

Devine High School Cheerleading Program Constitution 2024-2025

Overview of the Cheerleading Program Constitution

Squad Membership

- **Varsity Squad:** Up to 25 members (grades 9-12).
- **JV Squad:** Up to 12 members (grades 9-12).
- **Mascot:** Up to Two (2) members may share the responsibilities of being Willie the Warhorse
- **Competitive UIL team:** Up to 24 members and two mascots, or adhere to newest UIL Spirit rules for 4A team membership
- Membership is contingent upon meeting tryout qualifications and adhering to the DHS Cheer Program's constitution and DHS campus conduct standards.

Tryout Qualifications

- Must maintain a grade average of 70 or above.
- Attendance at school on tryout day and prior practices is required.
- Perform specific cheerleading skills and provide teacher evaluations.
- Video submissions allowed under certain circumstances.

Performance Obligations

- Cheerleaders must attend all designated events, practices, summer camp, and mini cheer camp.
- Responsibilities include promoting school spirit, attending games, and participating in community service activities.

Behavior and Discipline

- A demerit system is in place to ensure conduct aligns with program expectations. Accumulating demerits can lead to probation, benching, or dismissal.
- Unexcused absences and disciplinary infractions can result in penalties.

PREAMBLE

The DHS Cheer Program Constitution guidelines have been developed to outline the expectations and accompanying procedures for each Devine Independent School District high school cheerleading program. This constitution was designed and prepared as a basic operating instrument to define and explain the qualifications and responsibilities of the cheerleading programs of Devine ISD.

All extracurricular activity participants will be subject to the provisions of the Devine ISD Student Code of Conduct, Devine ISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct, University Interscholastic League (UIL) regulations, and the Side by Side Texas Education Agency's (TEA) guidelines for cheerleading. The TEA and the UIL does permit a school district to impose stricter standards than those in the TEA or UIL requirements, but the district shall not impose more lenient standards. Additional cheerleader and/program expectations may be published by each campus. Therefore, in case of a conflict between this handbook and a campus handbook, this handbook will prevail.

DISCLAIMER:

Extra-Curricular Due Process Statement - A student is not entitled to any due process prior to removal, because participation in this extra-curricular program (cheerleading) is a privilege and not a right. Students will be notified of the reason for their removal. The student is not entitled to any investigative report or full evidentiary hearing. In student discipline matters, school officials (coaches) need only a form of reasonable belief that misconduct occurred prior to taking disciplinary action including removal from this extracurricular activity.

FO(LOCAL) Statement - This handbook adopts policies that are more stringent than those adopted by Devine ISD and Devine High School as allowed by district policy.

Disclaimer: Unfortunately, not all situations that arise can be anticipated or accounted for in the constitution. Should events occur that are not covered in the Devine Independent School District High School Cheer Constitution, they will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Fine Arts Director, Campus Administrators, and cheer coaches. Situations will be dealt with according to what is fair and just. Furthermore, Devine ISD reserves the right to alter the rules according to the situation, at any time.

Devine ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disabilities in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title XI of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and Title II of the American with Disabilities Act. For information on compliance with these, contact Devine ISD Independent School District Administration.

PURPOSE & CONDUCT:

The purpose of our cheerleader organization is to create, promote and uphold school spirit and a positive school environment by participating at athletic events and extracurricular activities as deemed appropriate by the campus administration and coach. Participation in the regular curriculum is a right afforded to each student, while participation in the extracurricular program is a privilege that carries additional expectations for acceptable conduct. Cheerleaders must exemplify positive behavior in school and the community, with disciplinary actions imposed for negative conduct.

The DHS Cheer Program works to promote leadership; maintain school spirit; develop and enhance responsibility of members; to participate in civic and community activities; and to create camaraderie and friendship between members. Cheerleaders are expected to be good examples to all other students in his/her classes and in the community. Students that are in conflict with this philosophy will be removed at the coach's discretion. All negative student behavior (while in cheer, other classes, or in public) will be evaluated by the Coaches and appropriate disciplinary action will be determined based on the severity of the incident and its impact on the team.

One would think that the fact that participation in these activities is a privilege, and not a right, allows school officials greater latitude to impose restrictions on out-of-school behavior, including speech. The Supreme Court has even noted that:

By choosing to "go out for the team," [students] voluntarily subject themselves to a degree of regulation even higher than that imposed on students generally.... Somewhat like adults who choose to participate in a "closely regulated industry," students who voluntarily participate in school athletics have reason to expect intrusions upon normal rights and privileges, including privacy. *Vernonia Sch. Dist. 47Jv. Acton*, 515 U.S. 646, 657 (1995).

EXPECTATIONS

Leadership

Cheer members are expected to promote and maintain relationships with faculty, administration, student body, and work cooperatively with all school organizations and communities.

Physical functions include, but are not limited to:

- Athletic conditioning
- Jumps
- Stunts
- Tumbling

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Campus Procedures

- Cheer coaches manage daily decisions regarding the program. They may develop and enforce standards in addition to or higher than DISD expectations. All cheer programs in Texas will now follow UIL athletics expectations and paperwork.
- All coaches must maintain yearly state required cheer safety certifications and medical safety certifications through testing.
- Program now falls under UIL rules for athletes and UIL Spirit guidelines, even if varsity, junior varsity, or mascot.

DISD Expectations are defined as:

- Student Code of Conduct
- DHS Cheer Program Constitution for 2024-2025
- Campus Handbook
- DISD Concussion Protocol
- UIL spirit program requirements and expectations
- Due to UIL state law, any student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion must obtain physician clearance before beginning DISD Return-to-Play protocol.

Medical

- Coaches must be apprised of any medical condition whether temporary, permanent, or recurring.
- Withholding pertinent medical information could result in the immediate dismissal from the program.

Misconduct

- Violations of the DISD Code of Conduct will be addressed in accordance with the campus handbook and administration.
- DAEP placement results in automatic dismissal from the program.

Academic

- Cheerleaders members who receive a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period or who fail to meet the standards in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not participate in extracurricular activities for the allotted time set by the DISD UIL Athletic Eligibility Schedule.
- Cheerleaders members who become ineligible will not be allowed to participate in any fashion with the team.
- Cheerleaders members who have been ineligible for two or more six-weeks grading periods, during the current school year, will be dismissed from the team.

DHS CHEER MEMBERSHIP:

TRYOUTS AND CHEER MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

1. Varsity will consist of maximum of twenty (25) cheerleaders. (There is no minimum membership requirement)
2. Junior Varsity will consist of up to fifteen (15) cheerleaders (There is no minimum membership requirement)
3. UIL competitive cheer squad size is regulated by UIL Spirit competition rules by school (Devine High School is 4A).
4. The mascot will consist of a maximum two (2) individuals who share the Mascot responsibilities.
5. Top scores will be placed on Varsity with lower scores on JV. The score's natural break will be respected.
6. Administration reserves the right to allow students with cognitive and/or physical disabilities to be an honorary member of the squad. These members will cheer at home games and pep rallies. These students will not compete and are will not travel to away games.
7. Officers and social officers will be determined by the tryout process. The requirements vary from year to year. The number of officers will be determined by team size.

