

# CONSTITUTION FOR HENRIETTA HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADERS AND MASCOT

## PREFACE

The following articles have been developed with the advice and the consent of the campus cheerleader sponsor, principal, and school board for the purpose of communicating the standards of eligibility and procedure which all candidates must meet to be eligible for try-outs and for the purpose of articulating the standards of conduct and behavior to which all Henrietta ISD Cheerleader and Mascot members are expected to adhere as a condition of participation in cheerleading activities. Participation in extracurricular activities, including cheerleading activities, is a privilege, not a right, and student participants will be held to higher standards than students who choose not to participate in extracurricular activities. **Failure to comply with the standards of conduct and behavior outlined in this Cheerleader and Mascot Constitution may subject the member to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the squad, in addition to any consequences imposed in accordance with the Henrietta ISD Student Code of Conduct.** This document may be amended at any time and does not limit a sponsor's ability to make decisions pertaining to his or her program, consistent with the guidelines set forth herein.

## I. PURPOSE

- A. The cheerleader and mascot shall promote and uphold:
  - 1. School spirit, pride, and unity;
  - 2. A sense of good sportsmanship among students;
  - 3. Unification of the crowd's involvement during athletic events;
  - 4. Building better relationships between schools;
  - 5. The highest personal, as well as, cheerleading standards of **behavior** and **appearance**;
- B. The cheerleader and mascot shall perform as a **school leader** as well as a **cheerleader**.

## II. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership is open to high school students or incoming freshmen. (Students who have not been in school at Henrietta for a complete semester prior to tryouts must have teacher evaluations from previous school and provide access to discipline records from that school.)
- B. Squad will consist of **ten** cheerleaders and one mascot. **If not enough students try out to come up with the ten cheerleaders, we will only have however many cheerleaders try out for the squad. If nobody tries out for mascot at the original try out date, a supplemental try out will be held at a later date. Students may NOT try out for both cheerleader and mascot.**
- C. Students must maintain passing grades and good citizenship grades.
- D. Assume all expenses necessary for membership, including a \$200 deposit due one week following tryouts. (No funds will be returned to participants removed from the squad.)
- E. Cheerleaders and mascot will attend summer practices and a summer camp as a squad. (Failure to attend will result in removal from the squad.)
- F. The school will pay a portion of the cost of camp with the remainder being the responsibility of the student.
- G. Must participate in fundraising activities of the squad and be responsible for the money collected.
- H. **Jobs** shall not interfere with cheerleading duties during football/volleyball season or basketball season.

- I. Supply record of a recent **physical exam** showing the student to be in excellent health and capable of participation without the burden of ongoing or recurring injury/illness. (This may be done in August with athletes.)
- J. Supply a doctor's release in order to return to cheerleading should an injury or severe illness occur.
- K. ***Must understand that a cheerleader serves as a role model and is held to a higher standard than other students.***
- L. Eligible to receive a letter jacket upon successful completion of summer cheerleading responsibilities. Patches can be earned by those who have already received their letter jacket. (Students may receive only one letter jacket.)

### III. TRYOUTS

#### A. Eligibility

- 1. The student must have an 80 or higher overall grade average (excluding P.E. or its equivalent) for the semester prior to the tryout.
- 2. The student must be passing all subjects the six weeks prior to the tryout.
- 3. The student must not have quit or have been dismissed from the squad during the current year.
- 4. The student must have no more than **3** discipline referrals in the semester preceding the tryout and only **1** during the semester of the tryout. (**Students not in school here during the previous semester must provide access to discipline records from previous school.**) These referrals include misconduct and bus behavior. No student may be a candidate for cheerleader or mascot who has accumulated **2 days ISS, 5 days D-Hall, or 1 day of Extended School for discipline** during the current school year. Any time served in AEP or SUSPENSION disqualifies a person from trying out. **Discipline files** are subject to final review by the sponsor/administration to determine eligibility for tryouts.
- 5. The student will be physically able to **jump, bend, and yell.**
- 6. Two mandatory practices are required to be able to participate in tryouts.
- 7. The student and at least one parent or guardian must attend a pre-tryout meeting set by the sponsor.
- 8. The student must return signed parental permission and medical release.

