



CHEERLEADING RULES

I. Definitions:

- a. **Coaching staff:** all Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Coaching Trainees.
- b. **First Responders:** coaching staff with First Aid/CPR certification.

II. General rules

- A. All rules will be reviewed annually at the May MSYFCC Cheer meeting, for necessary revisions.
- B. All coaching staff must complete all official Mid-State Youth Football and Cheerleading Conference required documents.
- C. Head Coaches must be 19 years old and graduated from high school.
- D. Assistant Coaches must be at least 18 years old or must be approved by their community board.
- E. Coaching staff and cheer squads will follow the Mid-state rules, modeled after the National Federation of High School Association (NFHS) and American Association of Cheerleading Coaches & Administrators' (AACCA) rules.
- F. Cheerleaders and coaches may not be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, performance enhancing substances, or over-the-counter medications while participating in a practice or performance that would hinder the ability to supervise or execute a routine safely
- G. At least one coaching staff (on site) will be trained in First Aid/CPR
- H. Coaching staff will maintain an updated squad roster and will take roll call for every activity.
- I. Coaching staff will follow Mid-state volunteer rules and shall follow the coach's code of ethics.
- J. All boards, coaches, and/or Cheer Coordinators must have an emergency action plan in the event of an emergency Each Cheerleading Coordinator will be responsible to provide his/her community board with a site map of their game day location that shall be posted on the MSYFCC website.
- K. We are an extension of the Youth Football League- Can NOT move from level to level



L. All Mid State Cheer meetings are mandatory in order to compete in Cheer Competition.

III. Practice:

A. A coach with a minimum age of 19 must supervise and be present at all practices. Practice is defined as a gathering of spirit participants without minimum number, in the presence of at least one coach, where one or more of the following takes place: [games and warm – up prior to games are not considered practice]

1. View of fundamental films
2. Group conditioning
3. Individual skills sessions
4. Group skill sessions
5. Cheers, sidelines, chants, dance, music
6. Stunting, jumps, gymnastics, etc.
7. Camps or clinics that are not sponsored by MSYFC
8. Team parties are considered practice when spirit/cheerleading teams are discussed and one or more coaches is present and any of the previously listed activities take place.

B. Hours of Practice

1. Practice will start on the 1st Monday in August. The 2nd Saturday thereafter is an “open scrimmage” weekend. The 3rd Saturday will be the start of competition.
2. Before Labor Day teams may practice no more than ten hours per week
3. After Labor Day teams may practice no more than six hours per week

C. Requirements for Practices

1. The first week (ten hours) of practice are for basic techniques & conditioning
 - i. Running
 - ii. Aerobics
 - iii. Stretching
 - iv. Chants/side line cheers
 - v. Jumping drills
 - vi. Arm motion drills



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- vii. Basic cheerleader expectations & game day etiquette
- viii. ***Note* No stunting, tumbling, or competition practice is allowed in the first ten hours of cheer practice**
- 2. The second week or after ten hours of practice may include all of the above and begin stunting, tumbling, and building pyramids
 - i. Coaches must require proficiency of lower level skills before progressing to skills that are more difficult, Coaches must consider the athlete, group, and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement
- 3. All practices must begin with a minimum of 10 minute warm-ups
 - i. warm-ups shall include aerobic and stretching
- 4. Mid-State Youth Football & Cheerleading Conference Cheerleading Camp does not count towards hours of practice
- 5. Completion of ten hours of practice is mandatory before a cheerleader may participate in preseason or season games
- 6. A coach must identify that cheerleaders are to bring their own water or the coach will supply the water for adequate hydration during practice

IV. Coaches/Director Meetings

- A. It is mandatory to have a cheerleading representative at the May, July, September and October meetings held by the Mid-State Youth Football & Cheerleading Conference Director of Cheerleading
 - 1. If Coaches/Directors would like to meet with the Director of Cheerleading they may contact and schedule such a meeting before the mandatory July meeting
 - 2. Meetings begin at 6:00 p.m., are held the same date as the Mid-State Youth Football and Cheerleading Conference board meetings, and are held in May, July, September (before competition), and October (after competition). Note: If the October board meeting should fall before competition/championship weekend the final meeting shall be held in November



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3. Coaches must have all required documents in their possession prior to the first practice
 - i. Physical form
 - ii. Emergency contact form
 - iii. Proof of age signed off
4. Coaches must email the Cheerleading team roster to the MSYFC Cheer Director by August 1st. Final roster is due the Monday before first game.