8. If a cheerleader leaves the program before August 1, the next candidate meeting the minimum score requirement for the designated team may move into the vacant position at the campus discretion. This is up to the coach's and principal's discretion. Squad membership will exist from tryout date to the last day of the following school year.
9. If a member quits a team, that individual may not try out for that team, or another for the following school year.
10. ALL RULES MUST BE FOLLOWED DURING MEMBERSHIP YEARS AND TRYOUT SEASONS.
11. ALL RETURNING MEMBERS WILL TRYOUT TO REGAIN THEIR SPOT.

Guidelines

1. Candidates must be physically present to be eligible.
2. Candidates are prohibited from possessing any type of technology during the campus tryout hours.
3. Tryouts are closed to the public.
4. In the event of an emergency, staff will be responsible for communication with the parent.
5. All scores are final.

Financial Expectations

1. Parents can expect to spend up to \$1,000 per cheerleader.
2. A tentative list of uniform/accessories/camp expenses will be given prior to tryouts. \
3. Any member dismissed, removed or resigned of his/her position in the cheer program must complete all financial obligations for non-returnable/non-refundable merchandise, and turn in all school-owned uniforms.
4. Funds will not be used to purchase gifts of any type for athletes. (UIL.480/2)
5. A payment plan for expenses minus funds raised will be due prior to attending camp.
6. Parents may be asked to assist the cheer coach at games, special events, and decorating for pep rallies with students. Parents can be excluded from any and all participation or volunteering at the campus principal's request.

Summer Camps

Summer Cheer Camp and Mini Cheer Camp are mandatory unless the student transferred into the district at a later date.

TRYOUT QUALIFICATIONS:

Candidate Character Evaluation

- Must have exhibited appropriate conduct in accordance with the DISD Student Code of Conduct and the DHS Cheer Program Constitution.
- Current cheerleader team members who have resigned or been removed for violation of district policies/regulations will be ineligible to try out for the following school year. This includes current eighth-grade cheerleaders.
- If a current cheerleader fails two six-weeks and is removed from the program, they will be eligible to try out the following season but will be on academic probation if they make the team.
- Any additional failure will result in immediate removal from the team, and the cheerleader will not be able to try out for the following season.
- Candidates must be enrolled in DISD before tryouts.
All candidates must clear all campus financial obligations.

Candidates will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Grades
2. Behavior
3. Attendance
4. discipline review (by the campus office: middle school or high school)
5. Tryout material

6. Tumbling
7. Have a 70 or above average in each class enrolled in at the end of the six weeks prior to tryouts.
8. Must attend school the day of tryouts.
9. Must be in 8th– 11th grades to try out.
10. Must attend 2 of the 4 practices or take advantage of Open Gyms prior to tryouts.
11. Female candidates must perform a spirit section, an individual cheer, group dance, tumbling, 3 designated jumps and a participate in a stunt.
12. Male candidates must perform a spirit section, an individual cheer, partner stunt and 3 designated jumps.
13. Must provide 1 teacher evaluation (provided by the coach) prior to tryouts. The evaluator must be a current teacher whose course you are currently enrolled in.
14. Mascots must perform a skit (from 2 minutes minimum to 3 minutes maximum) displaying support for a Devine Warhorse/ Arabians sports team, must be engaging, fun, encouraging fans to participate.

DISD Cheer Tryout Clinics and Cheer Open Gym:

- Occurs the week of tryouts.
- Choreography will be taught and brought in by selected choreographer at coach's discretion.
- Choreography will be available through video after completion of first tryout practice.
- All days are mandatory. If a candidate misses a day or opportunity to practice, that will not be an excuse to request change in squad placement.
- Athletic attire is required. Candidates must provide their own solid white t-shirt and solid black shorts and white athletic or cheer shoes
- Clinics and Open Gym is closed to the public and to other students.
- Candidates must have a current DISD Physical on file with the high school campus athletic program to participate. (New UIL cheerleading rule for all of Texas)
- Hair must be worn in a ponytail -- away from the face.
- Natural makeup and nails.
- No jewelry. No exceptions.

VIDEO TRYOUT CRITERIA:

A student can **only** be judged by a video for the following reasons:

Due to a school-related activity.

- In this circumstance, the coaches will video candidates and submit videos for judging panel to review.
- Videos will be conducted as if it were actual tryouts. They will be given one opportunity and perform skills in the same order as all other candidates. The video will not be edited in any way.
- All candidates must wear the required attire as all other candidates that will be attending tryouts.
- Must have submitted all paperwork and must perform all cheer, chant, dance choreography and skills required for this year's tryouts.

Personal injury WITH a doctor's note.

- Doctor's note must specifically state which skills the candidate is not able to perform. The notes must be given to coaches prior to the day of tryouts.
- **Candidates will still conduct tryouts as normal, except for the portion(s) the video is representing.**
- The video that will be submitted to judges for viewing, must ONLY contain the skills they are not allowed to perform per doctor's orders. If any other skills are visible in the video, the video will not be viewed by judges and your points for the skills are forfeited.

Video requirements

- Cheer uniforms of any kind are prohibited. Must be in tryout clothes— white shirt, black shorts, hair in ponytail, white cheer shoes white tennis shoes.
- Skills must be performed on a surface comparable to the tryout surface. **(i.e NO spring floors)**
- In the event one of the above is violated, the video will not be viewed by judges and your points for the skills are forfeited.
- Must have submitted all paperwork and must perform choreography for this year's tryouts.

TRYOUT APPLICATION DENIALS:

- A student who has been placed in DAEP or is suspended from school and will not have completed their suspension prior to the conclusion of cheer season
- A student who has **had 3 or more discipline referrals** during the current school year will not be permitted to try out.
- A student who had had 5 or more detentions during the current school year will not be permitted to try out.
- A student with an excessive amount of absences (more than 10 days which results in loss of credit) based on compulsory school attendance rules will not be permitted to tryout. FEC(LOCAL) states that students should be in class 90% of the days class is offered.
- A student who was terminated from the squad or chose to quit the previous year may not tryout.
- An application can be denied if all the criteria are not met. All UIL rules apply including House Bill 72, "no pass – no play."
- If a candidate is deemed ineligible, an appeal may be submitted in writing to the campus principal.

TRYOUT JUDGING:

Performance Judging:

- Three outside independent and qualified judges will be contracted and selected from the UCA cheer coach Band group. Each must be from outside the district.
- Must be a fellow cheer coach, former professional cheerleader, a current collegiate cheerleader, or a former UCA camp cheerleader and instructor.
- The judges may not and will not have ties to the Devine and surrounding communities.
- The judges will not disclose scores to any candidate, their parents or friends.
- All scores and decisions are final
- Callbacks are permissible upon judges' request
- Judging score sheets will be used.