#### B. Procedure

- 1. Cheerleaders and mascot will be elected in the spring for the following year.
- 2. Judges for the tryouts will be determined by the sponsor with the principal's approval.
- 3. Each prospective cheerleader shall be evaluated by his/her teachers and former sponsors.
- 4. Tryout procedure will be explained in detail during the pre-tryout meetings held.
- 5. Each prospective cheerleader will wear the tryout t-shirt to be purchased at the parent meeting with black shorts, white socks, and tennis shoes. No jewelry of any kind will be permitted.
- 6. Each prospective cheerleader shall perform a combination of a cheer, a chant, a group cheer **and/or dance routine.** The sponsor will determine what will be performed for tryouts.
- 7. Mascot tryouts will be held with cheerleader tryouts and the procedure will be explained in detail the pre-tryout meetings.
- 8. Each prospective mascot shall perform a two-minute skit and/or a chant of his/her choice and perform with a group if determined necessary by the sponsor.

### **C. PERCENTAGE OF CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

1. Judges evaluations 45%
2. Teacher evaluations 25%
3. Student body elections 15%
4. Rules test 15%

### **IV. CAPTAIN AND LIEUTENANT**

**A. If the sponsor chooses to have them,** the captain and lieutenant will be **APPOINTED BY THE SPONSOR**. The selection of head cheerleader will be based on maturity, experience, and tryout scores. The sponsor will have the power to relieve the captain and/or lieutenant of his/her duties if determined necessary. If this occurs, the sponsor shall have the power to appoint a successor if desired.

**B. Duties of the captain shall include but are not limited to:**

1. The captain must work closely with the sponsor in planning activities such as pep rallies, special spirit events, and fund raisers.
2. The captain must report any conduct complaints, uncooperative behavior, or squad problems to the sponsor;
3. The captain must be responsible for calling practices and keeping up with attendance/absences in cooperation with the sponsor.
4. The captain is responsible for planning pep rallies with input from other squad members and final approval and changes made by the sponsor;
5. The captain must coordinate plans for what uniforms are to be worn at each event;
6. The captain is responsible for setting an example for other cheerleaders to follow. The captain should be positive, cooperative, helpful, and dedicated;
7. The captain is to provide individual help in learning and perfecting cheers and routines, checking attendance, inspecting uniforms and equipment, and any additional duties involving the squad and makes sure routines are ready for performances.
8. Captains must be willing to spend extra practice time to organize activities, learn material, and perform additional duties.
9. During games, captain will call cheers/chants, and will make sure that all cheerleaders are lined up within windows or assigned position on the sidelines.
10. Additional duties for the captain may include but are not limited to:
  - a. Arrange gifts for other activities
  - b. Make thank you notes, cards, sign-up sheets, lists, etc.
  - c. Plan squad and team parties, lunches, and bonding activities
  - d. Help with banquet preparation
  - e. Help sponsor with organizational responsibilities

**C. Duties of the lieutenant shall include but are not limited to:**

1. Work closely with captain and assist captain in all duties acting as a second in command on the squad.
2. Set the example of proper behavior, always above reproach.
3. Help sponsor maintain discipline when the captain is away.
4. Attend all activities held throughout their year.
5. Assist in directing routines and directing practices.

