed on a team.
- Final roster decisions are determined by the Head Cheerleading Coach.

Injured Candidates:

In the case that an athlete is injured and wishes to tryout, the following must be met:

- A doctor's note stating what they can and cannot participate in, and the estimated date of clearance.
- A video **within 1 year** of the tryout date of the skills needed to score. ***If no video within a year can be provided, the cheerleader must participate to the best of their ability.***
- For full credit, the video must be on hard mat (non spring floor). This would include grass, turf, hard gym floor or traditional cheer flooring with no springs under.
- Only jumps, tumbling and stunts may be submitted with the video guidelines. The cheerleader must participate to their best of their ability in cheer, dance and all other categories.
- Coaches have the right to score current cheerleaders on skills they have witnessed.

Newly Enrolled Students

- If a student enrolls at The Colony High School after the cheerleading tryout has been completed, the coaches may hold a private tryout for team placement upon school enrollment approval and application submission. This tryout must be approved by the administration. All late tryouts must be requested prior to summer camp. If the late tryout request occurs after camp, it will be up to the head coach and administration if the tryout will be allowed. In order to be placed on a team, the cheerleading prospect must fall within the scoring range of the current team members.

Squad Dynamics:

- **The decision to combine squads or move team members up can be done at the discretion of the coaches based on numbers and team needs at any time; this will override the grade level per squad.**

Varsity:

- Number will be determined by the coaches' evaluations at tryouts
- Consists of Junior and Senior females
- Sophomore females will be considered for Varsity depending on squad needs

Junior Varsity:

- Number will be determined by the coaches' evaluations at tryouts
- Consists of Sophomore females
- Any junior not making the Varsity squad may be eligible to make the Junior Varsity squad, if they consent in writing prior to the tryout
- Freshmen females will be considered for JV depending on squad needs

Freshmen:

- Number will be determined by the coaches' evaluations at tryouts
- Consists of freshmen males and females

Yell Leaders (Male Cheerleaders):

- Sophomore, Junior, and Senior males will be placed on the JV/V team that the coaches determine is best for the skill level.
- Freshmen males are only eligible for the freshmen squad.

Mascots/Managers:

- Can be 9th-12th grade males or females.
- Managers may be appointed to assist the coaches and teams. The decision to have managers is at the sole discretion of the coaches.
- If there are no mascot candidates that tryout, then cheerleaders that do not meet the cheer tryout criteria can be placed as a mascot.
- Mascots/Managers will receive a PE credit if in the class period, so they will do all athletic aspects of cheer as designated by the coaches.
- Mascots can be in the cheer class during football season and will perform at designated football games and pep-rallies. Mascots can be approved not to be in the period at the coaches discretion.
- Mascots will also serve as the team manager at times as designated by the coaches.
- The number of mascots will be determined by the coaches.

Captain Selection:

- The Varsity captains will be chosen by the head coach with the assistance of the assistant coaches.
- To be considered for captain, you must be a senior that has already cheered at least one year at the varsity level.
- A Varsity Co-Captain can be selected from the Juniors if the coaches choose to do so. This Junior must have cheered a full year on the Varsity/JV team prior.
- Varsity captain candidates will lead a cheer practice, complete a captain essay and be interviewed by the coaches.
- Junior Varsity/Freshmen captains will be chosen by coach evaluation. The number of captains and whether to have a captain at the JV/F level is up to the coach. JV captains should have already cheered at the freshmen level.
- Captains can be demoted from their position at any time if the coach feels they are not performing to expectations.

Captain Responsibilities:

- Able to fulfill the extra time commitment that is needed for planning and captain obligations.
- Set the mental and emotional tone of the team, alongside the coaches.
- Be able to responsibly deal with squad conflict resolution and keep coaches informed about team issues.
- Provide input on team decisions.

- Be loyal to the coaches and support their decisions.
- Be able to publicly speak in front of crowds and under pressure. (Events, interviews)
- Arrive early to all practices, games, and events
- Lead the team during games, pep rallies, and other events
- Call cheers at games and competitions
- Direct teammates on the field and sidelines
- Ensure mats are out and all team members are warmed up, stretched and ready
- Ensure cheerleader attendance at community service and fundraising events
- Send out meeting times, uniforms, and game-day information
- At the beginning or every practice and game, check your team and verbally warn them to remove jewelry. If they do not, report to coaches.

Notification of Results:

All results will be posted on the cheer website and the cheer social media on the date designated by the coaches. All results are final!

Parent Request for scores:

- Requests for scores can be made through the coaches through an email request.
- Scores will not be given over school breaks/holidays or after school hours.
- The order of the candidate's placement in conjunction with the team will not be disclosed.
- By law, all other student scores are protected and cannot be shared with anyone except the coach and campus administrators.
- We as coaches would be glad to help you understand scores and what to improve on.

COMMUNICATION

Parents have the right to know, and understand the expectations placed on them and their children. Coaches have the right to know if parents have a concern; a parent should discuss concerns with the coach at the appropriate time and place.

Communication of the Parent:

Appropriate communication coaches should expect from parents:

- Concerns regarding a son/daughter expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place.
- Specific concerns regarding the coaches' philosophy and/or expectations.
- Notification of any prior schedule conflicts.
- Mental and physical treatment of their student.
- Student Behavior/Safety

Concerns not appropriate for discussion with a coach:

- Squad selection of cheers, chants, stunts or elements of a performance.
- Any situation that deals with other student athletes or squad members.