Judges will be scoring candidates on the following:

- Crowd Appeal (neatness, fitness, facial expression)
- Projection (energy, enthusiasm, confidence)
- Jumps (form and height, flexibility, variety)
- Tumbling (running & Standing) (execution and technique, difficulty)
- Motions (Precision, arm placement, technique)
- Dance (memory, execution, technique) Girls
- Stunt (difficulty, technique, variety) Boys
- ***A sample of the judges score sheets will be provided before tryouts week.***

RESULTS:

- Judges' score sheets and comments will be made available for ONE week ONLY starting the Monday after tryouts. That is the principal's discretion. Campus principal keeps/holds all scores and tryout materials.
- All decisions are ***final*** unless a mathematical error has occurred.

- Results will be posted the evening of tryouts.

FERPA LAW - The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Responsibilities, Duties, Obligations

Obligations

Cheerleaders

Cheerleaders will perform at all varsity football games (varsity), home junior varsity football games (JV cheer), home district basketball games, and some district volleyball games in which our presence is requested. Sponsors will have the option of splitting the squad for representation at away games. Cheerleaders will attend all playoff games, regardless of sport. Cheerleaders may be excused from school to attend the district cross country meet and the district track meet, at coach's discretion.

Mascots

Mascots will perform at events in uniform with breaks as designated by the coach. Mascots will have the same requirements as cheerleaders concerning all duties and expectations within this constitution.

1. *The DHS cheerleaders and mascots will help promote spirit and appropriate behavior at all athletic events and cheerleading activities.*
2. *Members must be in attendance for the entire event, unless perviously arranged.*
3. **Homecoming:** *Cheerleaders will work with other organizations to assist in the activities associated with homecoming.*
4. **Bonfire:** *Cheerleaders will help organize, prepare and attend the bonfire.*
5. **Decorations:** *Cheerleaders will work with other organizations with guidance from the high school principal to provide appropriate decorations for student activities and organizations, and pep rallies.*
6. **Signs:** *Each cheerleader will be required to have a certain number of signs for each game and for each sport/activity. They must be neat, reasonable in length, and eye catching. This will show the cheerleaders' ability to be responsible, as well as advertise the games and promote school spirit.*
7. **Practices:** *Times for practices may vary. We will try for consistency, but it is sometimes not possible to schedule practice for the same days of the week and at the same times. We do our best to work with all other sports in order to keep your child from having to choose a sport. Parents please pick up your student immediately following all activities.*
8. **Football Game Materials:** *At each HOME GAME, each cheerleader will be assigned designated game day items (signs, mats, flags, etc.) they are responsible for carrying items to the game and putting items away after the game. After all materials, have been collected coach(es) will release the team. There are no exceptions!*
9. **Summer Camps and Practices:** *Cheerleaders must attend all summer practices to work out as a squad for camp and the upcoming season. We must have 100% participation.*
10. **Safety:** *Each cheerleader will adhere to the AACCA high school safety guidelines (www.aacca.org) and NFHS Spirit Rules per UIL.*

The DHS Cheer Program is as much a service organization as it is an athletic team. DHS Cheerleaders will participate in community and school service activities.

Attendance

The coach(es) must be contacted prior to an absence from, leaving early from, or arriving late to cheerleading practice or a scheduled event even if the cheerleader is absent from school. Failure to do so *will result in demerits*. In order for a cheerleader to participate in pep rally or game held on a school day, the cheerleader must be present at school for at least one-half of the school day and for all practices regarding the event. Any exception will be at the discretion of the coach and a campus administrator.

Cheerleaders are required to attend all activities scheduled by the coach(es) such as photo sessions, athletic banquets, summer camps, community service activities, UIL competition (at the discretion of the coaches), and other DISD school sponsored activities, clinics, booster club activities, etc.

Excused Absences

- Personal illness with doctor's note on letterhead (not routine appointments such as orthodontist, dental, etc.)
- Death in the family
- Special school activity during school hours– permission must be acquired from the coach(es) prior to the activity.
- Extenuating Circumstances– with prior permission.

Unexcused Absences

- **Minor illness:** Unless under a doctor's care with written notice from that doctor on letterhead, a cheerleader is expected and required to attend and fully participate in all activities.
- **Work:** a cheerleader may hold a part time job, but it must not interfere with practices, events, or any cheer activity whether scheduled or not
- **Doctor Appointments:** Appointments should not be scheduled during any practice, event, or activity. Practices and performances are scheduled in advance and cheerleaders are given as much notice as possible.
- **Family Activities:** such as birthdays, family trips, etc.

Practice

- Cheerleaders must be present at all scheduled practices. Missing planning practices for Pep Rallies will result in a cheerleader being benched for all of or part of that Pep Rally.
- Cheerleaders missing one practice will be benched the 1st quarter of the game. Missing more than one practice in a week will result in being benched for the entire game.
- Cheerleaders must participate in all summer practices. "Summer school" activities are not excused. (See excused absences)
- Cheerleaders are expected to be on time and properly attired before practice starts (must be dressed, stretched, bathroom needs addressed, etc.).

Transportation

When the school provides bus or van transportation, all cheerleaders must ride the bus/van to the activity.

Transportation and Pick Up

1. Cheerleaders members are not allowed to drive to away games or competitions. They must ride in either school transportation or authorized transportation (only due to other school event or game).
2. Cheerleaders are subject to district policies concerning behavior and safety while using district transportation.

3. Cheerleaders may ride home with parents (or other guardians) as long as the parent provides appropriate documentation 24 hours beforehand in email form.
4. You may sign your child out after the event with the coaches. If you want your child riding home with another parent, we will need written consent 24 hours PRIOR to the game.
5. members MUST be picked up no more than 15 minutes after any given practice or performance, or return from out of town game or event.

Camps

All team members are required to attend both summer camps.

1. All school and cheer camp rules will be in effect while in attendance at any cheer camp. This includes the trip to and from camp.
2. The date and location will be determined by the sponsors and announced before the end of the school year.
3. Practice for camp will be held one week prior to the scheduled date of camp.
4. All members are required to attend these practices.
5. Rules will be followed and enforced. Any member who violates the Cheerleader Constitution, camp rules, and/or school rules while at camp will be sent home immediately at the parent's expense and will receive a minimum of 10 demerits per incident.
6. Visitors of cheerleaders are not allowed at camp, unless attending special performances requested by the coaches. Disciplinary action will be taken if a violation occurs.
7. Cheerleaders will remain with the squad at all times. While parents are invited to some events, they are asked to remember that their student is not at liberty to socialize until the event concludes and cheerleaders have been dismissed by the coach(es).
8. Mini Cheer Camp is also mandatory and will require practice and decorating time before the event begins. Dates will be given in the spring and members must attend each day. DHS Practices and sports practices will be arranged by the cheer coach, sports coaches and the AD and principal before event takes place.

