

WSMS CHEER PROGRAM HANDBOOK



Part A. ~ PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Purpose

Cheerleaders are student leaders who exemplify and promote school spirit, pride, and sportsmanship. Cheerleaders enhance a positive school climate by exhibiting leadership skills such as respect for individual differences, academic excellence, and modeling appropriate behaviors, in and away from school at all times.

Cheerleaders are expected to be athletically skilled in the field of cheerleading and both mentally and physically fit. As a representative of WSMS, members of the cheerleading squad will be expected to maintain a higher standard of behavior than that of their peers, both on and off campus. In or out of uniform, cheerleaders have a large responsibility to live up to these expectations at all times.

Composition

The WSMS cheerleading program will consist of one squad with 20-30 cheerleaders of mixed grade levels (6th-8th grade) for the current school year. The WSMS Cheer program will have 1-2 captains which will be voted on by the team and chosen by the coaching staff to serve as club officers. The selection process will be based on maturity, skill, leadership skills, punctuality, responsibility, and attendance.

Tryouts

Applicants are required to have no failing grades and complete the online application for tryouts. Tryouts will consist of an in-person 2-3 day evaluation clinic, teaching basic level skills. No experience is necessary.

Uniforms

Uniforms will be purchased by family donations. The uniform pack may consist of shell, skirt, liner, briefs, shoes, pants, tank, t-shirt, shorts and jacket. Bows will be available for purchase and cheerleaders will borrow a set of pom poms from the school. Uniform donations are non-refundable in the event of an injury or dismissal from the team.

Health and Fitness

Cheerleading is a rigorous activity and all participants are required to be in top physical condition. Students with serious health problems that are aggravated by exercise and/or which limit full participation for a substantial amount of time should not participate in the

program. Cheerleaders will be required to hold a up to date physical at the time of evaluations and will need to update program advisors of any PE notes or physical activity restrictions. The goal of this health and fitness requirement is to ensure the safety of all students who participate in the WSMS cheerleading program.

All cheerleaders are be considered athletes and are expected to condition/train in such a way as to benefit not only themselves, but the squad as a whole. We are a team, and will function as a whole, and not as individual parts! We will conduct ourselves in such a way as to model a strong, cohesive, and motivated athletic team.

Fundraising

This is a necessary evil, and a component of every team or group! Money earned is used to further benefit the cheer program as a whole, including offsetting family costs. It is essential that every member do their part. We will be looking for parent volunteers to coordinate fundraising to help support our team. Our hope is to have several fundraising opportunities throughout the year to build and support our program and it's members such as:

- Ice Cream/Snow Cone Sales @ lunch (T/Th)
- Chili Cook Off- Annually (around November)
- Dinner Nights
- Etc.

Part B ~ Guidelines and Expectations (AGB)

The school policies for attendance and behavior, as stated in the school handbook, will be enforced. If at any time a cheerleader acts or speaks inappropriately, causes harm to another student, or simply acts with conduct detrimental to the organization, the coach reserves the right to choose the appropriate consequence.

Cheerleaders will be held accountable for attendance, grades and discipline using an "Athlete Incident Form".

ATTENDANCE (A):

All cheerleaders are responsible for being at practice AND events. If you will be absent for any reason, a coach **MUST** be contacted (this is in addition to letting the school know).

A "Sick Day" will be classified as a day in which the cheerleader is absent from school due to illness and is not seen by a doctor. **If a cheerleader is not at school, she will not come to practice and will notify coaches.** Cheerleaders must inform coaches of all school activities in order to be cleared from an absence/tardy and all vacations must be given in a 1 month advance notice.

➤ **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

- Illness (provide Dr. note if absent for 3 practices)
- Injury that prevents attendance (Most injuries will require attendance, not participation).
- Doctor/dentist appointment (with note provided, please schedule on non practice days.)
- Funeral
- Religious holiday (with 1 month given notice)
- Unexpected emergency (contact coach)

➤ **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

- Doctor/dentist appt. without a note
- 3 absences without a doctor note (this include leaving practice/events early- you must commit to the team).
- Other school programs (not cleared by coach/advisor)
- Vacation (not cleared 1 month in advance)
- Extra-curricular activities/sports outside of school (this include leaving practice/events early- you must commit to the team).

The "Athlete Incident Form" will be filled out per absence. If there are three absences before a performance, excused or not, the athlete will not participate in the monthly performance. Three of any incidents during the season, as noted below, will result in a parent meeting and possible removal from the team.

ATTENDANCE (A):
3 Absences (Including leaving early)
3 Tardies (Includes school/cheer)
No call, no show to practice/event

GRADES (G):

Academic and Citizenship Requirements

- C's or better are required for all members of the cheer team, at all times, including tryouts.
- Grade checks will be performed at each progress report period (i.e. – 6 times per year).

If a student earns a D or F grade on a progress report or report card, student will be placed on Academic Probation (AP) until the low grade is brought up to a C or better and the AP will be documented on the "Athlete Incident Report" form. Students on Academic Probation are still required to check in for practices and events, however, will be using the time (in and out of school) to rectify their academic deficiencies. If an athlete who is on Academic Probation has any D or F grades on the following progress report or report card, a parent conference will be necessary to determine next steps.