Communication of the Coach:

Communication parents should expect from the coach:

- Requirements and/or feedback the coach has for his/her student and the team.
- Locations and times of practices and performances.

- Team requirements of fees, special equipment, uniforms, squad rules, travel arrangements and off-season expectations.
- Improvements on which a cheerleader/mascot may need to focus.
- Procedures in the event his/her student becomes injured during a performance or practice.

Communication between Parent/Guardian/Coach/School:

There are situations that may require a conference to promote resolution to an issue. If a parent has a concern to discuss with the coach, the following procedure should be followed:

- Call the coach to set up an appointment: Outline and define objectives for a meeting and stick to discussing facts only.
- Do not confront the coach before, during or after a practice or performance. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution of the situation, but often escalate it.
- Do not attempt to enter the cheerleader athletic class/practice without prior permission from the Coach/Campus Principal or his/her designee during school hours or after school hours. Parents and guardians are restricted to campus visits under the guidelines for campus visitors in LISD.
- If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, a parent or guardian should follow the following chain of command: (You cannot contact the following if you have not first met with the coach directly)

Chain of Command:

- Head Cheer Coach
- Campus Assistant Athletic Coordinator or Athletic Coordinator
- Assistant Principal over Cheer
- HS Principal

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility:

- Academic eligibility begins anew each school calendar year (August) as is the case with UIL sanctioned activities.
- A student whose recorded grade average in any course is lower than a 70 at the end of a UIL eligibility period shall be suspended from competition or performance. A suspension continues for at least three weeks and is not removed during the school year until the student is passing all subjects taken. This suspension shall become effective seven calendar days after the last day of the UIL eligibility period during which the grade lower than 70 was earned. Refer to board policy for a list of courses that are exempt from this policy. (These could include AP, Dual Credit and Collegiate classes)
- A student who regains eligibility at the end of a UIL eligibility period shall not become eligible until the school day seven calendar days later at 4:00 pm.
- Per the TEA/UIL Eligibility Calendar High School Side by Side, a cheerleader who is ineligible at a Nine Week grading period (or the first 6-weeks) and two subsequent grading periods in the same or different subjects, will be removed from cheerleading at the next grading period. The participant will only be allowed to tryout the following year with the approval of the campus cheerleading coach.

No pass- no play includes:

- Public performances of any type
- Dressing in uniform for events without coaches approval
- Traveling to away cheer events

It does not include:

- Social events
- Community service not involving performances

- Practice
- Fundraisers
- Cheer class

GENERAL CONDUCT RULES/EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT (ECOC)

General Code of Conduct Rules: Cheerleaders are expected to behave in a manner that is becoming to the individual, as well as to the organization they represent. They should be aware that in or out of uniform they are representatives of the cheerleading squad and the high school they attend and should act accordingly. Any cheerleader removed from his/her squad for disciplinary reasons during the current cheerleading year will not be eligible to participate in the next tryout without approval from the coach. Areas to be reviewed will include but not be limited to a review of the reason(s) for removal and student records since removal (academic grades, discipline records, attitude, etc.)

Cheerleaders will meet the following expectations on and off the field/court/mat. Violation of the following expectations (depending on the severity) may be dealt with by benching during practice/performance, placement on behavior contract, running, jumping, mat duty, or other physical conditioning as determined by the Coach:

- Work and practice hard as a team 100% of the time taking practice/performances/games seriously and not playing around.
- A member must WANT to be a team member and must be willing to accept criticism that will help attain improvement
- Show honesty and integrity at all times exhibiting excellent character, conduct and citizenship
- Be good role models and leaders of the school on and off campus
- Display positive school spirit towards all programs/sports in the school exhibiting school spirit
- Exhibit a positive attitude toward TCHS, teachers, coaches, peers, the sport of cheer etc.
- Respect the coaches decisions on placements and do what you are asked to do the first time
- Come to the Coach first with any concerns you may have
- Address the coaches in a respectful manner (yes ma'am/sir and no ma'am/sir)
- Accept critiques with eye contact and respect
- Never leave practice/performance/game without permission from a coach
- Do not discuss another team member's situation that does not involve you
- Honor your commitment to the team the full season
- Report ALL injuries to the Coaches and Trainers
- A member must understand that the schedule and discipline of a team member demands a high degree of determination, hard work, strength, dedication, self-discipline, and loyalty to the team concept.

In-School Suspension: Anyone assigned to in-school suspension will be subject to the following actions:

- First Offense – Benched for next event.
- Second Offense – Benched for next event and placed on probation for the duration of the year and be placed on the Behavior Contract.
- Third Offense – Removal from squad.

Students assigned to in-school suspension may not perform, wear the cheerleader uniform, or practice with the squad while serving in-school suspension. However, students benched for disciplinary reasons will be required to attend the event, and stand in the designated area by the coaches.

Out-Of-School Suspension: Anyone assigned out of school suspension will be subject to the following actions:

- First Offense – Benched for next two events, Principal/Coach Review, Placed on probation for the duration of school year and on the Behavior Contract. Possible dismissal
- Second Offense – Removal from squad.

Any member failing to abide by published school rules relating to conduct, use of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or other illegal activities will be subject to review by the coach and principal. Dismissal from the group may result from that review. Any drug/alcohol violations will be disciplined in accordance with the LISD Student Code of Conduct at school or for any school sponsored activities. The LISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct will be implemented if not at school or school sponsored activities. Should any eligibility situation not be covered by the above policy, the UIL eligibility standards will apply. Any member who is expelled or placed in the Alternate Education Program will be removed from the cheerleading squad for the remainder of the school year. The participant will only be allowed to tryout the following year with the approval of the campus cheerleading coach and campus administration.

