

Brazos Cheerleader/Mascot Handbook



High School/Middle School

Revised 3/23/18

Cheerleader/Mascot Handbook

Purpose

The purpose of Brazos cheerleading is twofold. It is to create, promote, and uphold school spirit in accordance with school rules and represent Brazos ISD at cheerleading-oriented activities. Cheerleaders/Mascot encourage high academic standards and promote leadership, sportsmanship, self-discipline, and good citizenship for school and fellow cheerleaders. Cheerleaders/Mascot plan and initiate activities, which will promote student body and community support and involvement in the promotion of athletic events and other school activities.

Expectations of Brazos Cheerleaders

1. A cheerleader is considered a leader of the student body 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Certain responsibilities accompany any position of leadership. Drug and alcohol use, any immoral behavior, disobedience of school policies, and in-school suspension are not acceptable in any member of a Brazos ISD cheerleading squad.
2. Cheerleaders are expected to set a good example for their classmates. Cheerleaders must have and must continue to display the following characteristics:
 - a. Must be honest and truthful
 - b. Must exhibit high moral standards
 - c. Must be willing to display positive school spirit
 - d. Must show good sportsmanship
 - e. Must exhibit a very positive attitude toward cheerleading
3. Cheerleaders must be cooperative with teachers, administrators, sponsors, and fellow cheerleaders. All problems and conflicts are to be discussed within the cheerleading squad.

Expectations - Grades

1. Grades will be checked at the end of each six weeks' grade reporting period. In accordance with UIL No Pass/No Play, a cheerleader failing a course will be ineligible to cheer for the following three weeks. During that time the member will dress out and participate in all practices, but may not participate in any pep rallies, games, etc.
2. If a member is ineligible due to failing grades for two six week grading periods, they will be removed from the squad.

Expectations - Attendance: Events/Practices

1. Cheerleaders are expected to have above average school attendance habits and are responsible to their fellow squad members to attend and participate in all practices and activities. Excused absences are:

- a. Personal illness or accident
 - b. Death in the family
 - c. Special school activities with advanced approval from sponsors
2. Unexcused absences are grounds for disciplinary action. Any cheerleader with absences that prevent them from working out for time that exceeds two consecutive days must bring a doctor's note
 3. Sponsors must be notified if a cheerleader is ill and will miss an event. Any cheerleader unable to perform because of an injury or minor illness will appear at the event in full uniform and sit in a designated area. Any member found not to be truthful about an absence from a cheering event will be dismissed from the squad.
 4. Any cheerleader whose absence from OR lack of performance in getting the gym ready for pep rallies, decorating or collecting materials after cheering WILL NOT perform at the next pep rally and/or game.
 5. Cheerleaders/Mascot will ride the bus or school transportation to and from out-of-town athletic events. If a parent is at an event, the cheerleader may ride home with the parent or an adult approved by the parent, provided a note from the parent is given to the sponsor prior to the event. In addition, if a cheerleader/mascot is attending another school event they may travel with their parent or an adult approved by the parent with prior written notice given to the sponsor.

Expectations-Practices

1. Since most cheerleaders participate in other extra-curricular activities we will try to limit any practices after school. However, it may be necessary to schedule some after school or weekend practices. Should that be necessary those practices will be set so as to not interfere with any extra-curricular events. Any scheduled practice will be mandatory and required by all cheerleaders & mascot to attend.
2. No practices or meetings may be held without the sponsor's supervision.

Expectations - Uniforms

1. Cheerleaders are responsible for maintaining all uniforms and accessories.
2. Uniforms may only be worn by cheerleaders to approved activities.
All cheer clothing is to be clean and in good repair before each cheer activity.
3. When in uniform at school or in public, the proper cheerleading shoes, socks, accessories must be worn at all times.
4. Jewelry may not be worn while in uniform.
5. Hair must be pulled away from the face while in uniform.
6. It is the discretion of the sponsors to determine the proper fit of the uniform.