Appearance/ Uniforms

During any practice and/ or scheduled event, the school dress code will be in effect governing appropriate apparel. Uniform is defined as any item of clothing that identifies the wearer as a Devine Cheerleader.

- No jewelry is to be worn at any time. Including: stud earrings, belly button rings, etc.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted. Undergarments should not be seen.
- Each member is responsible for the care and timely return of his/ her school owned uniforms. Any school owned uniform that is damaged or not returned at the end of the cheerleading year shall be paid for by the member to whom the uniform was issued.
- Cheerleader footwear, ribbons, socks and other items designated by the coach(es) must be purchased by the members.
- Cheerleaders must wear the designated parts of the uniform while performing. This includes hair bows, under armor, appropriate cheer shoes. Unauthorized articles of clothing such as sweatshirts, pants, or flip-flops will not be acceptable.
- The uniform must be kept clean and in good repair including footwear and pompoms.
- A Devine Cheerleader will be subject to demerits should he/she wear the district uniform off campus other than transporting to and from a school-sponsored event.
- Cheerleader is to be in full uniform representing Devine ISD from the designated arrival time until dismissed by the coach(es).
- Any unauthorized loaning of a uniform, or any part of a uniform, by a cheerleader will result in disciplinary action being taken.
- Mascots are responsible for the care, cleaning, and return of all uniforms, suits, and props given to them by the coach(es)/ school.

Expenses

Cheerleader and Mascots should be prepared to meet the cost of cheerleading, such as bloomers, sports bra, socks, shoes, hair ribbon, camp attire, etc. Other items may be required at the discretion of the coaches. If a squad member is dismissed from the squad, he/she is still responsible for all expenses incurred. Each member is responsible for ALL expenses incurred during the season. While there will be instances when the school will provide financial support, each member must be ready to accept full financial responsibility.

UIL Competition:

The UIL State Cheerleading competition is still a new event to Devine High School. Like any new venture, changes can be expected to occur. There will be instances the Devine Cheer Program can and will make necessary changes accordingly, to ensure the team is following all proper guidelines set forth by UIL.

- The coach(es) will make all final decisions regarding competition each year.
- When choreography money is set aside for competitive cheer, a choreographer will be hired from UIL cheer-ready companies or choreographers.
- Coach(es) will determine whether or not to attend competition; team members (number of participants on floor and participants on the floor).
- For 2024-2025, all varsity team members, mascots, and prior year's competitive team members **WHO TRIED OUT** have immediately earned their spots on the competitive team.
- The size of team roster is set by UIL rules for 4A schools, or if DHS cheer votes, for the co-ed teams. That will vary year by year, but governed by UIL Spirit rules.
- The coach(es) can make necessary changes for the benefit of the team. (i.e. personnel, numbers of participants, who to hire for choreography, etc...) All changes made are the responsibility of the coach(es) and are final.
- The UIL Competitive Cheer team is a UIL team, and most financial needs are met by the school district (uniforms, entry fees, hotels, registrations, meals). As such, the DISD owns the uniforms and other materials needed for competition. These materials are separate and apart from any purchased for Varsity/ JV/ Mascot.
- Extra financial responsibilities may include something simple such as t-shirts or sweatshirts to purchase for competition that the team has voted on. While there will be instances when the school will provide financial support, each member must be ready to accept some financial responsibility.
- All team members who participate in the UIL competition will be required to travel together, to eat meals together, and to stay in the room designated by Devine ISD and coach(es).
- Once a Cheerleader has committed to the DHS UIL Competitive Cheer Team, all responsibilities to the squad must be fulfilled. ***If a Cheerleader quits after making the team, they will not be allowed to try out for any other DHS cheer team the following academic year.***
- Cheerleader rules will be followed and enforced. Any member who violates the cheerleader constitution, camp rules, competition rules, or school rules while participating will be sent home immediately at the parents' expense and will receive a minimum of 10 demerits per incident.
- If deemed necessary, the coach(es) will hold a tryout for the competition squad. Outside judges will not be hired, current coach(es) will judge the UIL Competitive Cheer Team tryouts and determine participants that will compete.

Discipline and Conduct: Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal:

The integrity and reputation of the cheerleading organization is based upon the personal and team conduct on and off campus. All cheerleaders and mascots are to conduct themselves in a respectable manner at all times, obey the rules and regulations in force for students of Devine High School, and comply with all rules, regulations and expectations found in the cheerleader constitution. The general conduct of a cheerleader is important to the reputation of the ENTIRE squad.

Definitions:

- Issues concerning discipline and/or conduct may be handled through the utilization of either a disciplinary referral or through **demerits** at the discretion of the coach(es).
- A **Probationary Period** shall be defined as a disciplinary action taken when a Cheerleader has committed a violation which could lead to dismissal. Once a cheerleader is put on a Probationary Period, any subsequent violations may constitute immediate dismissal. Probationary Periods will be used at Coach(es) and Principal discretion. If the violation is severe enough, the coach (es) and administration will deem probation unnecessary and immediate removal from the program will be enforced.
- **Benching** shall be defined as not being able to perform in any performances of the squad. The length of benching will be determined by the coach(es).
- **Dismissal** shall be defined as no participation of any activity of the squad for the remainder of the year. A dismissed member must turn in all school owned uniforms and any other issued item.

Dismissal:

- Cheerleaders may be subject to dismissal from the squad for the remainder of the year with no probation or may be prohibited from trying out the following year for, but not limited to:
- Violation of the DISD alcohol and drug policy.
- Violation of DISD tobacco policy.
- Violation of DISD fight policy.
- Any infraction that results in DAEP for the current season.
- Three days cumulative in ISS within the current season.
- Any act that results in school suspension.
- Violation of the law, other than minor traffic violation.
- If a Devine Cheerleader is in uniform off campus and found by a Devine Independent School District Employee violating the Cheerleading Constitution he/she will be immediately dismissed from the squad.
- 20 or more Demerits in the current season.

Grades:

Cheerleaders with failing grades at the end of a six week grading period will be placed on probation from events for the next three-week period. Attendance at all practices is still required. **Cheerleaders placed on probation due to failing grades 2 or more 6 weeks periods may be subject to dismissal.**

Conduct:

- ISS assignment by the principal or assistant, for discipline reasons, will result in an automatic benching for the length of the disciplinary action taken by the school. The allotted demerits will be assigned for an ISS placement. Suspension from school will result in automatic dismissal from the squad. Sitting out of events will begin when student returns to regular school.
- Any offense that brings negative publicity to the school or squad that occurs at a school sponsored activity or at any outside activity will result in disciplinary actions

Cheer Expectations and Obligations

Cheerleader Expectations and Responsibilities: (all teams, including officers)

1. Team Representation:

- Serve as representatives of the cheerleading team and school, embodying the team's values and spirit.
- Represent the team and school with pride in all public appearances, including during competitions, games, school events and community events.
- Maintain a positive and energetic demeanor to uplift the team's image and spirit.

