

# Spanish Fort High School Cheerleading Constitution

With any honor comes a certain degree of responsibility. The honor of representing Spanish Fort High School requires that a cheerleader maintain a conscientious attitude at all times, both in extracurricular and academic activities. Cheerleading must be the priority over other extracurricular responsibilities. The rules and regulations of this constitution will serve as a guideline to help each cheerleader successfully meet the responsibilities required in the cheerleading program.

## Section I: Qualification of Candidates and Tryout Procedure

### Qualifications

1. Candidates for the Spanish Fort High School Cheerleading Squads must be currently enrolled in Spanish Fort High School. A student who does not currently meet this eligibility requirement but plans to attend Spanish Fort High School in the fall must provide proof of intended residency and obtain permission to tryout from the principal. The cheerleading tryouts are open to rising 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders.
2. Each candidate must have attained **an overall minimum GPA of 2.0** the preceding semester (January grades preceding tryouts). Students entering the 10th and 11th and 12th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least six new Carnegie units with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six units. (AHSAA Guidelines)
3. Each candidate must participate in the entire clinic. Exceptions may be made in extenuating circumstances. These exceptions are up to the discretion of the coach.
  - a. The coach will organize and coordinate the activities of the clinic.
  - b. The coach and senior cheerleaders will choreograph the tryout material and teach required technique skills. Attendance will be required of all candidates at the clinic. If a candidate needs to miss part of the clinic, permission will be granted on an individual basis. The coach must approve excuses in advance. All excuses must be submitted in writing.
  - c. All registration/release forms **and tryout fees** are due on the specified date.
4. Parents and candidates will sign and return a form stating that they have read the policies outlined for the cheerleading program and understand the rules/regulations for clinic, selection, and participation. These signatures also indicate an acknowledgement of the physical requirements for both clinic and participation. Parents will assume responsibility for any injuries that may occur as a result of practice or performance.

## Tryout Procedure and Selection

1. The coach will determine the number of cheerleaders chosen. After tallying the scores, the number of cheerleaders will be determined based on the natural break of the scores. Rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors will be eligible for the Varsity squad and rising freshmen and sophomores will be eligible for the JV squad.
2. A panel of qualified judges will be hired to judge certain skills. These judges will evaluate each candidate individually and in a group in the following categories: chant, dance, jumps, voice, spirit and enthusiasm. The candidates will be judged on the basis of the qualities listed on the sample score sheet. Each candidate will be assisted in learning proper technique during the week of clinic.
3. The SFHS coaching staff will evaluate candidates in the following areas: stunting, tumbling, coachability, and work ethic. These scores will be factored into the judge's scores to obtain an overall score for the candidate.
4. Teacher evaluation scores will also be factored into a candidate's final score. Candidates will obtain a teacher evaluation score from their four core classes: Social Studies, English, Math, and Science. In addition, they will obtain a teacher evaluation from a class of their choosing outside the four core.
5. For tryouts with the judges the candidates will be assigned a tryout number and a tryout group. A random drawing conducted by the coach will determine a candidate's number and group. The coach reserves the right to reassign numbers and/or groups in order to fill gaps left by the candidates who may not tryout.
6. For tryouts with the coaching staff, candidates will select the stunt group of their choosing, and will be evaluated one time. Candidates may not stunt in more than 3 different groups. (Subject to change)
7. The coach will specify attire for the tryouts.
8. All candidates must be in accordance with the Spanish Fort High School extracurricular attendance policy. The coach will verify class attendance each day. Candidates are NOT to check out early on the day of tryouts. In cases such as family illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstances, the coach may make an exception to this policy.
9. Only designated school personnel will be allowed in the tryout area.
10. Scores will be tabulated by judges not affiliated with SFHS.

\*\*All candidates trying out will do so with the understanding that they could be on the competition team for the year. The competition team and alternates will be determined by the coaching staff, and will be chosen from JV and Varsity.\*\*

## **Section II: Cheerleading Responsibilities**

### **Varsity Cheerleaders:**

1. Cheer at all football games in the regular season and during play-offs.
2. Attend all schedule practices. All practices are mandatory both in-season and summer. Please be mindful that there will be practices called that are not on the schedule—these are mandatory as well. All “spirit decorating” days are mandatory as well.
3. Cheer at scheduled Varsity basketball games (boys and girls). This will include tournament games and area as well as state play-offs.
4. Participate in parades and any public appearances.
5. Will perform any skills demonstrated during tryouts (jumps and tumbling) year-round
6. Attend sign painting during the summer and in-season.
7. Wear the appropriate uniform attire for games, pep rallies, during school and other events.
8. Participate in fund-raising events for the cheerleading program.
9. Be productive and cooperative during practice time.
10. Use proper technique and safety when stunting.