Behavior Contract:

Cheerleaders are expected to demonstrate exemplary character at all times. At practice, performances, and all cheer related events, cheerleaders are expected to have a positive attitude, work hard, be willing to learn new things and improve skills, encourage, and help teammates, and show respect for each other, coaches, and other staff. Cheerleaders who do not meet these expectations will be counseled by the coach about needed improvement and parents will be notified. If the cheerleader continues to fail to meet these expectations, he/she will be required to meet with a coach and campus administrator and sign a behavior contract. Parents will be notified. Any failure to meet expectations after this point may result in removal from the squad. The Coaches have the right to discipline for poor attitude/behavior with conditioning, benching's or removal at any time.

Extra Curricular Code of Conduct (ECOC):

An extracurricular code of conduct has been developed and approved by the LISD school board. The ECOC must be signed by all TCHS Cheer program members as part of the tryout paperwork. The extracurricular code of conduct goes into effect from March of the current year until Tryouts of the upcoming year. Any incidents that occur after school hours or on the weekend will be disciplined in accordance with the extracurricular code of conduct, which will supersede the cheerleader constitution during these times. This does not include times that a cheerleader or male spirit squad member is participating at a school sponsored cheerleading event or activity, during which times the campus code of conduct and cheerleader guidelines will be enforced.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance/Absence Guidelines:

*Cheerleaders will attend all in/out of school practices and required events. Absence from practice or events does not just affect you, but your entire team. You have a responsibility to be at all practices and events unless illness, injury, unforeseen circumstances or emergency prevents it. Any absence must be cleared by the Coach prior to the practice/event/class period. If prior notice is not given, but it is an excused reason, it will be considered excused without prior notice and will receive a ½ game benching.

- EXCUSED:
 - Illness with a doctor's note/school nurse (unless for emergency reasons, the cheerleader should make every effort to schedule **ALL** appointments around practice and events)
 - Funerals/death in the family/Major family medical
 - Absences approved by coach/principal
 - Religious Holiday
 - Weddings of immediate family
 - Students will have one week from the absence to provide a doctor's note in order to be excused. **If an illness only keeps the cheerleader out one day, a parent note will excuse the absence.**

Excused absence without prior notice: benched for a ½ game.

- UNEXCUSED:
 - Work/vacation
 - Personal appointments (non emergency doctor/dental appointments)
 - Drivers Ed
 - Detention
 - Any other absence not approved by the coaches.

Unexcused: Benched one game.

- Cheerleaders cannot miss the last practice before an event (Benched one (1) event).
- Cheerleaders will attend all summer back to school practices (Benched one (1) game per miss).
- If a team member is absent, it is their responsibility to find out what was covered and learn any new material that was missed.
- You must call, email or send a SportsYou message to the coach ahead of time to let them know of any absence during the cheer period or after school events. Conditioning/game benching's can be given if notice is not given ahead of time.
- An unexcused or excused absence without prior approval could result in being moved to a different position in a routine, game line up or performance. A squad member may also be moved if there is an absence (excused or unexcused) on a day when a routine is being worked on depending on the needs of the routine.
- A team member that is absent on the day that a paid choreographer or tumbling coach is either in the class period or working with the team after school MUST give prior notice since this is considered a scheduled team practice. This absence will result in being removed from the choreography and possible game benching.
- TCHS Cheerleading should be your first priority after academics.
- All other school activities will not be approved without at least a week's prior approval from the coach.
- School field trips are not excused during competition season or other major performances.
- All tutorials and make up work should be scheduled to the best of your ability around the cheer schedule. The coaches do not have to excuse a team member from practice/events for this reason.
- TCHS Cheer takes precedence over any other club, organization, sport, or outside activity.

Flex Pass Absence: (formerly known as freebie)

- Each squad member is allowed to use up to 3 absences for situations beyond their control.
- You MUST give at least a week's notice to the coach for approval using the planned absence request form.
- The Head Coach will decide if the absence is an approved reason. One of the three flex pass absences given with at least a 90 day notice will allow for more flexibility in the approval.
- Every effort should be made to schedule absences during times that do not involve practices or performances. Every cheerleader is an integral part of the program and his or her attendance is necessary for the overall success of the program.

College Visits:

- Varsity cheerleaders will be given one additional Planned Absence a year to use for a college visit.
- Students must complete and turn in the Planned Absence form at least 7 days prior to the planned absence.
- Students must bring documentation on an official university/college letterhead verifying the visit;
- If a school day is missed, the absence must also be excused by the school.
- Please note that the cheerleader will not get a violation/benching for a college visit if procedure is followed but will not be able to cheer at the next event/game if the cheerleader misses choreography or the last practice prior to the event/game. In this case, the cheerleader will still be required to attend that game/event in uniform but will sit on the sidelines and support the team.
- A college visit will only cover the absence of one day worth of events. In the circumstance that there are multiple events within consecutive days, a Flex pass absence will be required for each additional day of events and a new form for that should be completed. (Ex: In a weekend, there is a football game and

choreography. The college visit would cover either Friday's football game or choreography. In this case, an additional Flex pass would also need to be taken.)