2. Practice Participation:

- Attend all scheduled practices and arrive on time, ready to participate and improve skills.
- Actively engage in practice sessions, focusing on skill development, choreography, and teamwork.

3. Skill Development:

- Work on improving individual skills, including jumps, stunts, tumbling, and dance techniques during practices.
- Participate in additional training sessions, choreography weekend, or UCA workshops brought by DHS cheer programming to enhance cheerleading abilities.
- Actively participate in skills development by practicing jumps, stunts, tumbling, and cheers outside of scheduled practices.
- Participate in periodic skill assessments to track progress and identify areas for improvement.

4. Collaboration with Coaches:

- Maintain open communication with the cheer coach regarding practice schedules, performances, and individual progress.
- Take feedback from coaches and teammates constructively to improve skills and teamwork.
- Support coach in their final decisions

5. Team Spirit and Team Work:

- Foster a strong sense of camaraderie and teamwork within the cheerleading squad.
- Encourage and support fellow cheerleaders during practices, performances, and competitions.
- Work collaboratively with teammates, supporting each other in skills development and during performances.

6. Safety Awareness:

- Be aware of safety protocols when performing stunts, tumbles, and jumps, ensuring the safety of oneself and teammates.
- Take all stunt and pyramid building and tumbling seriously no matter how many times it has been performed before.
- Communicate any potential safety concerns or injuries to the coach immediately.

7. Creativity and Innovation:

- Contribute ideas for new cheers, routines, and themes that keep performances fresh and engaging.
- Collaborate with teammates to develop choreography and enhance team performances.

8. Commitment:

- Cheerleaders are expected to attend all practices, games, and events unless a valid excuse is provided in advance.

9. Positive Attitude:

- Maintain a positive attitude during practices, performances, and while representing the team at all events.

10. Respect:

- Show respect towards coaches, teammates, and opponents at all times.

11. Communication:

- Communicate openly and respectfully with coaches and teammates about any issues or concerns.

12. Health and Fitness:

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle, including proper nutrition, hydration, and physical conditioning and by making best choices outside of school.

13. Uniform Maintenance:

- Keep uniforms and cheer gear clean, well-maintained, and in good condition.
- Ensure all team members adhere to uniform guidelines during performances and events.

14. Game Day Engagement:

- Attend and participate in all games, pep rallies, and events where the cheer team performs.
- Engage the crowd with cheers, chants, and routines to promote school spirit and enthusiasm during games and events.
- Support and encourage athletes from other teams during competitions and events.

15. Campus and Community Events:

- Attend community events, parades, and fundraisers as representatives of the cheerleading team to promote school spirit.
- Interact positively with fans and community members to create a welcoming environment.
- Use your position as a DHS cheerleader to spread school spirit, KINDNESS, and be supportive of other DHS organizations, clubs and athletic teams.

16. Community Service:

- Engage in community service projects organized by the cheer team to give back to the community and promote teamwork.
- Help organize and participate in team bonding activities to strengthen relationships among teammates.

17. Promotional Activities:

- Participate in promotional activities for the cheerleading team, including social media posts, school announcements, and outreach efforts.
- Help in promoting upcoming events or initiatives through creative performances and interactions.
- Participate in team fundraising activities to support expenses and events.

By fulfilling these responsibilities, cheerleaders can significantly contribute to the success of the cheerleading program and foster a positive atmosphere within the school community.

Cheer Mascot Expectations and Responsibilities

1. Game Day Engagement:

- Attend and participate in all games and events where the cheer team performs.

- Engage with the crowd to promote school spirit and enthusiasm during games and events.
 - Lead cheers, dances, and skits to entertain the audience and encourage fan participation.
2. **Team Representation:**
 - Serve as a representative of the cheerleading team and school, embodying the mascot's character and values.
 - Maintain a positive and energetic demeanor to uplift the team's image and spirit.
 3. **Collaboration with Cheerleading Team:**
 - Work closely with the cheerleaders to coordinate cheers and routines that involve the mascot.
 - Participate in team practices when appropriate to ensure smooth performances.
 4. **Community Events:**
 - Attend community events, parades, and fundraisers as the mascot to promote school spirit and cheerleading.
 - Interact with fans, especially children, to create a memorable experience and foster community relations.
 5. **Costume Maintenance:**
 - Ensure that the mascot costume is clean, well-maintained, and in good repair for all appearances.
 - Report any issues with the costume to the coach or designated team member for repairs.
 6. **Safety Awareness:**
 - Be aware of surroundings while in costume to avoid accidents or injuries, especially during performances and events.
 - Stay hydrated and take breaks as needed to ensure comfort and safety while in the costume.
 7. **Creativity and Enthusiasm:**
 - Develop and incorporate new cheers, routines, or interactions to keep performances fresh and engaging.
 - Utilize props or accessories that align with the mascot character to enhance performances and audience interaction.
 8. **Promotional Activities:**
 - Participate in promotional activities for the cheerleading team, including social media posts or school announcements.
 - Help in promoting upcoming events or initiatives through creative appearances and interactions.
 9. **Collaboration with Coaches:**
 - Communicate regularly with the cheer coach to align on appearances, expectations, and special events.
 - Take feedback from the coach and cheerleaders to improve performances and interactions.
 10. **Team Spirit:**
 - Foster a sense of camaraderie and teamwork within the cheerleading squad and with fellow mascots if applicable.
 - Encourage cheerleaders and fans alike to maintain high spirits and enthusiasm during events.

By fulfilling these responsibilities, the DHS cheer mascot will significantly contribute to the overall success of the DHS cheer program and enhance the spirit within the school community.

The DHS Cheer Leadership Positions

All Cheerleaders (Varsity, Junior Varsity, UIL competitive, and Mascots and cheer officers)

Responsibilities:

- Attend all practices, games, and events punctually.
- Learn and perform cheers, chants, and routines with enthusiasm and precision.
- Maintain a positive attitude and encourage teammates and support the cheer coach.
- Support fellow athletes during games and events.
- Bring new ideas to teach during selected cheer group week.
- Follow the code of conduct and represent the team respectfully.
- Lead team cheers and chants during games and events.
- Assist in bringing school campus/school spirit decorating ideas.
- Preparing and decorating for pep rallies and events.

