



2010 - 2011

# HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADER HANDBOOK



PLEASANT GROVE

INDEPENDANT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
TEXARKANA, TEXAS



## **CANDIDACY AND SELECTION**

### **Candidacy and Selection**

In addition to meeting UIL rules and requirements, a candidate must have no lower than an overall grade average of 78 and no grade lower than a B in conduct the semester prior to tryouts. Each candidate shall also return a signed parental permission form to the school office on or before the date specified to tryout. Tryouts will be conducted before at least three judges from outside the school. Spectators will not be allowed. Each candidate shall perform individual cheers, group cheers, and group dances. Candidates will be judged based on spirit, jumps, technique, crowd appeal, voice, dance, and teacher evaluations. The coach may add up to ten points to a candidate's score based on behavior and attitude during tryout clinic. Senior candidates with three year of cheerleading experience at Pleasant Grove High School are exempt from tryouts.

Candidates must attend the Pleasant Grove High School Cheerleader Tryout Clinic held prior to the day of the tryouts. Criteria and requirements for tryouts will be disclosed at an informational meeting before the clinic begins. Candidates must strictly adhere to all criteria and requirements for tryouts. Any violation may result in disqualification.

There will be a maximum of 15 varsity cheerleaders from the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. Each cheerleader will meet a minimum score requirement. There is no restriction as to the number from each grade. There will be no more than 10 junior varsity cheerleaders selected each year from the ninth or tenth grade. Tenth graders have the option of being assigned to the JV squad if their score is in the top ten scores for JV, but they did not qualify for the Varsity squad.

There will be one mascot selected. Students in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades may tryout.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COACH**

- A. Check eligibility of cheerleaders and mascot as per No Pass/No Play and cheerleading grade requirements.
- B. Assist the administration in the development of rules for cheerleaders and mascot.
- C. Accompany and supervise the cheerleaders and mascot while participating in cheerleading activities
- D. Enforce all cheerleading rules and regulations
- E. Maintain a channel of communication with parents concerning activities

### **SELECTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHEERLEADING CAPTAIN**

The captain will:

- A. Be selected by 50% majority vote of the new squad and 50% coaches interview.
- B. Assure that cheerleaders are carrying out their responsibilities as assigned by the coach
- C. Cooperate fully with the coach and fellow cheerleaders
- D. Display a positive attitude at all times
- E. Assist coach at practices and games
- F. Provide the coach with a pep rally agenda by the designated time and date
- G. Assist coach in assigned duties

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND RULES FOR SQUAD MEMBERS**

Each squad member should be able to carry out the following responsibilities:

- A. Cheerleaders must want to be a member of the squad.
- B. Cheerleaders must be able to accept constructive criticism that will help you attain a high performance level.
- C. Cheerleaders should be leaders and set good examples at all times.
- D. Cheerleaders are expected to be of good character.
- E. Good grooming and personal habits are required since cheerleaders are constantly representing the school.
- F. Cheerleaders are never to be smoking, drinking, or using any kinds of drugs.
- G. Cheerleaders do not use profanity.
  
- H. Cheerleaders must be at all games and practices at the times designated by the coach. Work will not be considered an excused absence. Attendance at practice is mandatory to perform at each week's activities. If a practice is missed the cheerleader will attend but must sit out of the performance they are practicing for.