## V. UNIFORMS

- A. Selection of the length and style of the uniforms will be made by the sponsor with input from squad members.
  - The sponsor will choose several uniforms that are suitable.
  - The captain and lieutenant will narrow choices down to 2 or 3 uniforms.
  - The rest of the squad will vote via secret ballot on the uniform choices.
  - The uniform with the most votes will be purchased.
- B. Each cheerleader shall be responsible for the care of the equipment and uniforms (cleaned and/or pressed for each event). **Cheerleaders will be held responsible for replacing or repairing any damaged or lost uniforms or equipment.**
- C. Cheerleaders must wear the specified uniform for each event and be **dressed and ready upon arrival at school**. The uniforms are to be worn ONLY at designated school event. The specified uniform will include: uniform top, uniform bottom, specified bow, specified socks, designated shoes, solid black briefs, poms, and sports bra. During cold weather, tights, warm-ups, etc., will be used as well.
- D. There will be 2 uniforms for each squad member. The new uniform ordered for the current school year will be worn, and the uniform purchased the previous year will be worn.
- E. The new uniform will be designated for home games, and the older uniform will be designated for away games.
- F. All cheerleaders are to dress alike from head to toe... excluding hairstyles. Senior bows may be different in that they may have lettering indicating that the cheerleader is a senior.
- G. On Senior Night, the senior cheerleaders may choose and wear any uniform available from the four years they have been in high school. If all seniors do not agree on the uniform, they will wear the home uniform for that year.
- H. All uniforms are to be temporarily altered (this means the uniform may be let out or taken in but **NO MATERIAL SHALL BE REMOVED**) at the expense of the cheerleader in order to insure the uniform fits properly, if needed.
- I. No jewelry of any kind shall be worn due to safety reasons.
- J. **All uniforms and equipment must be returned** to the sponsor at the end of the cheering season. Uniforms must be cleaned appropriately before being returned. (Everything should be turned in one week following the final basketball game.)

## VI. GAMES/EVENTS

- A. Cheerleaders must be present in proper uniform at all football games, home district volleyball games, playoff volleyball games, district basketball games, playoff basketball games, or other designated events.
- B. A cheerleader will travel to and from all out of town games or events via school transportation. Parents may make special arrangements for their child's **RETURN** trip. This must be done in writing **BEFORE** we leave on the trip.

## VII. PRACTICES/ MEETINGS/ FUNDRAISERS

- A. Cheerleaders must be present and participate in all practices and meetings (including camp) and for all fundraisers (including Mini Spirit Camp if held).
- B. All cheerleaders will wear designated practice uniform to all summer practices (this will be the uniform purchased for tryouts, **WITH NO JEWELRY**). (Designated camp outfits will be worn to and during camp.)
- C. A monetary penalty will be assessed to cheerleaders not selling their quota in a fundraiser.