Expectations - Fundraising

1. Cheerleaders are expected to participate fully with fundraisers that benefit the entire program.
2. Cheerleaders are expected to pay for all of their cheer obligations in a timely manner. A payment breakdown and schedule will be given to each girl.
3. A fundraiser will be held to help you raise money toward your bill.

Expected Participation

Cheerleader attendance is mandatory for:

1. Summer camp announced later; we try to have it during the month of June or the 1st week in July.
2. Summer work week which will be announced later.
3. Attendance at all scheduled cheer activities.
4. Any scheduled practices or decorating that has to be done
5. Fundraising group activities
6. Cheer throughout the game-win or lose. No one is to leave the track or court during a game without permission.
7. Cheerleader duties do not expire until the end of the school year. Those who do not uphold their obligations will not be allowed to tryout the following year as a cheerleader.

Brazos Cheerleading/Mascot Discipline System

A cheerleader/mascot will receive consequences when he/she fails to satisfactorily complete any responsibility or violates the student code of conduct. The consequence will coincide with the student handbook and/or will be determined by the cheer sponsor.

Removal/Suspension from the Squad

Certain acts or violations may result in removal from the squad. This will be at the discretion of the sponsor and district administration. In-school discipline problems resulting in ISS, Saturday School, Swats or Suspension may result in dismissal from the cheer program. The following violations may also result in suspension or dismissal from the Brazos Cheer Program:

1. Using illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco at any time.
2. Allowing yourself to be in a situation, in school or away from school, where you are accused of/arrested for an illegal activity.
3. Missing practice (unless excused by the sponsor).
4. Skipping class or school.

5. Poor sportsmanship
6. Harassment (verbal/physical/sexual/etc...) of another student or team member.
7. Any act (either in school or away from school) which in the opinion of the sponsor and/or school administration, reflects in a negative manner on the Brazos Cheer Program.
8. Electronic communication (text, Facebook, Twitter, etc...) should be positive and should never negatively reflect on other teammates or coaching staff. If it is not positive don't post it.

In School Suspension (ISS) Procedures

A Cheerleader/Mascot that is assigned ISS will be permitted to practice. The athlete will become eligible for competition at the end of the school day on the final day of the ISS assignment. The athlete will not be allowed to leave ISS prior to the end of the school day to travel to a competition.

High School Cheer/Mascot additional Info

Events:

Football: Varsity cheerleaders and mascot are required to attend all varsity regular season football games as well as all playoff games, whether home or away. Junior Varsity cheerleaders are required to attend all home junior varsity football games. Junior Varsity cheerleaders will cheer during the third quarter of all home varsity games. If there is no junior varsity cheer squad, varsity cheerleaders will cheer at home junior varsity games.

JV Cheerleaders will travel to away games as determined by the sponsor.

Volleyball: Varsity and JV Cheerleaders will cheer at volleyball playoff games.

Basketball: Varsity and Junior Varsity cheerleaders will cheer at boys and girls varsity district home games, as well as all playoff games.

OTHER EVENTS

Austin County Fair Parade
Wallis and Orchard Christmas Parades
Brazos Elementary Carnival
Athletic Booster Fun Run
Mini-cheer Clinic (summer)

Captain/Co-Captain

The cheerleading squad and sponsors will each vote once for captain. Varsity captain must be a returning varsity cheerleader. The candidate with the most votes wins the captain position. The candidate with the second highest votes becomes co-captain. When the captain is not present, the co-captain assumes the captain position and duties.

Captain Responsibilities/Duties:

- Weekly meetings with sponsors to develop and plan practices and events
- Be early to all events and practices
- Call out cheers at all events

- Plan and run weekly practices

JV Head Cheerleader

The JV cheerleading squad and sponsor will each vote once for a JV head Cheerleader. The JV head Cheerleader must be a returning cheerleader. The candidate with the most votes wins the captain position.

