



Cheerleader Guidelines

Eighth Grade

Richardson Independent School District

RISD EIGHTH GRADE CHEERLEADER GUIDELINES

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Cheerleading is a stand-alone extra-curricular activity. The cheerleader guidelines are unique to team members. The guidelines provide a necessary framework to aid in developing a successful cheerleading squad.

PHILOSOPHY

The primary purpose of eighth grade cheerleading is to create enthusiasm and support for the district's athletic teams. The goal of instructional and performance activities is to enhance each individual member's skills and development, resulting in a highly skilled performance group. Each team member must be aware of the time commitment and individual dedication required to achieve personal improvement and effective teamwork through responsibility and discipline. Cheerleaders will demonstrate good citizenship and moral standards and assume responsibility for developing school spirit. Cheerleaders will support both boys and girls athletic events. Cheerleading must be a first priority for team members after academics. **Emphasis will be on leading rather than competing.**

The District will annually review these guidelines and update them with the sponsors on an as needed basis.

ELIGIBILITY - TRYOUT

To be eligible for tryouts, a cheerleader candidate must be enrolled as a student in the Richardson Independent School District. Any student who was not enrolled and actually in attendance at the beginning of the school year at the RISD school where he or she desires to tryout must:

Otherwise meet the minimum eligibility criteria; and if a newly enrolled student, must be enrolled and in attendance in classes in the RISD school fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the tryout.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Students must have passed all subjects* with a minimum grade of 70 the preceding six-weeks grading period in order to participate in **any** of the out-of-school workshops. Tryouts for students who have failed one or more courses are limited to **one-day** participation before the judges.

***EXCEPTION:** Students who are enrolled in current year TEA/UIIL Advanced Courses identified for No-Pass, No-Play Exemption, including Pre-AP courses, and make a grade below 70 in any of these classes are exempt from this eligibility ruling (see counselor).

INDIVIDUAL & CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

To be eligible as a candidate, a student must have a 90 average in Individual and Civic Responsibility.

Individual and Civic Responsibility grades from all previous six-weeks for the current year will be averaged together.

The following scale will be used:
(A = 95; B = 85; C = 75; F = 65)

PERMISSION SLIPS & MEDICAL RELEASE

All candidates must complete and turn in required permission slips, including a medical release form, prior to participation in any tryout activities.

ORIENTATION MEETING

All candidates must attend scheduled orientation meeting(s) accompanied by a parent/guardian prior to the beginning of the tryout workshops. All candidates will be advised in writing of requirements, duties, responsibilities and consequences of guideline violations prior to tryouts. All parents and students will have an opportunity to discuss concerns and questions with the sponsor and/or principal prior to the parent and student signing the agreement form indicating understanding and willingness to comply with all applicable rules as a condition of participation.

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TRYOUT PROCESS

- Workshops and election dates will be scheduled by the school.
- Tryouts cannot exceed three days of out-of-school activities, excluding the judging.
- The number of workshops will be at the sponsor's discretion.
- Eligible candidates for cheerleader must try out in person in front of the judges.
- A student may participate in the cheerleading tryout process at only one RISD school per year.
- Tryouts for team membership will be closed to parents and the public.
- Tryouts will be held within the two weeks prior to spring break.

JUDGES

- Three qualified cheerleader judges from recognized associations will score the performance of candidates for eighth grade cheerleader.
- An effort will be made to secure impartial judges who are not acquainted with any candidate.
- Individuals who have attended any RISD high school during the four years prior to the school year in which tryouts take place may not be used as judges.
- Immediately after scoring, the judges' score sheets will be turned over to a school administrator who will maintain the scores for the remainder of the school year.
- If unusually large discrepancies (as defined by each school's constitution) between one judge's scores and the other two judges' scores exist, the administrator monitoring the tryouts shall request a callback.

SCORING

- The administrator will total judges' scores and rank the cheerleader candidates from the highest total to the lowest.
- If two or more candidates have the same judges' scores for the last available position, a tiebreak procedure will be followed. Callbacks will continue until the tie is resolved.

- The candidates who receive the top twenty judges' scores will be selected as eighth grade cheerleaders.
- Under normal circumstances, the list of candidates selected as cheerleader will be posted within twenty-four hours of tryouts.
- All team members must pass a physical exam and the record must be on file with the cheerleader sponsor before the cheerleader can participate in any cheerleading activities.

PARENT REQUEST FOR SCORES

- A candidate's scores and score sheets will be made available to the candidate's parent or legal guardian upon request the week following the tryout announcements.

VACANCIES

- Any cheerleader team vacancies that occur on or after June 3rd will not be filled.