- If possible, please attempt to schedule college visits around cheerleading events.
- College visits do not cover and will not be considered approved for pre-scheduled mandatory events/practices.

Injured Cheerleaders:

- If an injury occurs that keeps the student out of practice the cheerleader must see the trainer.
- If the injury restricts the student from three or more practices, a doctor's note will be required. This note should state the nature of the injury, the specific length of time of the restriction (or when the athlete will be seen again), the specific task the student cannot perform, and any special instructions.
- Lack of participation will be categorized as missing practice if there is no note.
- Injured cheerleaders will attend all cheer practices and events, unless otherwise noted by a doctor.
- Will fully dress out if capable in practice clothes/uniforms.
- Injured members are expected to actively participate in team practices by giving squad feedback, helping coaches with necessary team needs, and continuing to condition depending upon medical limitations.
- Will not be cleared to participate in cheer events until cleared from a doctor and the athletic trainers.

DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

In School Minor Violations:

These items will be considered minor violations during the cheer class period:

- dress out
- Tardies
- jewelry/spacers
- Gum
- Failure to bring supplies needed (poms, megaphones, etc.)
- hair/bangs down
- nail length
- Anything else deemed by the coaches

All these minor violations will result in after school conditioning that day designated by the coaches. If the conditioning is not started the first time asked, additional conditioning will be added. If it is not started the second time asked, another additional amount of conditioning will be added. If a coach must ask a third time, then it will result in an office referral. If a coach misses a minor violation at the start of class and then notices it later, the squad member will be asked to condition double for not being upfront with the violation on their own.

Out of School Minor Violations:

These items will be considered Out Of School minor violations:

- dress out/full uniform (including make up for females)
- Tardies
- jewelry/spacers
- Gum
- failure to bring supplies needed (poms, megaphones, etc.)
- hair/bangs down
- nail polish/nail length (only clear or french are allowed)
- not fulfilling sign crew or committee meeting duties
- Anything else deemed by the coaches

Out of school Minor Violations will be dealt with in the following manner:

Three minor violations will result in a half game benching. One half-game benching per season from minor violations (off season - from tryouts to the start of school, football - from the start of school until Dec. 1st, and basketball - from Dec. 1st until tryouts) will be allowed to be worked off with assigned conditioning. Work offs will be mandatory to complete if the squad member has not used a work off for that season. Any squad member that does not complete the work off in the designated time will serve their half game benching and will still be responsible for finishing the remainder of the work off in the time designated by the coach. The work off needs to be completed on the coach's scheduled time only and should be completed within one week. Cheerleaders that are injured at the time a work off is issued will be given other duties if the work off cannot be completed in the allotted time. (i.e. Cleaning and organizing the cheer closet, vacuuming mats, etc.)

Unexcused Tardies:

- Unexcused tardy that is under 10 minutes will result in a minor violation
- Unexcused tardies from 10:01-19 minutes will result in a half game benching
- Unexcused tardies that are 20+ minutes will result in a full game benching and will be considered an unexcused absence.

Cheerleaders will follow all school rules and LISD policy, including dress code (Campus Code of Conduct and ECOC)

Game Benching:

- Accumulation of three (3) benching's (for any reason) will result in a Coach/Admin. review and possible removal from the squad. Game benching's will be served at the next football or basketball game after the discipline is assigned.
- Volleyball games will not be used as game benching's.
- If a coach has too many benched from one game to have a full team, then they may assign the last person disciplined to the next game.

General Discipline:

- There are absolutely **NO** refunds from cheer once items have been ordered and paid for through the booster club account. This goes for beginning season fees, booster club fees and competition fees.
- All rules set forth are general rules and guidelines for all TCHS cheerleaders, male spirit squad members and mascots. Failure to comply may at times require judgment calls to be made. These decisions will be left up to the Coaches/Administration.

Coaches reserve the right to upgrade any penalty (immediate benching, office referral or removal) depending on the severity of the situation. Any conduct considered unbecoming of the program can be suspended from trying out for the program indefinitely. Coaches will determine what action will be taken in response to a situation on a case-by-case basis, and at their sole discretion.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media Contract:

ALL Social Media are powerful tools of communication that have significant impact on your personal reputation as well as the reputation of TCHS Cheer. You and your parent/guardian must read and sign this contract acknowledging your responsibility to use Social Media responsibly as a member of TCHS Cheer. You are committing to following the guidelines below when using Social Media.