JV Head Cheerleader Responsibilities/Duties:

- Weekly meetings with sponsors to develop and plan practices and events
- Be early to all events and practices
- Call out cheers at all events
- Assist the Captain of the Varsity Squad

Brazos Middle School Additional Info:

Events:

BMS Cheerleaders will cheer at all home football games.
BMS Cheerleaders will travel to two away football games.
They will assist BHS cheerleaders with mini-cheer camp.
Additional events may be added throughout the year.

Pep Rallies: BMS will hold 5 pep rallies a season to be determined by sponsor.

Mascot: There is no middle school mascot.

Membership and Tryout Qualifications

A candidate must first "qualify" to go through the tryout procedure.

Tryout Qualifications:

1. Candidates for tryouts must have an overall 70 average in all classes. Applicants cannot have a six weeks grade of F (69 or less) in any class. Grades will be checked through the last report card date prior to tryouts. Any candidate that is academically ineligible will not be able to participate in the tryouts.
2. Candidates must have maintained a 90% or higher attendance rate for the year at the time of tryouts.
3. Candidates must attend all practice clinics as scheduled by the cheerleading sponsor prior to tryouts, unless prior notice of absence is given to sponsor.
4. Candidates must have a signed parent permission form to try out.

Cheerleader Tryout Procedures:

1. Contestant must fulfill tryout qualifications.
2. Contestants will compete in front of judges only, and judges' scores will count the full 100%.
3. Tryout attire: Candidates will be required to wear black shorts with a solid red or white shirt.
4. Contestants will perform in a group and as an individual.
 - a. Skills to be performed will include any gymnastic ability, varied jumps, cheers, and dance routine.
 - b. Areas of judging will focus upon dance, tumbling, personality expressed, spirit and enthusiasm, voice and projection, motion techniques, and jumps.
5. **High School:** There are 8 squad positions available on each squad; Varsity and Junior Varsity. The top 8 scorers will be eligible to be a varsity cheerleader. The next 8 scorers will be eligible to be junior varsity cheerleaders. A minimum of 4 cheerleaders are needed to make a JV squad. In the event of an exact tying score for the 8th position, a 9th position will be added.

Middle School: There will be 10 total members on the squad, five 7th graders and five 8th graders. In the event there are not five members trying out from one grade level, then the remaining spots may be filled with additional members from the other grade level. Additionally, in the event there are only five candidates from a grade level trying out, candidates must still attend tryouts to receive the experience and feedback. In the event of an exact tying score for the 5th position, in either grade level, a 6th position will be added.

6. **Mascots (High School Only):** Candidates trying out for mascot will perform a 2-4 minute skit before the judges. Mascots may use props in their skits. No additional individuals will be allowed as part of the skit. Music used in the skit must be school appropriate and approved by the sponsor prior to tryouts. **One mascot will be chosen. There will be no Brazos Middle School Mascot.**
7. Results of the tryouts will be announced no later than one hour after the completion of tryouts. Sealed envelopes will be given to each candidate indicating if they made one of the squads.

If a Cheerleader Quits/Moves

High School: After tryouts, the top 8 scorers will be selected for varsity cheer. If a varsity cheerleader quits or moves BEFORE the squad goes to camp and there is a junior varsity squad, the junior varsity cheerleader who is next in line, based on tryout scores, will have the opportunity to move up to varsity cheer. If there is no junior varsity squad and more than 8 students tried out, the candidate with the next highest score will be offered the opportunity to join the varsity cheer squad. If there were 8 or fewer candidates who tried out for cheer, the position will remain vacant. **No additional tryouts will be held.**

Middle School: If a middle school cheerleader quits or moves before the date of the uniform fitting, the candidate with the next score in line will have the opportunity to join the squad. No spots will be filled after uniform fittings are held.

Expenses

Expenses:

1. Cheerleaders will be responsible for the cost of their own uniforms, camp, camp clothes, pom-poms, shoes, and other accessories. A fundraising activity will be conducted to help pay for costs. Any funds raised above the total amount of the bill will be deposited to the group activity account.
2. The cheerleading uniform will be worn only when cheering as a group member at pep rallies, football or basketball games, or another school sponsored event.
3. A list of cheer expenses will be included with the tryout registration packet.