## VIII. RULES/REGULATIONS and DISCIPLINE

- A. Cheerleaders and mascot are required to abide by the following rules and regulations.
1. Cheerleaders/Mascot will follow the **Code of Conduct** stated in the *Henrietta High School Handbook*. (This includes dress code.)
  2. Cheerleaders/Mascot must behave in an appropriate manner at all times, including non-school events.
  3. Cheerleaders/Mascot shall maintain a healthy, natural, well-groomed appearance.
  4. A cheerleader/mascot shall cooperate with the sponsor, head cheerleader, game officials, and other squad members, and will abide by the regulations set up **without complaint**.
  5. Cheerleaders/mascot will not chew gum or eat during a performance. They may eat during breaks.
  6. Cheerleaders **may not wear jewelry of any kind** while performing.
  7. Visible tattoos or body piercing (other than the ears) is not allowed.
  8. Cheerleaders are required to cheer at all times during a sports event with most cheers being crowd directed.
  9. The Mascot will be given the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of football and basketball games off. He/She will be in full uniform and ready to resume his/her performance BEFORE the clock starts for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. The sponsor may make an exception to this requirement in order to do what is best for the student portraying the mascot, such as allowing extra time off during games due to excessive heat.
  10. The Mascot will not break character at any time while in costume. (The head will remain in place as well as all parts of the costume while visible to the public.)
  11. Conduct in the classroom shall be of the caliber which sets a good example to others. Cheerleaders/Mascot should **be cooperative, never cheating, fighting, arguing, or using inappropriate language** towards other students or school personnel.
  12. A cheerleader/mascot shall accept a full share of the responsibilities and do a full share of the work in any cheerleading activity including clean up, loading, and unloading. This includes camps, pep rallies, games, etc.
  13. A cheerleader/mascot shall have regular school attendance and be at school on time.
  14. Cheerleaders/Mascot shall leave an appropriate amount of funds for the next year's cheerleaders.
  15. Cheerleaders/Mascot must observe all safety rules and obey the chaperone/bus driver/sponsor.
  16. Cheerleaders/Mascot must attend the All-Sports Banquet.
  17. Cheerleaders/Mascot must contact the sponsor if he/she will be late or absent for practice, game, or other cheerleaders sponsored event.
  18. Cheerleaders/Mascot must help plan and participate in cheerleader tryouts.
  19. Cheerleaders/Mascot must have a sponsor present for all functions.
  20. No medication (including Tylenol, Advil, or aspirin) will be administered by the sponsor.
- B. If a cheerleader/mascot has an issue or a problem that needs to be addressed with the sponsor, the **student** will meet with the coach privately to try and resolve the issue with the sponsor. The sponsor will not address a student problem with the parent until the student has attempted to resolve the issue with the sponsor first. If the student and the sponsor cannot come to a resolution, then the sponsor, student, and the parent will meet. If the issue is still not resolved, the sponsor and the principal will meet with the parent and the student. Breaking this chain of command by **the student or the parent** will **not** be tolerated, and may result in removal from the squad.

C. Demerits will be administered for failure to fulfill duties and expectations of cheerleading. Cheerleaders/Mascot will sign to acknowledge receipt of demerits. Merits may be awarded at the discretion of the sponsor for exceeding expectations. Two merits may replace one demerit.

1. Violations with penalty of **ONE** demerit:

- a. Inappropriate clothing for practice. All cheerleaders will wear designated practice uniform to all practices- designated camp outfits will be worn to and during camp.
- b. Failure to meet deadlines set by sponsor (1 demerit per day late) including signs, paperwork, etc.
- c. Wearing jewelry while in uniform or at practice.
- d. Wearing clothing with cheerleader uniform that is not approved cheerleader apparel. (This includes spirit shirts, jackets, etc. from other schools) For special events or inclement weather, the sponsor may approve certain/appropriate items of clothing to be worn at his/her discretion.
- e. **Lack of spirit (this includes not smiling and quiet voices- as cheerleaders should be loud and smiling at all times).**
- f. Chewing gum or eating when practicing or cheering. (Eating must be done only during breaks, as this is a safety issue.)
- g. Not wearing or bringing all necessary elements of uniform (including poms, bows, socks, sports bra- if applicable- uniform top, uniform bottom, and briefs).
- h. Failure to turn in any assigned project by designated date.
- i. Tardiness to a game, event, or practice.
- j. Violation of school dress code.
- k. Failure to listen and follow instruction during practices.

2. Violations with penalty of **three** demerits:

- a. **Rudeness** or inappropriate behavior to other students, other cheerleaders, sponsor, or school personnel.
- b. Uncooperative behavior.
- c. Forgetting complete uniform.
- d. **Profanity** (in school, at camp, at school sponsored event, on social media, etc.)
- e. Public display of affection while in uniform.
- f. Failure to secure **punctual transportation** following any scheduled activity (15 minutes from dismissal of events).
- g. Failure to correct a violation of school dress code.

3. Violations with penalty of **five** demerits:

- a. Unexcused absence from any cheerleading event or practice.
- b. Leaving early during an event without prior permission from sponsor.
- c. Rudeness, vulgar language or inappropriate behavior directed at the sponsor, other students, or other school personnel.
- d. Failure to follow safety regulations while stunting.
- e. Failure to have all cheers, chants, and sideline routines (this includes words and motions) memorized by the first day of summer practice.
- f. Failure to memorize weekly pep rally dance performances by the deadline.