- I. Cheerleaders are expected to attend all cheerleading activities including but not limited to: camp, pep rallies, football games, basketball games, volleyball games, parades, clinics, competitions, and other special appearances. If an activity is missed without permission, the cheerleader will be disciplined according to the guidelines in the cheerleader handbook.
- J. Cheerleaders will be assigned duties by the coach including but not limited to making spirit signs and participating in fundraisers.
- K. A cheerleader may not perform at a game or activity if absent from school the day of the activity unless it is a school related absence.
- L. Cheerleaders should be respectful to the coach and other squad members.
- M. Cheerleaders must wear specific practice outfits on class days.
- N. Cheerleaders are expected to support all cheerleading activities and projects.
- O. Cheerleaders should maintain a positive attitude. Negative remarks will not be tolerated. If there is a problem, discuss the problem with the coach or an administrator.
- P. Cheerleaders should be courteous, friendly, and exhibit a good attitude at all times.
- Q. Quitting is discouraged. If a cheerleader quits or is dismissed from the squad before the end of the year, the cheerleader forfeits the letter and inclusion on the cheerleader composite. Once a cheerleader is off the squad, the cheerleader may not return during the school year or be allowed to tryout for cheerleader the following year. The cheerleader may request that the coach waive the tryout restriction.

**IF A CHEERLEADER FAILS TO MEET THESE RESPONSIBILITIES, THE COACH MAY TAKE APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

**MEMBERSHIP IN AN EXTRACURRICULAR ORGANIZATION/TEAM IS A PRIVILEGE AND NOT A RIGHT.**

**ANY STUDENT WHO IS FOUND TO HAVE FORMAL CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST HIM/HER BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS OR ANY STUDENT WHO, IN THE OPINION OF THE COACH, SPONSOR, OR ADMINISTRATION BRINGS FORTH A NEGATIVE VIEW OF THE TEAM OR ORGANIZATION BY HIS/HER ACTIONS IS SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS IN ADDITION TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT.**

**CONSEQUENCES WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE COACH, SPONSOR, OR ADMINISTRATOR.**

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Attendance**

Cheerleaders shall attend and perform at all assigned football, volleyball, basketball and baseball games. The schedule will be determined by the coach and subject to UIL. Breaks during games will be determined by the coach. Cheerleaders must attend all playoff games as requested by the coach or administration.

If a student cannot participate in an activity involving the squad, the coach **MUST** be contacted **PRIOR** to the activity. A written statement signed by a parent or guardian must be turned in to the coach. The statement should include the date and reason for the absence.

If a cheerleader misses a game, and the absence is unexcused, they will attend the following game in uniform, but will not perform. They will also receive 1 demerit. Excused absences will be allowed for the following reasons only and must be properly documented by a parent/guardian and given to the coach.

1. Personal illness (excused by a Doctor's note or note from school secretary that the student was not in attendance at school that day)
  2. Death in the family
  3. Academic, School-required trips
- \* Work and Out-of-town trips are NOT considered excused absences.

### **Cheerleading Class Grade**

Grades will be determined based on the student expectations found in the Physical Education Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Every ½ demerit received will result in an automatic 5 point deduction from the weekly grade. Class participation, attitude, participation in pep rallies, performance at games, etc. will also all factor into the athletes grades.

### **Competitions**

If alternates are needed for competition, tryouts will be held, from current JV members. The number of alternates will be at the discretion of the coach. All squad members will be expected to attend all practices for the national competition. The coach will provide the national squad members with mandatory practice dates. If a member misses a mandatory practice for an invalid reason, the member will be moved to first alternate, and the first alternate will become a member of the national squad. If an alternate misses a mandatory practice for an invalid reason, the alternate will be moved to the last alternate position. Squad members that are late to mandatory practices are subject to demerits and other discipline. Extreme tardiness for an invalid reason will be counted as an absence. More than 15 minutes late to a 90 minute practice will be considered extreme tardiness. Participation on the national squad requires a high level of commitment and dedication on the part of each national squad member.

## **Demerit System**

Demerits will be given for violation of rules. Six demerits in a six-week period will constitute dismissal from the squad. The demerit system will be in effect at all cheerleading activities. The demerit system for the first six-week period will begin the week of summer cheerleader camp. The coach will give demerits. The cheerleader captain may recommend demerits.