- Always be authentic (disclose and use your own identity). If you post personally, or on as a TCHS Cheerleader, make sure you are aware of the Standards of Conduct stated in the TCHS Student Handbook as you share your personal views about yourself, other students, school personnel, or the school. Never post false, inaccurate or misleading information that could be taken as truth.
- Never pretend to be someone else when you post personally or as a TCHS Cheerleader. Tracking tools enable supposedly anonymous posts to be traced back to the authors. Always be honest about yourself and views without providing personal information that could be used against you. Do not share information that could endanger you or someone else.
- Think twice before posting. Privacy does not exist in the world of Social Media. Consider what would happen if a post becomes widely known, and how that may reflect on your reputation, the reputation of your family and friends, the reputation of another student, and the reputation of TCHS or TCHS Cheer. Moreover, the information you place online could jeopardize your future when applying to college or even applying for a job. Colleges and employers are increasingly conducting online searches of applicants.
- Be respectful and thoughtful. As a student of TCHS Cheer, be mindful of the school's commitment to showing respect and dignity for all people and to the civil and thoughtful discussion of opposing ideas. Refrain from negativity and putting-down, criticizing and demeaning others. Abstain from posting any objectionable content that could be considered obscene, threatening, hostile, indecent or offensive, including written and graphic material. Treat others the way you would like them to treat you while posting on Social Media sites.
- Know the rules. Follow a code of ethics. Become familiar with the terms of service and policies of the Social Media sites and networks in which you participate and the appropriate code of ethics required for responsible online communications.
- Always remember that Cyber Bullying is the willful and repeatedly bullying or harassment of another person or persons' through the medium of Social Media, which includes electronic text. Students who engage in Cyber Bullying on Social Media sites, including electronic text, may be subject to discipline by TCHS administrators and, if necessary, by The Colony Police Department as CYBERBULLYING is ILLEGAL. Remember the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" when you post on any Social Media site.
- Should you receive any information regarding any possible danger or threat to the school, DO NOT CREATE A POST OR FORWARD IT. If at school, alert a teacher, counselor or administrator immediately. If at home, tell a parent and have them contact LISD or the Police. Forwarding any post that could cause alarm, widespread panic and emergency response could be a criminal offense.
- Cheerleaders must also avoid any postings on any social media sites that include profanity, disparaging/unsportsmanlike comments, bullying, pictures of or references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nudity, or inappropriate behavior in or out of uniform or with The Colony HS cheer items showing or on.
- Should you violate any of these guidelines, not only are you violating TCHS's Student Code of Conduct, but your actions could also be criminal. By following these guidelines not only are you demonstrating good moral character, but you're also protecting yourself from criminal liabilities. Feel free to contact TCHS School Resource Officer (SRO) should you have any questions about the criminal aspects/penalties related to the misuse of Social Media. The following Texas Penal Code references apply to the types of offenses applicable to misuse of Social Media:

- Sec 33.07 Online Impersonation (up to 3rd degree Felony)
- Sec 42.06 False Alarm or Report (up to 3rd degree Felony)
- Sec 43.261 Electronic Transmission of Cert. Visual. Material (up to Class A Misdemeanor)

*By signing this contract, I agree to uphold all of the above guidelines!

PRACTICE/PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

UIL: One contest/per week: Cheerleaders are not permitted to lead cheers for contests held on separate school nights during the week. Playoff games are an exception to this rule. A school week consists of contests Monday-Thursday. Friday-Saturday contests do NOT count in the calendar week.

Violation of the following guidelines may be dealt with by benching during practice/performance, running, jumping, mat duty, or other physical conditioning as determined by the Coach.

Practice Expectations:

- Appropriate attire when practice begins. All should be in the assigned practice clothes.
- Hair must be up and secure. No braids that are not tied together in a ponytail.
- Nail length should be considered active length and no polish while in uniform.
- No gum
- No jewelry during practice.
- Pay attention and only talk at appropriate times.
- Follow stretches and do them correctly with full effort.
- Practice ALL Skills and put in 110% effort all the time
- Have a positive attitude, encourage your teammates and be willing to try something new.
- Bring all required items (forms, signs, poms, etc.) at the beginning of practice/performance.
- Be on time to all practices.
- No leaving practice area without Coach's permission.
- No leaving practice until dismissed by the Coach.

*Note that unscheduled practices and events may be called with a 24-hour advance notice.

Game Expectations:

- Correct assigned FULL uniform.
- Be on time.
- Hair must be all up in a high ponytail and secure with natural hair color only. No low ponytails and only half up if hair length requires. The coach will determine if the length of the hair requires half up.
- Nail length should be considered active length and no polish in uniform other than french or nude.
- No gum
- No jewelry during game, performance or pep-rally. (Or anytime in uniform)
- Pay attention to the game and only talk during appropriate times.
- Stay in line up.
- No leaving the performance area without coaches approval.
- No leaving the game without coaches approval.
- Make sure that all items are taken from the bus when we arrive at away games. This includes trash and personal items.
- Follow the captains as they lead in stretches.
- All will warm up jumps together.
- All will warm up stunts/pyramids/baskets together.
- Tumblers will warm up together.

- Do the game gift before the game if the opposing team is there before the school song. (Varsity football)
- Be ready for the school song together. (Varsity football)
- Take a knee immediately when a player is injured and do not talk.
- Be loud and smile big! Have fun.
- Cheerleaders are expected to know the motions and words to all cheers and chants.
- Coaches also have the ability to bench a cheerleader during a game for not displaying appropriate enthusiasm and skills or for not knowing the material.
- Showcase your skills – including tumbling and jumps during every performance! Jump or throw tumbling after EVERY cheer and chant.
- Pay attention when cheers are called, but also pay attention to what is going on in the game. You should know what is happening on the field/court.
- You will not be allowed to leave between quarters, so be sure to use the bathroom prior to game time.

*Disregard for game time expectations may result in immediate violations/benchings to be served at the current game or the following game/performance. Cheerleading is a privilege you have earned through your ability, dedication, and hard work. Continuing to display those abilities, hard work, and dedication is an expectation that will be maintained throughout the year.