Cheer Officer Requirements

Qualifications

- Cheerleader must be an 11th or 12th grader. (APPLIES TO VARSITY TEAM ONLY)
- Cheerleader must be in good academic standing.
- Cheerleaders will need to have good communication skills, be approachable, responsible and delegate without being bossy.
- Respect and support all coach-made decisions.
- All other duties as listed in DHS Cheer Program Constitution

Dismissal From Officer Duties

- A captain/co-captain can be dismissed from their duty if:
- Aren't completing any of their duties as assigned
- After multiple warnings a cheerleader can be put on probation, at which parents will be notified.
- If the captain/co-captain does not improve they will be dismissed and the runner up will be able to step up.
- Collecting numerous demerits

Team Captain:

Responsibilities:

- Be the voice of the coach to the team and support all messaging from the coach, or from the coach and campus principal
- Meet with coach and principal once a week, or as principal is available
- Serve as a liaison between the coach and team members and facilitate communication between them.
- Lead team practices and drills
- Lead team cheers and chants during games and events.
- Assist in planning practices and warm-ups, team events and meetings with co-captains and the selected cheer group.
- Encourage and motivate teammates, promoting a positive team culture.
- Address conflicts or issues among team members and communicate them to the coach.
- Help organize and lead team bonding activities with coach and cheer group.
- Serve as a role model for teammates in behavior, attitude, and performance.
- Resolve conflicts among team members and promote teamwork.
- Meet with the coach and co-captains to plan for events and initiatives.

Co-Captain(s)

Responsibilities:

- Support the captain in all leadership duties and assume captain responsibilities in their absence.
- Assist in leading practices and warm-ups.
- Lead team cheers and chants during games and events.
- Encourage and motivate teammates, especially during challenging practices or competitions.
- Help maintain team morale and unity.
- Support the coach and coach's messages
- Provide feedback to the captain on team dynamics and concerns.
- Collaborate with the captain and coach to organize team events and initiatives.

Team Manager

Responsibilities:

- Assist the coach with administrative tasks, such as scheduling and communication, and tracking demerits and merits.
- Manage team equipment and uniforms, ensuring everything is in good condition.
- Help coordinate transportation for away games and events.
- Help organize fundraising events and team activities.
- Document team activities and maintain records of attendance and performance.

Spirit Coordinator

Responsibilities:

- Help plan and execute spirit events, such as pep rallies and community appearances.
- Promote school spirit and cheer for various sports teams.
- Lead team cheers and chants during games and events.
- Work with the social media team to share team updates and achievements online.
- Collaborate with other teams to organize joint spirit events.
- Create social posts, have access to DHS cheer social media accounts

Coach and Sponsor

Responsibilities:

- Develop practice plans and training schedules along with selected cheer group.
- Work with cheer leadership to bring cheerleading skills, techniques, and routines.
- Provide constructive feedback to cheerleaders to help them improve.
- Ensure the safety and well-being of all team members during practices and events.
- Set team goals and monitor progress throughout the season.
- Organize and coordinate participation in competitions and performances.
- Plan and conduct practices and training sessions with cheer leadership
- Develop and select choreography and routines for performances with that week's selected cheer group.
- Provide feedback and guidance to cheerleaders on skill development.
- Organize and supervise team events, competitions, and community service activities.
- Serve as the primary point of contact for parents and school administration.
- Foster a positive team culture and ensure adherence to team rules and expectations.
- Makes all final decisions after taking all considerations into account.

Fundraising Coordinator

Responsibilities:

- Organize and manage fundraising activities to support the cheer program.
- Develop a fundraising calendar and ensure participation from all team members.
- Communicate with parents and community members about fundraising efforts.
- Track fundraising goals and report progress to the team and coaching staff.
- Work in collaboration with cheer coach
- Run ideas by cheer coach to gain and maintain school district approval and have the district vouch for legitimacy of activities to community.

The DHS Cheer Program's Demerit and Merit System

The demerit system serves to establish accountability among cheerleaders, mascots, and managers while promoting a culture of respect and commitment and giving their all to each performance or practice. Demerits will be issued to cheerleaders and/ members who fail to abide by the rules as specified in the DISD Cheer Program Constitution. Coaches have the sole responsibility for assigning demerits. All demerit regulations apply to all teams, and to mascots and managers.

- Unexcused absences will result in demerits until note comes in (after three (3) days, demerits stay on record)
- Demerit count begins the summer after team is made. (For 2024 school year, demerits will begin the first week of school Mon, Aug. 19, 2024).
- Demerits may be given to any member during any practice, cheer camp, social event, competition, or any scheduled event.
- Coach(es) will keep record of discipline and behavior.
- Anyone who receives five or more demerits in any one week will be benched for the following week's activities, the parent will be contacted by the coach(es).
- If a cheerleader receives 15 demerits, the parent will be contacted by the coach(es) for a conference.
- A total of 20 demerits will terminate membership.

***Benching:** *to be benched means that the cheerleader must attend all practices, attend the activity, dress in the appropriate uniform, and sit with the coach(es) without socializing with his/her peers for the entire event or activity. The cheerleader member will sign off on each demerit given, and it will be the cheerleader's responsibility to tell the parent and keep up with the number of demerits that she has obtained. The coaches reserve the right to issue demerits for unacceptable situations which are not outlined in the cheer constitution. Final decisions regarding demerits will be made by the coaches.*

The Demerit Point Chart and System:

The 1 Demerit Offenses:

- Unexcused late arrival at practice or event (must have an official note from a medical office).
- Arriving more than 5 minutes late from another DISD practice or meeting.
- Eating during practice when not on an official practice break
- Being on a cell phone during practice outside of official break time
- Creating a distraction in rehearsal (talking, off-task, cell phone rings, etc.).
- Leaving rehearsal or performance without asking permission.
- Chewing gum, eating, or drinking (other than water) outside of break times during practice.
- Cell phone use at games, performances or events (outside of designated times, such as halftime and breaks).
- One per day sent to lunch detention assigned by the school administration or teacher
- Failure to meet responsibilities (turning in money, pep rally supplies assigned, gift deadlines).
- Leaving rehearsal or performance without asking permission.
- Being seen in an incomplete uniform BEFORE or AFTER a performance.
- Not signing the book promptly for any demerit given will result in another demerit.

- Leaving behind school-owned property unsecured (by the bus, at a game, event or a contest site, etc.).
- Not helping set out or put away mats.
- Not participating in group's weekly assigned obligations.

The 2 Demerit Offenses:

- Any negative communication from a teacher or administrator for negative behavior or tardiness to any class. Communication will be copied to the administrative office
- Negative behavior or attitude during practice or events. To officers, other members or coach.
- Disrespectful behavior towards coaches or teammates.
- Failure to participate in a required fundraising or community service event.
- Not maintaining the uniform or cheer gear as per team standards.
- Playing around during practice, not prepared to practice
- Not listening to the coach, captain, or co-captains when they are addressing the team
- Not listening to coach or officers during practices, games or performances.
- Arriving tardy to performance.
- Late returning from any break at practice or a scheduled event/ performance.
- Not having a piece of a uniform at a performance.
- Unprepared for a performance (includes but not limited to not having correct costume, hair, performance make-up, having anything other than natural colored nail polish, short nails, or wearing jewelry (other than ear studs in ear lobes).
- Taking items from the closet without permission from the director.
- Profanity at any time
- Not obeying coach(es) commands
- Not standing at attention during performance
- Unnecessary talking during any event
- Talking to anyone outside the squad without permission while performing at any event, performance, competition or scheduled activity.
- After being warned, not cheering.
- **CHEERLEADERS MUST CHEER, JUMP, SPIRIT, USE CHEER VOICE!** (unless excused from it with doctor's note).