### **Junior Varsity Cheerleaders:**

1. Cheer at all JV football games.
2. Cheer at a select number of Varsity games determined by the coaching staff.
3. Cheer at JV basketball games (boys and girls) and any Varsity games if needed.
4. Attend all scheduled practices. All practices are mandatory both in-season and summer.
5. Participate in parades and any public appearances.
6. Will perform any skills demonstrated during tryouts (jumps and tumbling) year-round
7. Attend sign painting during the summer and in-season.
8. Wear the appropriate uniform attire for games, pep rallies, during school and other events.
9. Participate in fund-raising events for the cheerleading program.
10. Be productive and cooperative during practice time.
11. Use proper technique and safety when stunting.

\*At no time is work, a family reunion, a party, vacation, or any event of this nature excused to miss practices, games or travel to games. The coach will determine what excuses are appropriate and inappropriate at the time of the event. Un-notified and/or inappropriate absence from a game or other event will result in a conference with the coach and possible consequences will be determined by the coach.

\*With the exception of illness, a REQUEST for an absence at least TWO (2) WEEKS IN ADVANCE IN WRITING prior to an absence in order for that absence to be considered for excusal. Final approvals are up to the coach. Not providing the 2 week notice can result in inability to perform at the upcoming event. (A practice, game, or appearance missed due to an illness will only be excused with a doctor's note.)

### **Section III: Cheerleading Behavior**

1. Cheerleaders are subject to all rules and regulations of Spanish Fort High School including the Academic Honor Code. They must also follow the guidelines and procedures of the Spanish Fort High School Athletics and the Spanish Fort High School Cheerleading Constitution.
2. Cheerleaders are representatives of Spanish Fort High School and should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and uphold the integrity and character of the school, and the athletic and cheerleading programs.
3. SFHS Cheerleaders will not be involved in any incident involving alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or engage in any illegal activity. Violation of any of these rules will result in benching for a period of time to be determined by the coaching staff, as well as additional punishment seen fit.
4. Cheerleaders will maintain an online presence that exemplifies character and integrity.
5. Cheerleaders are expected to show respect for all those in authority including faculty, administrators, coaches, consultants and captains.
6. Cheerleaders are expected to respect the coaching staff and each other as teammates and work coherently as a group. Bickering with the coaches and/or within or between squads will not be tolerated. If the attitude or conduct of any cheerleader should have a negative effect on the team or school, the coach will hold a conference with the cheerleader. If the negative behavior persists, the cheerleader will be suspended until further notice. Should the behavior continue beyond the suspension, the cheerleader will be permanently dismissed from the squad.
7. As representatives and leaders of Spanish Fort High School, cheerleaders shall conduct themselves in a responsible and dignified manner at all times. They should continually exemplify strong character and leadership qualities.

## **Section IV: Absences**

1. All practices, games, and events are mandatory.
2. Cheerleaders are expected to attend all scheduled and "emergency" practices, games, and any other events.
3. Eighth period is designated for cheerleading and is not only a scheduled practice it is considered a class period. As such, cheerleaders should not schedule appointments or other activities during this class period or during after school practice.
4. Any cheerleader who misses a scheduled practice is responsible for learning missed choreography and contacting a teammate in order to be notified of announcements.
5. Habitual tardiness or absence could result in a cheerleader being temporarily suspended.
6. Excused absence include: illness, death in the family, and situations pre-approved by the coaching staff.
7. Requests for absences must be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the event and must be submitted in writing. Not all excuses will be approved.
8. In the event that an injury or illness incapacitates a cheerleader, a written doctor's excuse must be submitted to the coach. This excuse should specifically dictate the type and degree of physical activity allowed. No injured or ill cheerleader will be permitted to practice or perform until fully recovered and released by a doctor.
9. If a cheerleader becomes ill or there is a true emergency situation, the coach must be notified by a phone call or a text message informing of the absence. Contacting another squad member is not acceptable.