Class Period Expectations:

- Cheerleaders will have 5 minutes after the tardy bell to get dressed and be ready to warm up for the cheer class. Any tardy to class, wrong clothes/shoes, hair not properly put up, jewelry, shorts rolled, etc. will be given after school conditioning. You **MUST** be completely ready when you walk through the door.
- Practice and class time can consist of the following: stretching, jumping, running, weight training, tumbling, stunting, cheers/chants, routines, sign making, and any other skills designated by the coaches.
- All cheerleaders and yell leaders will be required to take the cheerleading class period and will be graded on cheerleading skills as well as class participation, sign making, attitude, and other areas decided by the coaches.
- Seniors **MUST** stay in the cheer class the full year to be eligible to attend the end of the year cheer banquet. Only those seniors that need a required course to graduate will be given approval to get out of the cheer class the second semester. This **MUST** be scheduled the year prior during the scheduling period. This could make them ineligible for the competition team.

OTHER CHEER DUTIES

Sign Crew:

JV/Freshmen cheerleaders will be required to attend designated varsity games to serve as sign crew.

- Must arrive at the designated time in the correct full uniform. That includes the cheer backpack only and black water bottle.
- They must remain at the game until all duties are fulfilled.
- All sign crew must ride to and from away games with the team.
- Any sign crew duties that need to be switched with another team member must be approved ahead of time by filling out the game switch form and turning it into the varsity coach at least a week in advance.
- Bring the required items to the game or load them on the bus for away games.
- For home games all sign crew will move the items from the cheer closet to the field house at the end of 4th period.
- Hang the sign center of the Varsity cheerleaders at the game.
- Put all other supplies center on the Varsity cheerleaders at the fence area under the sign.

- At home games, take the spirit table items under the bleachers to the parents. Pick up these items at the end of halftime and return it to the fieldhouse.
- Make sure all items are packed up and returned to the fieldhouse for home games, or loaded on the bus for away games. Make sure nothing is left behind.
- Minor violations will be given for each part of the sign crew duty that is not fulfilled.
- Game benching's can be given based on the severity of the sign crew duty not fulfilled.
- Sign crew MUST sit down on the track in the designated area given by the coach and must follow all the same guidelines as the varsity cheerleaders. This means that they should not be using their phones or eating/drinking during the game. This can be done at half time or before or after the game. Sign crew may also be assigned mascot duties if needed.
- Make sure that you have a ride home when the game ends.

Cheer Committees:

- Cheer committees will be set up that have meetings determined by the coaches. *
- Meetings are mandatory and will be given class grades or minor violations for any portion of the committee duty that is not fulfilled.
- Committee meetings are on the calendar that the coaches distribute in advance.
- Reminders may be given by the coaches, but the cheerleader is responsible for checking calendars on their own and attending all meetings.
- If a meeting is missed, it is up to the cheerleader to approach the coach about what they missed.
- Once a squad member has missed a third meeting it will become a benching. At the third miss, they will receive a half game benching, and the 4th will be a full game. There will be a full game benching for every miss after the 4th.

Community Service:

- Community service hours will be set up as a group by the cheer coaches and attendance will be mandatory.
- If a cheerleader must miss a community service event for an approved excused reason, then they will be required to make up those hours on their own approved scheduled event. These absences MUST be turned in for approval at least one week prior to the event. They will have one month from the scheduled community service date to make up the time and should show proof from the organization that the community service was done with. If it is not made up by this time, then it will be considered a miss from an event and a game benching will be given.
- All squad members MUST attend all required community service to be eligible to attend the end of year cheer banquet.
- Varsity team members will be required to have 15 hours of approved community service, JV will be required to have 12 hours of community service and Freshmen will be required to have 10 hours of community service. These hours must be completed before the end of the year cheer banquet.
- Any event that a member volunteers for is mandatory once they have committed.

Socials:

- Socials that are paid for by the booster club for the full team will be considered required and unexcused misses will follow the absence guidelines.

BANQUET

Any squad member quitting the team or removed from the team will not be allowed to attend the end of year cheer banquet as a squad member or as a guest of a squad member. Squad members removed due to injuries will still be able to attend with prior approval from the coaches. Early grad seniors can attend banquet as a team member with coach approval only if the early grad form was filled out at the time of tryouts.

SUMMER CAMP/SUMMER WORKOUT GUIDELINES

Summer Camp:

Cheerleaders will attend summer camp. Camp is where they receive their certifications to be able to perform cheer skills safely.

- Camp is MANDATORY.
- Failure to attend summer camp is reason for dismissal from the squad.
- The only exception to this rule is late tryouts that happen after camp.

Summer Workouts:

Summer workouts are important to the cheer program in order to keep the kids in shape and to better our cheer program.

- Summer workouts will be done by cheerleaders uploading videos/photos to a shared google drive with their coach each week.
- Students may attend the school summer workouts/other cheer and tumbling gym workouts in place of uploading photos and videos with the correct criteria followed from the coaches.
- When available the cheer coaches will also offer open gyms at the school to come in and complete the workouts.
- Cheerleaders will also be asked to meet with their spirit buddies in order to help them go over the cheers/chants/band dances/fight song.
- Failure to participate in summer workouts could result in a benching at the start of the season and losing eligibility for the competition team.

UNIFORM GUIDELINES

Cheerleaders Will Not:

- Wear uniform to a non-CHEERLEADING function (Eating after a game may be approved by the Coach as an exception to the guideline)
- Lend out uniforms, warm-ups, practice clothes etc. to someone who is not a cheerleader.
- Cut fabric or alter uniforms in any way without prior approval from the Coach for uniform alterations.

Cheerleaders Will:

- Turn in uniforms by the scheduled date.
- Be responsible for damage to or loss of any part of a uniform (replacement of uniform or repair cost).
- Uniforms are expected to be washed after each use during the season; it is unacceptable to wear dirty uniforms for performances. Wash uniforms inside out and then hang to dry. DO NOT dry clean, this ruins the emblems.
- Will be charged a cleaning fee of \$50 for unwashed/wet uniforms.