The 3 Demerit Offenses:

- Insubordination or refusal to follow the coach's instructions.
- Repeated negative behavior or attitude.
- Involvement in any behavior that reflects poorly on the team or school.
- Unexcused missed practice or event (must have an official note from a medical office)
- Profanity/disrespect/unbecoming conduct (behavior that is unbecoming to a member of cheer, will be decided on at the discretion of the coach and principal. Includes all social media.
- Visible piercings at any time – including tongue, belly button, and all facial piercings (nose, eyebrow, lip, etc). Clear retainers are not okay. (Ear piercings are not included– ear studs are acceptable).
- Visible tattoos (including performances as well as inside & outside of school).
- Actions of disrespect towards coaches/ teachers/ administrators/ students/ officers/ teammates.
- Failure to attend a committed function/ event.
- Continuing behavior after coach's warning
- Unsportsmanlike conduct at any time.

The 10 Demerit Offenses:

- Breaking any school rule regarding behavior, vaping, alcohol, or bullying that results in school disciplinary action
- Bullying anyone on any cheer team, or attached to the cheer team
- Getting sent to ISS

- Demerits for not following the drug, tobacco, and alcohol policy.
- Missing a performance without prior approval.
- Arguing, walking away during an event or public performance— anything in the public's eye.
- Failure to attend a committed function/event.
- Failure to follow school rules (ex. Going off campus for lunch as an underclassman, skipping class, in school suspension, etc.), actions of disrespect towards a teacher, school official, or other adult.

Consequences of Accumulating Demerits:

2 Points accumulated:

Verbal warning and discussion with the coach about behavior and commitment.

3 Points accumulated:

Written warning; Sidelined from a game quarter or pep rally performance.

5 Points accumulated:

Meeting with the coach, removal from the next FULL DAY of performance (wake-up call, pep rally, and full game, or pep rally, send off and travel to away game, playoff game, or cheer event or community performance). Sidelined from full game/or performance, coach's discretion.

10-point demerit category:

Results in immediate removal from a week's worth of cheer performances. Must attend all cheer practices or more demerits will be added on.

Meeting with parents and cheer member

15 Demerits accumulated:

Meeting with parent, principal and cheer member

20 Demerits in One (1) Semester:

If 20 demerits have been accumulated by the cheerleader, they will be dismissed from the team. If a cheerleader is dismissed from the team, the student may not try out for the following school year's cheerleading teams.

Coaches have the right to issue demerits for situations not specified on this list, after discussion with and approval from principal.

DEMERIT QUICK POINTS

Demerits will be given as follows:

Academics

- Failing courses or 6 weeks periods
- Failure to attend tutorials if assigned by teacher

Behavior and Standards of Conduct

- Disrespect to team members and officers will not be tolerated.
- Disrespect to coaches and insubordination will not be tolerated. The coach's word is final.
- Any acts of discontent (temper tantrums, eye rolling, leaving the squad, talking under breath, etc.) PDA while at a game, school or in uniform is unacceptable.
- Talking/Horseplay during practice or games is not permitted for the safety of members.
- Eating/chewing gum/drinking/on a cell phone during a game or at practice must have the coach's consent.
- Arguing/Inciting conflict within the squad must be handled privately with the coach.
- Parental Involvement and communication must follow the appropriate chain of command. (See parent expectations).
- Breaking Code of Conduct and school rules will result in higher number of demerits.

- **If the occurrence takes place during a game or a public performance, the Cheerleader will be benched for the remainder of the performance/ game as well as the ENTIRE following performance/ game. Issues can be discussed but that is not the time or place.**

Uniform/Appearance

- All jewelry must be removed by team members at games and practices.
- Hair is to be pulled back, away from the face at games and practices.
- Tattoos may not be visible while in uniform.
- Demerits help to reinforce the regulations set forth by Cheer and Drill/Dance Handbook as well as the Devine ISD Code of Conduct.
- You can receive demerits any time during your membership including weekends, evenings and school breaks/holidays.

Bullying:

If there is evidence of bullying, any type of bullying, not just physical, it is 5 demerits and you will automatically sit out a game. If it happens again with evidence then you will no longer be part of the Devine cheer squad. (Refer to Student Code of Conduct) Depending on the severity of the incident. The coach, or the campus principal may automatically dismiss the cheerleader from the team.

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression or physical conduct against another student and the behavior: • results in harm to the student or the student's property, • places a student in fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property, or • is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment. Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, assault, demands for money, confinement, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyberbullying."

Social Media:

Use of social media that is obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, indecent, used to bully, intimidate, humiliate, make fun of another student, etc. will not be tolerated from team members or parents. This includes but is not limited to filming, likes, posts, use of emojis, profanity, and acronyms. Failure to comply with this policy can result in dismissal from the team. Coaches may post positive photos or videos of team members to promote team activities and accomplishments.

Hazing:

Hazing will not be tolerated. Strong disciplinary action will be taken. Hazing is any action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, which recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or academic health or safety of a student athlete. It includes physical injury, assault or battery, kidnapping or imprisonment, intentionally placing at risk of mental or emotional harm (putting "over the edge"), humiliation, the compromising of moral or religious values, forced consumption of any liquid or solid, placing an individual in physical danger (at risk) which includes abandonment, and impairment of physical liberties which include curfews or other interference with academic endeavors.

Any incident of hazing occurring on or off campus that is found will result in automatic dismissal from the team.

Felony Crimes:

Devine ISD Cheer s will follow the guidelines of the Texas High School Coaches Association's Code of Ethics when dealing with felony crimes. Article IX of the T.H.S.C.A. Code of Ethics states: It will be considered a breach of the Code of Ethics to willingly allow a student team member who is charged with, and/or under indictment for, a felony crime to participate in an athletic contest. This action should not be considered a presumption of guilt, but rather it affords the accused cheerleader the time and opportunity to clear their name. The cheerleader may be allowed to remain on their team as a suspended member, but should not be allowed to represent their school or community while under suspension.