APPOINTMENT PERIOD

- A cheerleader who is selected during tryouts will serve from the date of selection through the date on which the next squad is selected "the cheerleading school year."

SAFETY & CONDITIONING

Safe practices and adequate conditioning are of paramount importance for each cheerleading squad, and are vital to efficient athletic performance.

Warming up with stretching and flexibility exercises is required and important in reducing injuries.

Safety is a priority for Eighth Grade Cheerleaders. They will never perform any tumbling or stunting that has not been approved by the sponsor. For safety reasons, the Eighth Grade Cheerleaders will not participate in any stunting in which the bases do not maintain continuous contact with the flyer. The only exception to this will be in cradling. Eighth Grade cheerleaders will not participate in Basket Tosses.

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Students with injuries are encouraged to seek proper medical attention. No student will knowingly be subjected to any unsafe situation.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Official summer practice may begin no earlier than three -weeks prior to the opening day of school. The amount of time spent in summer practice shall not exceed a total of forty-five hours in any one-week period (Monday through Saturday), and no more than six hours in any one day. There will be no Sunday practices.

No required summer practices will be allowed for a minimum of six continuous weeks during the summer. During that six-week period, the school, sponsor, coach, or students cannot organize any practice, formal or informal.

The sponsor or a qualified adult designated by the sponsor will supervise all required cheerleading practices. At no time may cheerleaders be left unsupervised during a scheduled practice.

SUMMER CHEERLEADING CAMP

Summer cheerleading camp is optional and is not an RISD-sponsored event. Attendance and participation is solely at the discretion of the individual and his/her parent(s). Cheerleaders who do attend such camps must comply with any rules and procedures of the specific camp, as well as RISD rules of conduct. RISD expects that any student who represents the district will conduct himself/herself in an exemplary fashion at all times.

PRACTICES

- The principal must approve official practice times.
- Cheerleaders must attend practice sessions as instructed by the sponsor.
- It is at the discretion of the sponsor to determine the level a cheerleader performs if they have missed previous practice.
- Practice time will be limited to a total of eight hours per school week outside the school day.

The school week is defined as beginning at 12:01 a.m. on the first instructional day of the calendar week and ending at the close of instruction on the last instructional day of the calendar week, excluding holidays.

- Morning practice for cheerleaders can start no earlier than two hours before school and cannot exceed the eight-hour rule during the school week, regardless of the start time.
- All practices should be held to a maximum of 2 ½ hours work time.
- There will be no Sunday practices.
- A maximum total of 20 hours per week participation in contests and/or practices, including Saturday, will be permitted.
- All required practices will be supervised by the cheerleader sponsor or an authorized adult designated by the cheerleader sponsor. At no time may cheerleader members be left unsupervised during a scheduled practice.

PERFORMANCE

- Cheerleaders may not lead cheers at any activity unless the sponsor or an appropriate school official is designated to oversee the activity.
- All routines must be approved by the sponsor and in compliance with district and safety guidelines.
- No student may lead cheers more than one night during the school week, with exceptions for tournaments and play-off games.
- The school week is defined as beginning at 12:01 a.m. on the first instructional day of the calendar week and ending at the close of instruction on the last instructional day of the calendar week, excluding holidays.

FOOTBALL

The eighth grade cheerleaders will cheer the entire football game. At halftime, the entire team will perform. The visiting school's team will perform first. The total time limit for each routine is limited to 2 ½ minutes. Teams must be off the field two

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minutes before the end of halftime. Additionally, each school's team may have the opportunity to perform a "run through" during halftime of the football games.

BASKETBALL

Eighth grade cheerleaders will be divided into two squads for basketball. Depending on the basketball schedule, the cheerleaders that play on the basketball team may be divided amongst the two squads. No more than twelve cheerleaders from a school will be allowed on the basketball court sidelines at any one time. The school's two squads will alternate quarters to cheer. Squads not performing will remain in the stands with the sponsor. The entire team may perform at halftime. The visiting school's team will perform first. The total time limit for each routine is limited to two minutes. Teams must be off the court two minutes before the end of halftime. Due to safety being a priority, stunting during a basketball game can only be at halftime and during time outs when the squad can step out onto the court.

VOLLEYBALL

Cheering assignments for volleyball games are local campus decisions and will be made at the discretion of the sponsor.

TRANSPORTATION

The school district will not provide transportation for eighth grade cheerleaders for performances, practices, or special events.

ABSENCE

A student who is not present for any required activity outside the regular school day, such as games and practices, is considered absent.