Game Day Ready:

- All squad members should look game day ready anytime they are in uniform. Those that do not follow this will sit out until corrected. This will go towards their game benching's.
- Correct full uniform including shoes, top, skirt/pants, hair bow, white ankle socks and cheer issued backpack. This will also include jackets, leggings and crop tops if designated.
- Hair ALL up in a high ponytail (or half up if length is approved by the coach). NO wispy's hanging down. Natural hair color only.
- Game Day make-up for females.
- NO jewelry.
- Nails correct length/shape and no paint (french only).
- No visible tattoos or hickeys while in uniform.

- Team members should maintain an All-American look as determined by the coach.
- Only the Cheer warm up can be worn over the uniform if cold. Letter jackets can be worn to school and to and from games, but not while cheering as a team.
- Cheer shoes should always be worn with the uniform, even to and from games.

Letter Jackets:

Letter jackets are optional and not part of the cheer uniform, so should not be worn with the uniform during games. Those on the Varsity team and those that compete on the floor at UIL are eligible to letter in cheer after the season. So, these kids would be eligible for the fitting through athletics in the Spring. All letter jacket costs are the responsibility of each individual.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

Cheerleading is a sport and with any sport there is risk of injury. Cheerleading is an anaerobic/aerobic activity that includes jumping, stunting, motions, and tumbling. All physicals and medical releases must be on file with the coaches and trainers before the student can participate in the sport, practices or games. Coaches should be informed of any injury or chronic conditions. Although the probability of injury is minimized if you practice correctly, there is always the possibility of one occurring. Injuries that can occur in cheerleading include but are not limited to the following: blisters, muscle strains, ligament sprains, joint and muscle soreness, abrasions, contusions, stress fractures, broken bones, spinal cord injuries involving paralysis and even death. However, if you take certain precautions, the possibility of such injuries may be largely decreased.

Be sure to abide by the following:

- Never stunt or tumble unless a coach is present.
- TCHS Cheer should be placed under the direction of a qualified coach. Always practice in the presence of a qualified coach.
- The Cheerleading coach or other knowledgeable designated school employee will be in attendance at all practices, performances, functions, and will ride with the team members on the bus when bus transportation is required.
- All Cheerleaders should receive proper training before attempting any form of cheerleading (tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps. ie. cheer camp).
- If possible, all practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for the activities of cheerleaders, i.e., use of tumbling mats where warranted, away from excessive noise and distractions, etc.
- Always warm-up appropriately before cheering (practice and games) by jogging and stretching.
- Do not attempt a stunt that you do not know how to perform safely and that has not been cleared by the coach.
- Always use attentive spotters when stunting.
- Always use mats or a grassy area when stunting during practice.
- Always cheer in an area free from obstructions.
- Do not stunt on uneven ground, wet surfaces, and concrete. Do not stunt in cold or rainy weather.
- Never talk, laugh, or mess around when performing a stunt or learning a stunt.
- Report injuries to the coach as soon as they occur.
- Follow all trainer and doctor recommendations.
- Lift weights and maintain proper conditioning to increase strength and guard against injuries.
- Always wear shoes and clothing appropriate for cheerleading.
- Never wear jewelry of any kind or chew gum when cheering, including practices and games.
- Always have your hair pulled back from your face and shoulders.
- Eat nutritious meals and get plenty of rest.
- Always ask for assistance or advice at any time.
- Take all activities seriously.
- Coaches must recognize the entire squad's particular ability level and adjust the squad's activity accordingly.

I have read the preceding warning. I understand the assumption of risks inherent in cheerleading participation. I acknowledge that I am physically fit and voluntarily participating in the activity of cheerleading.

Specific Safety Guidelines:

All National Federation of State High School Associations(NFHS)/USA Cheer Spirit guidelines will be followed at all times.

Media Photo Consent:

All parent/Guardians grant and understand giving permission to the Media Coordinator of the Cheer Booster Club and TCHS Cheer the irrevocable right to use any images of my daughter/son, pertaining to all TCHS cheerleading events/activities/games/fundraisers in all forms of media and in all manners, including electronic media for lawful purposes.

CHEERING ACTIVITIES

- All cheerleaders will attend every assigned activity whether performing or not unless approved in advance by the coach.
- Transportation will be provided to some activities except home games/practices/other pre-approved events like NCA camp/competition events. When transportation is provided everyone will ride to and from the activity with his/her team.
- Requests for transportation exceptions must be made in writing at least one week in advance.
- Cheerleaders must never leave the group without permission when cheering at the activity. Cheerleaders must be ready for the game when they get off the bus or when they arrive at the game/performance.
- Cheerleaders must not eat on the field/court/track during a game. Cheerleaders must wait until halftime to eat.
- Cheerleaders must not use a cell phone during an event or on the field/court/track during a game in which they are cheering. Cheerleaders must wait until halftime to make necessary calls or send text messages.
- Cheerleaders must never cheer when any player is injured.
- Each cheerleader is responsible for knowing the departure schedule for each activity.
- Missing the bus is considered an unexcused absence.

Football:

- Varsity Cheerleaders-cheer at all varsity games
- JV and Freshmen Cheerleaders-cheer at JV and Freshman home games, respectively
- Playoff games will be covered if squads are available and as determined by the coaches.