Other Crimes and Suspicion of Crimes: The Principal and/or Fine Arts Director reserves the right to suspend any cheer member, who is suspected of committing any crime, depending on the circumstances. These decisions will not conflict with any state or federal laws or the State Student Code of Conduct. (Chapter 37)

Drugs and Alcohol:

Any cheerleader who smokes, vapes, drinks alcohol, or uses illegal drugs on or off school property will be disciplined. The discipline will range from probation to suspension to placement at DAEP. The district will follow the Texas Education Code Chapter 37 relating to student discipline. This includes provisions that any student who while on school property or at a school-related event on or off school property possesses, uses, sells, gives, delivers or is under the influence of alcohol will be placed in MAP/DAEP for the amount of time

Any cheer member who possesses, uses, sells, gives, delivers or is under the influence of marijuana, any controlled substance or dangerous drug as referenced to in the Education Code, will be disciplined in line with the punishment from the school/principal. A second offense will result in dismissal from the cheer program indefinitely.

If a cheer member is subsequently cleared of charges and no action (disciplinary or legal) results, the student-athlete may be reinstated immediately into the athletic program if the Devine ISD administration determines there were no violations of rules.

Stealing:

Taking things that do not belong to you, especially from your teammates will not be tolerated. A cheerleader member caught stealing may be suspended and/or punished at the discretion of the coach, fine arts director and principal. Depending on the seriousness of the offense, a cheerleader member may be prosecuted by the law. This also involves school equipment not returned.

Conclusion

This structured outline of expectations, leadership roles, and a demerit system will help foster accountability and a positive team culture within the DHS cheerleading program. The DHS cheer program is establishing clear guidelines so that the cheerleaders, managers, coaches, coordinators and mascots can understand their responsibilities and work towards achieving both individual and team goals.

THE CHEER/ MASCOT PARENT'S ROLE

Being the parent of a cheer member can be a great experience. Parents' participation with their son or daughter can be and should be an enjoyable activity. Their support is very important to their students, the high school and community. To make this experience the most rewarding for all concerned, the following are some suggestions on being a supportive cheer parent:

- **Be positive:**

Being on a school team is quite an accomplishment. Celebrate the accomplishment of making the team, but keep it in perspective. When things are not going well for your student or for the team, is when parents need to be most positive and supportive.

- **Be supportive of the coaching staff in front of your child:**

Nothing can injure teamwork faster than students doubting the capabilities of their coaches. The coaches are trying to do their best at every moment. If you have concerns, follow the DISD Cheer Program's communication process. Our staff will listen, appreciate your confidentiality and give you a timely response.

- **Refraining from inappropriate comments:**

Any inappropriate comments or actions towards any team member, student athlete, fan, official, coach or district employee at any time which disrupts either the educational or athletic environments or which advocates the violation of any school or team policy can lead to disciplinary action from Devine ISD. This includes but is not limited to any comments or actions

made in person by letter, email, text on any social media outlet or to the media (newspaper, radio or TV). Your inappropriate comments or action can lead to the removal of your child from the cheer program.

Communication, you as a parent should expect from their child's cheer coach:

- Coach's philosophy.
- Expectations for the team.
- Locations and times of practices and contests.
- Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment needed, school & team rules, off-season expectations.
- Procedures that will be followed if your child becomes injured during participation.
- Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches can expect from you as parents:

- Concerns regarding their son or daughter expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place.
- Specific concerns in regard to the coach's philosophy and/or expectations.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance. As your child becomes involved in extracurricular activities, he/she will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It's important to understand there may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. These are the times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

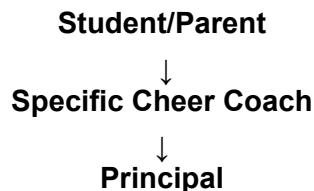
Appropriate concerns to discuss with a coach:

- The mental and physical treatment of your child.
- What your child needs to do to improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior. It is very difficult to accept that your child is not cheering or dancing as much as you may hope. Coaches' make decisions based on what they believe is in the best interests of all students participating.

The DHS Cheer Program's Communication Process

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. These are not discouraged, as it is important for each party to have a clear understanding of the others' position. Please know parents and students are welcome to communicate through SportsYou, messaging, or setting up conference or phone call.

When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure is suggested to help promote resolution to the issue.



If the proper chain of command is not followed, cheerleaders, mascots, leadership members, and/or parents will be referred back to the appropriate individual in the chain. Please allow at least 24 hours for DISD staff to return any messages or email.

Parent/ Cheerleader Code of Conduct:

*If at any time the DHS Cheerleading Code of Conduct is **violated by parents or cheerleaders**, a meeting with coach(es) and administration will be mandatory to determine the discipline action to be taken.*

No adult contracted or not by DISD should be crossing words with students in an aggressive, angry, or demeaning manner.

*Parents who are not part of the cheer program (under contract by DISD as cheer coaches or sponsors) should be disciplining, demeaning or mistreating any DHS student, be it a cheer program member, a student volunteering with another DHS group, or a student spectator.
Please take these rules into account when volunteering with the DHS Cheer Program.*

AMENDMENTS:

Amendments to this constitution may be made at the discretion of the coach and principal with verbal approval of the superintendent. All members will receive a copy of any changes that are made. The coach and principal reserve the right to interpret rules.

LITIGATION:

In the event the Devine Cheer Program is out of town or out of state, any litigation must take place within the court system, in which Devine ISD is in the jurisdiction of.

Effective Date:

These rules and regulations become effective on the date of and shall govern the election of the **2024-2025** Devine ISD cheerleaders and thereafter.

DISCLAIMER:

This constitution is a living document. If an incident should arise that is not specifically addressed in this document, the coach and/or school administrator will address the incident on an individual basis. The resolution of this incident may not be addressed team wide especially when privacy issues are involved. In addition, in order to benefit the cheer program, the coach and/or administrators reserve the right to revise this handbook at any time.

DHS Cheer Program's Code of Conduct & Agreement

The Entire Constitution needs to be read by all parents/guardians and cheer team members. Make sure each section is read carefully, as many changes have been made. **Both parent/guardian and participant are required to sign this document adhering to Cheer Constitution and the Cheerleader's Code of Conduct.**

All violations of the DHS Cheerleaders Code of Conduct will require a meeting with coach(es) and administration to determine action taken.

My signature below certifies that I have read, discussed, and understand the responsibilities, expectations, demerit system, and drug policy for Devine High School cheerleaders/mascot in the approved DHS Cheerleader Constitution and Cheerleader Code of Conduct.

I agree that if my child earns a position on the DHS Cheer Program, I will assist her/him in adhering to these policies throughout the school year.

Parent Signature: _____

Parent's Cell Phone Number: _____

Parent E-Mail: _____

Date: _____

Athlete Signature: _____

Athlete's Cell Phone Number: _____

Date: _____

Athlete's Address: _____

The Constitution and Cheerleader Code of Conduct must be turned in fully completed for admission to tryout. Failure to return completed, with all initials and signed by all parties, will result in an incomplete packet and not be eligible to tryout. For a copy of the Cheer Constitution and Code of Conduct, they are located on the Devine ISD website.