In addition to progress reports, any athlete who has D/F grades two weeks prior to a performance, will not perform.

Bottom line is: **Academics comes first, maintain C or better grades.**

The "Athlete Incident Form" will be filled out per academic probation. If there are D or F grades two weeks prior to any performance/event, the athlete will not participate/attend. Two Academic Probation incidents during the season, as noted above, will result in a parent meeting. If an athlete is placed on a third Academic Probation, this will result in removal from the team.

GRADES (G):
Academic Probation- D/F on grading period

BEHAVIOR (B):

Cheerleader Expectations

*Above all, cheerleaders will abide by all school rules, and always model P.R.I.D.E.

PURPOSE RIGOR INTEGRITY DETERMINATION EMPOWERMENT

*Cheerleaders will be dressed out and ready to practice/perform by specified practice/performance days & times.

*Cheerleaders will know all chants/cheers and dances/routines.

*Cheerleaders will spend their own time to make up missed days.

*Cheerleaders will not use cell phones, i-pods, or other devices during practices or other cheer events without permission from the coaches/advisors.

*Cheerleaders will not eat during practices, games, or events unless given permission by the coach/advisor (this includes gum).

*Cheerleaders will be focused and on task at all times.

*Cheerleaders will be respectful of themselves and others.

*Cheerleaders will be responsible for their actions, attitudes, and performances. Coaches have the right to pull cheerleaders from performances/events if they feel cheerleader is not performing up to their expectation or he/she is not reflecting the appropriate attitude.

*Cheerleaders will maintain a positive and outgoing attitude when cheering.

*Cheerleaders will use appropriate language at all times.

*Cheerleaders will use appropriate displays of affection, especially in uniform or spirit wear (in and out of school).

*Cheerleaders will represent the school in a positive manner on and off campus.

*Cheerleaders will always give the task at hand 100% without complaint.

*Cheerleader will ALWAYS represent themselves with class on ALL SOCIAL MEDIA including text messages. Foul language, inappropriate pictures, hazing or harassing on any social media will not be tolerated. The coach/advisor reserves the right to determine the appropriate action which could include dismissal from the squad.

Uniform and Dress Code

During cheer practices and events, girls are required to adhere to the following:

***No jewelry** may be worn during practices, performances or any cheer event. (this includes belly rings, nose rings, and body piercings) No new piercings during the cheer season- clear studs are not allowed.

*Nails must be kept at sport length, no acrylics.

*No gum chewing or candy .

*Hair must be pulled back and off of the face. Bright hair colors (red, orange, blue, yellow, purple etc.) are not acceptable. We are a team and need to look like a team.

*For Practice Days: Required attire for practices are shorts, t-shirts, sweats, capris, athletic shoes, socks, etc. Girls must wear appropriate under garments under practice clothes, IE: sports bras and spansks if wearing shorts. It is unacceptable to wear spansks and/or sports bra by itself, no visible bra straps should be shown anytime. No loose clothing that hangs off shoulders or short/long shirts that show skin, as it may be a safety issue during stunting. Hoodies or zip up sweaters cannot be worn while stunting.

*Uniforms: Full uniform includes skirt, shell, liner (If applicable), briefs (Under shorts), black sports bra, short “no show” socks, shoes and cheer bow.

The “Athlete Incident Form” will be filled out per incident listed below. Three of any incidents during the season, as listed below, will result in a parent meeting and possible removal from the team.

BEHAVIOR (B):
Behavior (School & Cheer- See Handbook)
Uniform (Missing 3 times)
Dress Code
Detention on campus (gum, etc.)

Social Media/Bullying

As this issue is taken extremely serious on our campus, any bullying/cyber bullying issues or social media conflicts will result in an automatic disciplinary suspension from the team (cheerleader will still attend practices/events as directed by coach/advisor). Depending on the severity of the issue, dismissal from the squad is left up to the discretion of the program advisor.

The “Athlete Incident Form” will be filled out per each behavior incident. Three of any incidents during the season, will result in a parent meeting and possible removal from the team.

Part C ~ Communication

This is a key component of any program and relationship. Please communicate with program advisors to discuss any all concerns/questions:

BAND APP- Make sure you are signed up to receive team notifications/reminders!

OUTLOOK- check your student email (outlook on 365) daily.

CANVAS- Make sure you have the tile, parents can pair to student accounts.

Cari Young

Program Advisor/Coach

cyoung@murrieta.k12.ca.us

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on dotted line and return this lower portion to the Cheer Coach

Cheerleading Handbook Acknowledgement

Signing the *Cheerleading Handbook Parent/Student Acknowledgement* form confirms agreement to the expectations outlined on the previous pages.

Cheerleaders must follow the rules and expectations throughout the entire season. Failure to follow this contract may result in dismissal from the squad.

Student Signature X _____

Student Name (print) X _____

Parent Signature X _____

Date ~ _____