Demerits will be given for the following offenses:

1. Chewing gum, eating, or drinking during practices, performances, games, or other activities except during scheduled breaks
2. Not being attentive
3. Excessive talking during practices, performances, games, or other activities
4. Tardiness at the beginning of an event, following a break, or leaving early (1/2 demerit)
5. Using a cell phone during practices, games, or other events without the coach's permission.
6. Missing a practice, game, or other event to attend detention.
7. Missing a practice, game or event for doctor's appointments.
8. Not participating
9. Being disrespectful
10. Unsportsmanlike behavior
11. Leaving an event or practice without permission
12. Wearing any jewelry during practices, performances, games, or other activities
13. Failure to wear correct and complete practice uniform
14. Failure to wear correct and complete uniform to games/events
15. Failure to meet certain deadlines or requirements set by the coach
16. Hair not fixed properly (tight, secure ponytail unless otherwise specified)
17. Failure to notify coach of an absence
18. Unexcused absence from a practice or a game
19. Receiving ISS disciplinary action\*\*
20. Other inappropriate behavior\*\*

\*\*Demerits acquired under these circumstances will remain on the cheerleader's record for the entirety of the school year.

## **Probation**

Any serious violations will be considered grounds for probation, suspension, or dismissal. While on probation, participation as a cheerleader is prohibited. Any cheerleader who receives 3 demerits in a six week period will be put on probation and will not perform for a minimum of a week. Upon receiving any additional demerits in a six week period, a cheerleader will again be on probation and will not be allowed to perform for at least another week. Upon receiving the 6th demerit, she will be dismissed from the squad. Written notices will be sent to the parents or guardians when a cheerleader receives 3 or

more demerits. These notices must be signed and returned to the coach. Any cheerleader who is placed on probation due to the “No Pass-No Play” rule for two grading periods a year may be dismissed from the squad.

### **Dismissal from Squad**

A member may be dismissed from the squad for excessive or repeated violation of cheerleading rules and may be subject to dismissal from the squad for the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. Cheerleaders must abide by all regulations to remain on the squad. Rules are subject to change with sufficient notice. The coach may be allowed to place certain restrictions upon a member of the squad and any time a member fails to adhere to these requirements, she may be dismissed from the squad. If a member is dismissed from the squad before the end of the year, the cheerleader forfeits the letter and inclusion on the cheerleader composite. Once a cheerleader is off the squad, the cheerleader may not return during the school year or be allowed to tryout for cheerleader the following year. The cheerleader may request that the coach waive the tryout restriction.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Cheerleaders will be ineligible for participation in drill team and any first semester athletics other than tennis. Cheerleaders may participate in second semester athletics, but cheerleading is their first priority. Second semester athletics are sports that begin practicing in the spring semester and whose games do not conflict with basketball season. Participation in these activities will not be allowed if it interferes with cheerleading class, practice, performances, or other required events.

### **Grade Requirements**

In addition to meeting UIL rules and requirements, each cheerleader and mascot must maintain an overall grade average of at least 78 and no grade lower than a B in conduct each six week grading period. Conduct grades of at least a B must be maintained in each class. If the grade average is below the standard set, the cheerleader will be put on probation. The first probationary period will be on a weekly basis, not to exceed three weeks. The student will be removed from probation as soon as the grade average meets the standard set. Any subsequent probationary periods will be three weeks in length. If after the end of three weeks the grade average meets the standard set, the student will be removed from probation. If grades do not meet the standard set above after three consecutive weeks of probation, the student will be removed from the position for the remainder of the year. If a cheerleader has a grade in any class lower than a 70 at the end of a six-week grading period, the cheerleader will be suspended from participation in accordance with UIL No Pass, No Play rules. If the athlete fails any 2 six weeks during the school year, and must be suspended according to UIL No Pass, No Play, they will be dismissed from the squad for the remainder of the current year.