V. Apparel

- A. Uniforms (applies to game days, demonstrations and competition day)
 1. Uniforms shall be properly fitted
 - i. Uniforms must cover midriff when standing with arms extended straight up or an undershirt/tank top should be worn for coverage during stunting/tumbling
 - ii. Bloomers, spankies, or a body suit must be worn at all times
 - iii. During outside cheering, long sleeves, leggings, warm-ups, hats/headbands, gloves, etc. shall be worn when the weather is cold—use common sense. Team colors should be considered in donning these extra items. When in their full sweat suit they can't stunt.
 2. Hair should be pulled back out of face and in a manner to minimize risk for all participants
 - i. No metal spring-type barrettes allowed (gymnastic barrettes or bobby pins are acceptable)
 - ii. Hair ribbons are allowed
 - a. Ribbons should not hang below athletes shoulders
 - b. Should not present a safety hazard to any participants
 - c. No glitter in hair
 3. Soft-soled shoes must be worn while competing. No dance shoes/boots, and/or gymnastics slippers (or similar) allowed. Shoes must have a solid sole.
 4. **Glasses are required to have a safety strap**



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B. Casts that are hard and unyielding or have rough edges must be appropriately covered with a padded material. Clarification: The appropriately padded material must be such that it protects both the cheerleader and fellow cheerleaders from injury.

C. Jewelry

1. No Jewelry shall be worn at games, practices, or competition
2. Medical Alert medallions must be taped with athletic tape to the athletes body without a chain
3. NO Earrings allowed. Tape is not acceptable. All earrings must be removed prior to the start of practice, games, and competitions.

D. Make-up

1. No Make-up
2. No face paint
3. No body or hair glitter
4. No temporary tattoos

E. Finger nails

1. Length
 - a. Finger nails must be kept at a safe length
 - b. Length must be no longer than the tips of the fingers (when looking at palms)
2. Polish
 - a. No fingernail polish is allowed for practice, games, or competition

VI. Game Day

- A. A coach/approved volunteer designee, with a minimum age of 19, must supervise and be present at all games.
- B. All athletes must participate in a minimum of 15 minutes of warm-ups prior to games
- C. A coach will escort the cheerleaders to the restrooms prior to the game to avoid unnecessary trips
- D. A coach/designee will give the cheerleading roster to the announcer in the announcer's booth prior to the game (easy pronunciation hints are encouraged to be written near difficult names)



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- E. Team Cheer will be determined by the coaches if they will have one or not and the time they are done or not. Please communicate with the home cheer coach.
- F. Before the beginning of the game, the cheerleading team **may** line up to make an archway or hold a banner for their team players to run through toward the bench as each player's name gets announced
- G. Cheerleaders must quickly leave the field to avoid injury
- H. If the community plays the National Anthem or the Pledge of Allegiance prior to each game, the coach is recommended to have the cheerleaders in the designated cheer area standing at cheerleader attention (stand feet shoulder width apart/right hand in a blade motion over the heart (left side of chest) while the left arm wraps behind back/left hand at the small of back in a blade motion palm facing away from body). **Note:** the hand over the heart motion is recognized as a WI state statute during either of these recitations.
- I. Two minutes prior to half-time, home team cheerleaders shall approach the visiting cheerleaders to share either a "Hello Cheer" or an appropriate sideline cheer. **Note:** If no visiting cheer squad is present, the home team shall still greet the visiting team/fans with an appropriate cheer to welcome them
- J. Cheerleading squads will be expected to be appropriate to the other cheerleader teams, all football players, all cheer and football coaching staff and all fans
- K. Coaches and cheerleaders will not partake in cheers/chants that criticize or demean other teams.
- L. Cheerleaders will be reminded that their behavior is representative of not only their cheer team, but also of all Mid-state Youth cheerleaders and they are very visible to the audience