EXCUSED

Excused absences are defined as absences due to personal illness, for religious holidays, death or serious illness in the family, or other absence excused at the discretion of the sponsor or principal.

OTHER

Absences from cheerleading caused by conflicts with other school activities will be excused at the discretion of the sponsor and principal.

MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY

Cheerleaders must maintain a minimum grade average of 70 in all classes.*

**EXCEPTION:* Students who are enrolled in current year TEA/UIIL Advanced Courses identified for No-Pass, No-Play exemption, including Pre-AP courses, and make a grade below 70 in any of these classes are exempt from this eligibility ruling (see counselor).

INDIVIDUAL AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

All students must maintain an Individual and Civic Responsibility grade average of 90 for the previous six-weeks grading period. Individual and Civic Responsibility grades in all courses will be averaged together (A = 95; B = 85; C = 75; F = 65) If a member fails to meet the criteria listed above, please see "Probation" under "Conduct and Probationary Procedures" for more details.

CONTINUOUS MEMEBERSHIP

Each cheerleading team member is assured of a position only if he/she has continuous enrollment *during* the school year involved. In the event that enrollment has not been continuous, reinstatement and conditions of reinstatement are at the discretion of the sponsor and principal.

CONDUCT AND PROBATIONARY PROCEDURES

Participation in cheerleading is a privilege. Certain standards are necessary to maintain the integrity and reputation of any organization. Cheerleading is a stand-alone extra-curricular activity. The cheerleader guidelines are unique to team members. Cheerleaders represent the school and the district at all times. Each member must conduct him or her self in an exemplary manner at all times, whether during school, at a performance, or during leisure and social activities. The behavior, character, and

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personal appearance of each member should set a positive example for others at all times.

Cheerleaders should never be seen smoking, drinking alcohol, using any kind of illegal drug or other illegal substance, or engaging in any unlawful or prohibited activity. A cheerleader, who fails to follow these guidelines, is subject to immediate disciplinary action, including removal from the team.

Violations of the RISD Student Code of Conduct resulting in an assignment to in-school-suspension (ISS) will result in a probationary period.

Violations of the RISD Student Code of Conduct (categories II or III) resulting in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement (Christa McAuliffe Learning Center) will result in removal from the team.

PROBATION

Prior to a cheerleader being placed on probation or removed from the team, he/she will be notified in writing in a timely manner of the reasons for the action. A conference will be offered to the parent and the student. The student will be given the opportunity to present his/her version of the events. A student or parent when not satisfied after the conference may choose to contact Student Services to obtain information about any applicable grievance procedure.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A cheerleader whose recorded six-weeks grade average in any course* is below 70, shall be given a seven-day grace period before being placed on probation (see example below). If a student's average is elevated to 70 or above during the grace period, the student will not be placed on probation.

The grade average of a student given academic probation shall be reviewed two weeks following the date on which the probation began (the third week of the six -weeks period). If the student is passing **all courses*** with a minimum grade of 70 on the last class day of the third week of the six-weeks period, the student may be reinstated effective at the end of the regular school day seven calendar days later. Refer to the UIL / RISD Eligibility Calendar.

***EXCEPTION:** Students who are enrolled in current year TEA/UIL Advanced Courses identified for No-Pass, No-Play exemption, including Pre-AP courses, and make a grade below 70 in any of these classes, are exempt from this eligibility ruling (see counselor).

INDIVIDUAL AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

Individual and Civic Responsibility grades in all courses will be averaged together (A = 95; B = 85; C = 75; F = 65). A cheerleader, whose recorded Individual and Civic Responsibility average is below 90, shall be given a seven-day grace period before being placed on probation (see example below). If a student's average is elevated to 90 or above during the grace period, the student will not be placed on probation. Refer to the UIL/RISD Eligibility Calendar.

The Individual and Civic Responsibility average of a student given academic probation shall be reviewed two weeks following the date on which the probation began (the third week of the six - weeks). If the student has an average of 90 in Individual and Civic Responsibility on the last class day of the third week of the six-week school period, the student may be reinstated effective at the end of the regular school day seven calendar days later.

CONDITIONS OF ACADEMIC PROBATION

A cheerleader who is on probation for academic reasons will not be allowed to participate in any cheerleading performance during the probationary period.

While on academic probation, if a cheerleader attends the performance, he/she must sit with the sponsor until the cheerleading team is released, or otherwise dismissed by the sponsor.

He/she will not be allowed to wear the uniform to school the day of the game or to an activity.

During probation, the cheerleader must attend all practices as scheduled.