4. Accumulating **ten** demerits will result in dismissal from the squad.

## IX. GRADES

A. Cheerleaders/Mascot are required to have a **passing grade in all subjects** each six weeks, according to UIL academic guidelines.

B. A **failing grade** on a report card will result in a **three week suspension** in accordance with TEA/UIL rules.

C. At the end of the **three weeks**, grades will be reviewed again. If grades in all subjects are passing, the suspension will end after a **seven day** waiting period.

D. If a student **fails a second time**, the student will be dismissed from the squad.

#### X. **SUSPENSION FROM GAMES/PERFORMANCES**

A. When a cheerleader/mascot is suspended, the cheerleader/mascot must come to the event and sit with the other cheerleaders or sponsor, but they cannot participate.

B. They are still responsible for their cheerleading/mascot duties.

C. If a cheerleader/mascot has an **unexcused absence** from school on the day of a performance, the student will not be allowed to perform that day.

D. If the cheerleader/mascot has an **excused absence** from school on the day of the performance, the student must be in attendance at least half the day to be able to perform at that event.

E. If a cheerleader/mascot is absent from the last scheduled practice prior to the scheduled performance without a pre-arranged excuse from the sponsor, the student shall not be allowed to perform at that event.

F. Receiving **5** demerits will suspend a student from that week's game or event.

G. Any time spent in **ISS** will suspend a student from that week's game and/or event.

H. A cheerleader/mascot may be suspended for failure to be in proper/complete uniform.

I. Minor infraction of disrespect, rudeness, or vulgar behavior to the sponsor or other school personnel.

#### XI. **DISMISSAL FROM SQUAD**

A. If a student quits or is dismissed from the squad, she/he may not try out for the squad the following year.

B. Lack of interest as shown by not following conduct rules and non-participation in cheerleading/mascot activities.

C. If injured, no attempt at seeking medical treatment or getting healthy occurs.

D. Serious misconduct in or out of school- this includes misconduct on social media.

E. Failure to maintain grade averages and citizenship grades.

F. Failure to attend summer camp.

G. Failure to meet financial obligations.

H. **Extreme disrespect or rudeness** to the sponsor or other school personnel.

I. Undesirable **language or gestures** towards anyone.

J. Obtaining **ten** demerits.

K. Engaging in inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to inappropriate sexual contact, fighting, public intoxication, possession or consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs, possession or use of vaporizers or "vaping", or other criminal activity excluding minor traffic offenses.

L. Any act that harms the reputation of the school or cheerleading squad.

M. Violation of the Rules and Regulations or failure to maintain duties.

N. Being **suspended** from school or assigned to **AEP** will automatically suspend a student from the squad.

O. **Dying hair** unnatural or severe colors.

#### XII. **SUPPLEMENTAL MASCOT TRY-OUT**

A. At any point during the season the mascot is dismissed from the squad, a new tryout for the position of mascot will be held to replace the position left vacant. The same rules apply for this try out as previous try out.

#### XIII. **PERSONAL OBLIGATION**

A. Cheerleaders/Mascot shall demonstrate a positive attitude about self, school, and community.

- B. Cheerleaders/Mascot shall serve from the day they are elected until the end of the following school year.
- C. Cheerleaders/Mascot cheer not for themselves, but for the school.
- D. Cheerleaders/Mascot shall work together as a unit.
- E. Cheerleaders/Mascot shall make decision together under the guidance of the sponsor.
- F. Cheerleaders/Mascot will adhere to the expectations, rules, and regulations set forth in this document.
- G. **Parents** of cheerleaders/mascot will adhere to the expectations, rules, and regulations set forth in this document as well as the **Cheer Parent Contract**.