VII. Cheer Competition Rules

- A. Competition will be held on the 3rd Saturday of October.
- B. Mid-State Youth Football & Cheerleading Conference must limit the size of spirit/cheer squads for competition to a maximum of 24 cheerleaders, due to safety of the squad based on the mat size; however, the squad size is not limited for practice &/or games due to limited coaching resources



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- C. Squads will be divided into 3 levels
 - 1. Junior Pee Wee: grades 3rd &/or 4th
 - 2. Pee Wee B: grades 3rd-6th
 - 3. Pee Wee A: grades 5th-8th
- D. Squads in each of the levels above will be entered into one of the following categories:
 - 1. Large squad (18-24 cheerleaders)
 - 2. Medium squad (11-17 cheerleaders)
 - 3. Small squad (5-10 cheerleaders)
- E. Squad Types will include:
 - 1. Cheer squad (no tumbling, stunting, but jumps are allowed)
 - 2. Cheer/Stunt squad (tumbling, stunting and jumps are allowed)
- F. Squad level/category/type will be established and shared via email with the MSYFC Cheer Director by Monday before September meeting. (Example: Community Name will have a JPW/medium/Cheer & Stunt only squad.
- G. The Cheer Director will coordinate with the hosting community coaches to organize the cheer competition event.
- H. The Cheer Director will work with the Mid-State Board members to decide on questionable situations occurring with judging, timing, scoring, and penalizing decisions.
- I. Teams will comply with the National Federation of High School (NFHS) Spirit Rules and the AACCA rules.
- J. Maximum time of routine is 2 minutes and 30 seconds
 - 1. Between a minimum of 45 seconds and a maximum of 1 minute and 15 seconds of the total routine time must contain music.
 - 2. Total routine will be timed, including music.
 - 3. Music will also be timed separately
 - i. Teams will be allowed to run on the mat to “hit the crowd”; time will start when organized cheer, music or stunt(s) start and ends when the movement stops for 3 seconds (teams will not be judged on entrance or exit).
Note: No stunts or tumbling are allowed entering or leaving from the mat.



K. Safety Violations

1. Breaking of any rule about stunts, uniforms, jewelry, or anything that concerns the safety of cheerleaders will result in a five point deduction per infraction.
2. Deductions for total routine time and for the portion with music as follows:
 - i. 1-5 seconds over = 1 point deduction
 - ii. 6-10 seconds over = 3 point deduction
 - iii. 11 seconds or more = 5 point deduction

L. Boundary Violations will be given for stepping off of the mat ($\frac{1}{2}$ point deduction per infraction).

M. Props/signs/pompoms in competition

1. Use of sign(s) is allowed (no other props or removable pieces of clothing for the purpose of sending a message).
 - i. Signs used during competition must be placed or dropped off the mat, not thrown, when not in use.
 - ii. Signs must not block the view of the fans, coaches, judges.
 - iii. Signs will not have any attachments for handles (ie. sticks/grips)
2. Use of pompoms is allowed
 - i. Cheerleaders may not stunt, tumble, or build while they have pompoms in their hands
 - ii. When the stunt/tumble is done, then props may be handed to that cheerleader. When that stunt is complete, then cheerleaders need to ensure that the prop is handed off so the flyer may dismount safely.
 - iii. Stepping on a pompom is a safety issue and each occurrence will result in point deduction.

N. No hats or other head gear are allowed as a regular part of the uniform or for decoration **and glasses are required to have a safety strap.**

O. The routine must be in good taste

1. No hip/chest thrusts or shaking of any body part that implies vulgarity



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2. No lyrics implying vulgarity
3. Words to cheers must be in good sportsmanship (no put-downs or mean-spirited cheers)
4. When in doubt about a lyric or move ask the MSYFC Director of Cheerleading

P. Injury during competition

1. The clock will stop at the time of injury
2. The team will have a ten-minute delay to reorganize the routine after assessment and/or removal of the injured cheerleader.
 - i. The team will have use of the mat and sound system to revise their routine, if needed
 - ii. The team will have the choice to restart the routine or continue from the point of injury.
 - iii. Timing issues will be discussed with all of the judges and the Cheer Director
3. The routine and competition will resume after the ten-minute delay.