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DEMERITS

- Only the cheerleading sponsor and the coach will assign demerits.
- Demerits are cumulative for the entire cheerleading year.
- Upon receiving the 4th demerit, the cheerleader will be placed on three week probation; upon the 8th demerit, they will receive a second probation and will be dismissed from the squad.
- Sponsor reserves the right to give a demerit if a situation arises and discipline is needed.

DEMERIT LIST

Unexcused tardy to an assigned activity or leaving early from an assigned activity.	1
Failure to wear assigned uniform to event and/or practice. This is bows to toes, including hair being styled as directed by coach/sponsor.	1
Failure to meet obligations of time—for example: turning in forms, grade sheets, report cards, sign painting, etc.	1
Failure to follow instructions of sponsor	1
Failure to know cheers	1
Receiving a school or teacher detention	1
Being sent to the office for disciplinary reasons or receiving a referral.	1
Receiving an unexcused absence to a cheerleader event = 2 demerits. If possible, the coach/sponsor should be notified before the event, if not possible they must bring a note within 24 hours of returning to school from parent or doctor.	2
Wearing cheerleader attire other than at school, games, or performances.	1
Suspension from school. (ISS or OSS will result in 4 demerits)	4
Inappropriate behavior or speech at any school function. This includes public displays of affection.	1

DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS

A cheerleader will be placed on probation for violations of school and/or cheerleading guidelines, policies, and procedures.

CONDITIONS OF DISCIPLINARY PROBATION:

- A cheerleader who is on probation for disciplinary reasons will not be allowed to participate in any cheerleading performance during the probationary period.
- While on disciplinary probation, a cheerleader is required to attend the performance and must sit with the sponsor until the cheerleading team is released.
- He/she will not be allowed to wear the uniform to school the day of the game or to an activity.
- During probation, the cheerleader must attend practice as scheduled.

REMOVAL

A cheerleader who receives a second failing grade in any subsequent six - weeks period will be removed from the team.

A cheerleader will be removed from the team upon receiving a second probation.

Cheerleaders who are removed from the team may try out the following year if they meet all eligibility requirements.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

All anticipated expenditures for cheerleading will be discussed at the student/parent orientation meetings prior to tryouts.

REQUIRED EXPENDITURES

Required expenditures for cheerleading shall not exceed \$400 per cheerleading school year.

OPTIONAL EXPENDITURES

Expenses for trips, pictures, summer camp, and social events are considered optional, as students are not required to participate.

FUNDRAISING

Cheerleader organizations and/or their parents' booster groups may conduct fundraising events consistent with the RISD policies and guidelines. Funds may be used to pay for a recognition banquet for members, and to assist cheerleaders and/or the team to purchase additional items necessary for special events. *Policy References: FJ (Local) and GKB (Legal) RE: Fund-raising Activities.*

AWARDS, GIFTS, AND TREATS

Cheerleader awards may not exceed a total of \$10 in value per year. It is the intent of the school district that student gifts to other students or district employees be an expression of appreciation, rather than a gift of significant monetary value. Expenditures by each student for gifts shall not exceed \$25 per year (all gifts). Personal expenditures by students and parents for treats for athletes will not be allowed.

UNIFORMS

Cheerleaders must wear uniforms as designated by the sponsor. The school district will not provide uniforms for eighth grade cheerleaders.

TRIPS

Cheerleaders may schedule one approved trip each year. A trip constitutes a special event, taking place outside of the Metroplex. This trip will not be mandatory for any member and will not affect his or her status in any way if he or she chooses not to participate in the trip. Any exception must be approved by the Executive Director of Student Services and the Assistant Superintendent. *Policy References: FMG (Local) and FMG (R) (Local) RE: Travel Guidelines.*

2009 - 2010 Agreement Form

Student Statement:

My signature below certifies that I have read and understand the policies and procedures stated in these guidelines. I agree to comply with all rules and regulations written in these guidelines and any additional rules adopted by my school's constitution as a condition of participation as a cheerleader. I understand that my failure to comply with these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the team and possible ineligibility to tryout for the following year.

Printed Name of Student

Student Signature

Date Signed

Parent Statement (for students under 18 years of age):

My signature below certifies that I have read and understand the policies and procedures stated in these guidelines. I understand that my child must comply with all rules and regulations written in these guidelines and any additional rules adopted by my child's school's constitution as a condition of participation as a cheerleader. I understand that his or her failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the team and possible ineligibility to tryout the following year. I understand that a component of the cheerleading practices and performances in which my child will participate involves tumbling and stunting. I further understand that injuries can occur during such activities.

Printed Name of Parent or Legal Guardian

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date Signed