Volleyball:

- V, JV and FR squads will cheer at Varsity home Volleyball games as determined by coaches.
- FR and JV squads will cheer at FR and JV home games and possibly cover some varsity games.
- Playoff games will be covered if squads are available as determined by the coaches.

Basketball:

- Cheering is limited to district games only.
- Varsity Cheerleaders – All V boys and girls district home games should be covered.
- JV Cheerleaders – JV will cover Girls/Boys JV home district games and will cover Varsity games as needed.
- Freshmen Cheerleaders – Freshmen will cover Girls/Boys district home games and Varsity games as needed.
- Playoff games will be covered if squads are available and as determined by the coaches.

Baseball/Softball:

- Cheering is limited to district games only after tryouts that fit in the cheer schedule.
- Varsity/JV Cheerleaders – Will attend designated Softball and Baseball games as assigned.
- Playoff games will be covered if squads are available and as determined by the coaches.

Other Sports/Events:

All playoff games designated by the coach to cheer are mandatory. Note that playoff games are not on the regular calendar and will have a shorter notice than other events, performances and games. Cheerleaders will cheer for any other sports as designated by the coaches.

Competition Teams:

- UIL competition will be required and can be chosen from freshmen, JV and Varsity squads.
- Performance competition teams/STUNT teams may also be chosen at the discretion of the coaches and also will be chosen by the coaches/choreographer from the freshmen, JV and Varsity teams.
- A JV competition team may be chosen based on the numbers of the program and will compete at a minimum of two local competitions.
- Those chosen for the UIL/competition/STUNT team both as a member on mat, or an alternate will be expected to fulfill their commitment to that team. Refusal to compete on a competition team if chosen could remove them from all cheer duties.
- Competition team members may be asked to pay extra fees or participate in extra fundraisers to cover the cost of these fees. The Booster Club/School will pay for competition fees when available.
- Competition teams are considered a privilege; the coaches have the right to remove anyone from the team at any time. No one's spot on the competition team is permanent; members can be moved for any reason as the coach sees fit.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation:

- Cheerleaders must utilize designated transportation. In emergency situations, students may ride home with their parent with prior approval in writing.
- Parents may be used to drive students to and from events where a school bus is not provided such as camp and competitions.
- Students should be picked up from events at the designated times. Violations/conditioning/benchings could be given if it is well over the designated time.

BOOSTER CLUBS/PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Booster Clubs:

- ALL BOOSTER CLUBS WILL FOLLOW LISD GUIDELINES.
- Booster clubs are optional but may be allowed at the discretion of the principal and coach. Booster clubs are formed by school patrons to help enrich an organization's participation in extracurricular activities. This should be their primary focus.
- Fundraising activities should support the educational goals of the school and cheerleading squad, but they should not exploit students.
- Booster clubs should have a board of directors made of at least a President, Vice President, and Treasurer.
- There should be at least two signatories on booster club checks.
- A detailed list of income and expenditures should be published by the Treasurer for the membership monthly.
- Cheerleaders shall not be required to pay dues to a booster club.
- Cheerleaders shall not be required to raise money if a parent prefers to pay the students' cost.
- Certain fundraising activities of the booster club may result in a donation to the school cheer activity fund.

Meetings:

- All parents should try to attend the booster club meetings to stay informed with the program and will be required to attend at least one fundraiser to help the team.
- Tryout meetings and after tryout meetings will be MANDATORY for all team members' parents.
- All freshmen parents and new parents to the program MUST attend an additional after tryout parent meeting to be designated by the coaches.

Parent Commitment/Behavior:

- Parents should direct all questions or concerns about the program to the coaches first.
- Parents must give their permission for their child to fulfill all the responsibilities of being a member of the TCHS Cheer team before he/she is officially accepted.
- Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to and from all activities, except when transportation is provided by the district.
- Relatives and friends should understand that the cheerleaders have responsibilities during games, pep-rallies, performances, and practices. Therefore, they may only take photos or talk to the cheerleader after their responsibilities are completed.
- Parents should remember that cheerleading is a team sport, suspending cheerleading activities as a punishment will punish the entire team and will not be excused.
- Parents are expected to help out with events/activities as needed by the program; it is not acceptable to expect other parents to complete all required duties.
- All parents are expected to support the program as equally as possible and are required to help out with at least one team fundraiser.
- JV/Freshmen parents are also required to volunteer to work at least one spirit table fundraiser in addition to the team fundraiser.
- Parents should be active members of the TCHS Cheer Booster Club and help achieve its fundraising goals.
- Parents must be willing to make the monetary commitment necessary to fulfill obligations related to the duties and responsibilities associated with being a member of the cheerleading squad. Please direct all questions to the head coach if financial help is needed.
- Parents need to schedule all appointments so as to avoid the cheerleader missing cheer class, practices, or events as this impacts the entire squad.

PROGRAM COSTS

Program Costs:

A listing of additional costs can be obtained from the cheerleading coach and will be included in the campus tryout packet.

HONORARY CHEER MEMBERS

Honorary Cheer Members:

- Honorary Cheer Members are students from our TCHS Life Skills class that would like to join the cheer team without going through a tryout process.
- These team members will follow the separate Honorary cheer member guidelines and will have a more flexible schedule.
- Contact the Head Cheer Coach for information on this program.
- Any Life Skills student that would like to tryout for the team under the TCHS guidelines may do so but will need to meet the skill requirement of the cheer program.