## **Section V: Academics**

1. Cheerleaders must maintain a total 2.0 GPA.
2. If a cheerleader has a below a 70 average, study hours and other helpful measures will begin and will continue until the grade improves.
3. End of 9 weeks: If a cheerleader still has below a 70 the cheerleader will begin a two week probation period. Study hours and other measures will continue until the grade improves. If the grade does not improve in two weeks, the cheerleader will remain on probation until the grade improves.
4. Cheerleaders must uphold the Spanish Fort High School Honor Code. Academic dishonesty will result in a 1 week suspension for the first offense. Additional instances of academic dishonesty could result in permanent suspension from the squad.

## **Section VI: Cheerleading Grades**

1. Attitude, attendance, dress, and participation for class will affect the cheerleader's grade for the 8<sup>th</sup> period class.
2. A grade will be assigned for each practice during the course of the year.
3. Deductions in a cheerleader's grade will be based on the following items: failure to dress out properly, failure to arrive to practice on time, failure to participate fully during practice, perform during a game and/or appearance; attitude during a game and/or appearance, etc.... (1 point per offense).
4. Should a cheerleader's grade fall below a B, a conference will be held between the cheerleader, parent, and the coach.

## **Section VII: Discipline**

1. Disciplinary actions are the means by which the coaching staff and administrators assure that squad members uphold the high standards of Spanish Fort High School Cheerleaders, both on and off campus.
2. Responsibilities that are not met may result in disciplinary action determined by the coach.
3. The form of disciplinary action may include, but not limited to: extra fitness, performance probation, temporary probation, and permanent suspension.
4. The form of disciplinary action will be determined based on the severity and/or frequency of the action. (See above regarding illegal activity).
5. Probation is a temporary time period in which cheerleaders must dress out and participate in all practices. They are also required to wear the appropriate uniform during pep rallies and games. They will sit in uniform in an area designated by the coach.
6. Permanent suspension is the removal of the cheerleader from the squad for the remainder of the season. Cheerleaders who are permanently suspended from the squad may not be allowed to tryout for the squad for the next cheer season. This will be determined on a case by case basis with the coaches and the school's administrators.

**\*\*Since we cannot foresee all the situations that may arise during the cheer season, the coaching staff reserves the right to take disciplinary action for offenses that may not be specified above. \*\***

## **Section VIII: Uniforms and Expenses**

1. An itemized list of expenses will be distributed that will include estimated cost of uniforms, accessories and camp fees. This list is subject to change.
2. Cheerleaders are required to participate in all approved fundraisers that benefit the team as a whole. Such activities will raise funds in the name of Spanish Fort High School Cheerleaders in order to purchase needed items for the program.
3. Uniforms will be issued in the spring or summer. Proper uniform fit will be checked and approved by the coach.
4. Cheerleaders are expected to take proper care of all uniforms and practice wear. All uniforms should be ready to be worn for performances at any time. The cheerleader will be responsible for the cost of lost uniform(s) and/or practice clothes.
5. All uniforms, practice apparel and camp fees are due prior to camp in June.
6. Uniforms, practice apparel and other accessories will be held until full payment has been made.
7. Should financial assistance be needed, a payment contract may be established.

## **Section IX: Coaches**

The coaching staff is appointed by the principal and approved by the Baldwin County School Board. They are responsible for coaching cheerleaders in the areas of safety, dance, motions, jumps, and proper double and single base stunting techniques and stunt progression, and tumbling. Throughout the year the coaches will inform the cheerleaders about practices, games, meetings, and other events. Because not every situation can be foreseen, it is the responsibility of the coaches to handle these situations with common sense and to act in the best interest of the Spanish Fort High School Cheerleading Program. All final decisions are up to the discretion of the coaches.

### **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

The Spanish Fort School system does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability or age in any of its programs and activities.

# Spanish Fort High School Cheerleading Constitution Acknowledgement Form

I have read and understand the stipulations in the Spanish Fort High School Cheerleading Constitution. I acknowledge that being chosen for the Spanish Fort High School Cheerleading squad obligates me to follow the guidelines in the Constitution. I agree to abide by these rules and I also understand and agree to the possible consequences should any of these rules be violated. I also understand that all final decisions are up to the discretion of the coach.

Cheerleader Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_