### **Insurance**

The Pleasant Grove Independent School District provides your son/daughter with supplemental insurance each school year while he/she is participating in any school

sponsored UIL event for grades 7-12. The coverage is supplemental to the primary insurance you provide. The policy only covers accident coverage while the student is participating in UIL athletics or activities sponsored by Pleasant Grove ISD. Coverage is in force during practice, scheduled games, and travel in a school appointed and supervised vehicle, to and from the event. In the event of an accident, claim forms can be picked up from the middle or high school office.

### **Letter Jackets**

To receive a letter jacket, a cheerleader must complete a full year on the varsity squad. A full year of cheerleading runs from the day a cheerleader is selected until the performance at Spring Show. Letter jackets will be delivered at the end of the year.

### **Composite Pictures**

Pictures for the composite will be taken at the end of the year. Any cheerleader who does not complete their obligation will not be included in the composite or in the yearbook.

### **Mascot**

The mascot will be subject to the same rules and regulations as cheerleaders.

### **Participation**

Cheerleaders shall attend and perform at all assigned football, volleyball, basketball, and baseball games. The schedule will be determined by the coach and subject to UIL rules. Breaks during games will be determined by the coach. Cheerleaders must attend all playoff games as requested by coach or administration.

### **Pep Rallies and Homecoming**

Cheerleaders must attend and perform at all pep rallies. Pep rally agendas must be given to the coach by 4:00 p.m. on Monday in preparation for a Thursday or Friday pep rally. Cheerleaders shall assist with homecoming ceremonies as directed by the coach.

### **Practices**

To perform at each week's activities, cheerleaders must attend practice. Absences or early dismissals are not excused unless validated by a parent or guardian in written form or by telephone and approved by the coach. Doctor's appointments, other appointments, trips, etc. should be scheduled for non-practice times. If a cheerleader misses a practice, the cheerleader is responsible for any instruction from that practice and will receive a demerit. Cheerleaders will attend, but will not participate in events or activities if in the coach's opinion if absences from practice have kept the cheerleader from being prepared. During the academic year immediately following the school day, practices will be regularly scheduled for each afternoon during the football season and one afternoon during the basketball season – if needed. Additional school coached practices may be called by the coach or administrator only. Time limits will be set by the coach. Required practice sessions during the summer include but are not limited to the following: two weeks before summer cheerleader camp, attendance at summer cheerleader camp, and beginning August 1<sup>st</sup> in preparation for the new school year.

### **Summer Cheerleader Camp**

Cheerleaders must attend a summer cheerleader camp sponsored by Pleasant Grove High School. The school will be financially responsible for transportation to and from the camp, the camp registration fee, dorm rooms, and meals during the scheduled camp. Students will be expected to furnish clinic uniforms and accessories, snack foods, a dorm key deposit, linens, and personal items. Detailed information regarding summer camp will be furnished to cheerleaders before school is dismissed for summer vacation. Every cheerleader must attend the summer cheerleader camp. Cheerleaders may be excused from camp due to an illness of the student, a death in the family, family emergencies, or any other reasons acceptable to the coach. If a cheerleader is unexcused from camp, the cheerleader will be dismissed from the squad. The camp could also be a private camp.

### **Travel**

Cheerleaders will be required to ride in transportation provided by the school district to and from each event or activity. Cheerleaders may return from an event or activity with their parent or guardian if a signed written request is provided to the coach the day before the scheduled event or activity. The District shall not be liable for any injuries that may occur to students riding in vehicles that are not provided by the District. Cheerleaders must provide the coach with a completed and signed trip permission form before being allowed to travel with the squad.

### **Uniforms**

Cheerleaders are responsible for purchasing their own standard uniforms, shoes, and accessories. The coach and cheerleaders with parental approval will select uniforms. All uniforms must be kept clean at all times.

**PLEASANT GROVE HIGH SCHOOL  
CHEERLEADER AND MASCOT HANDBOOK  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

I have received and read a copy of the Pleasant Grove High School Cheerleader and Mascot Handbook. I agree to abide by the rules and regulations as set out in the handbook and understand the consequences for the failure to abide by the rules and regulations.

STUDENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_