Q. Pre – Competition rehearsal

1. Teams may use the mat without music for five minutes prior to the start of competition
2. A Timer will be used during the rehearsal
 - i. Time begins when the team takes the mat
 - ii. Teams will be given a one minute warning
 - iii. Must leave the mat when time is up and the warning is called

R. Order of competition

1. A drawing will take place at the September meeting to decide Competition order. This will only be changed, due to an event approved by the Mid-State Cheer Director and attending board members.

S. Competition rehearsal

1. Will occur in the order drawn
2. If a community's football team is playing in a game during the same time a community's spirit/cheer team is scheduled to perform for the competition, their place in order will be moved



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so that the community can support both the football players and the spirit/cheer team.

T. Squad Size

1. Communities are allowed to have one cheer/spirit team in each division for competition; but may have more than one for game cheering.
2. When determining how many participants to have compete consider the safety of all cheerleaders. Do not over crowd the mat 24 cheerleaders can fit comfortably.

U. Student or Athlete must be 8 years old by September 1st or 3rd grade. All 2nd graders, that are 8 years old, must compete on Junior PeeWee only.

V. We are an extension of the Youth Football League.

VIII. Competition/Hosting Requirements

- A. Host is encouraged to hold the September meeting in order for all coaches/coordinators to understand the atmosphere. At this meeting, notify each coach prior to competition if food and beverages are allowed in classrooms.
- B. Event Staff to greet people and direct them to the area they need to go.
- C. A table set up for Event Staff to register each squad.
- D. Must have an emergency plan posted at the entrances of the building.
- E. Shall have signs on each classroom to identify which squad belongs there.
- F. Shall coordinate with Event Staff to run concessions in the commons area of the school.
- G. Shall have event staff to assist with parking/providing assistance for people with disabilities
- H. Shall have event staff available to provide janitorial needs to clean the mat, set up the award table, check bathrooms, etc.
- I. Hosting Community must provide a gymnasium with the following:



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1. A standard-sized wrestling match mat with a minimum size of 42 feet by 42 feet and the mat must be taped down prior to gym opening.
2. Seating for approximately 300 people (spectators, coaching staff and cheerleaders).
3. Signs above the bleachers to identify where spectators, judges, timers, coaches and cheerleaders are to be seated

4. A sound system
 - i. Microphone
 - ii. CD player
 - iii. An adult who knows how to operate the system
 - iv. An adult to cue the sound system operator
 - v. A CD/singer to play/sing the National Anthem prior to Competition
5. If available, classrooms or designated areas should be requested for each community and identified prior to the September meeting. The purpose of these areas is for taking roll call, warming up, checking uniforms, giving directions, making any needed adjustments due to absence, leaving personal belongings during competition. ***Mid-State and or the hosting community is not responsible for any belongings left in these areas.***
6. Timers/stop watches
 - i. Minimum of two adults with stop watches for the entire routine.
 - ii. Minimum of two adults with stop watches for the music portion.
 - a. The hosting team will provide 4 accurate timers/stop watches.
7. Reserved areas
 - i. Top of bleachers in front of cheerleaders or other suitable location for judges, timers, and Mid-State Youth Football and Cheerleading Conferences video and still cameras.



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- ii. Bleacher area directly in front of mat for coaches to sit during their team's routine.
- iii. Reserved seating for accessibility to those with disabilities.

J. Times of Competition Day Events

1. Gymnasium is to be opened no later than 1½ hours (9:00AM) before competition rehearsal time (10:30AM).
2. All squads should report to their designated classrooms to register with their Coaching Staff no later than 1/2 hour prior to rehearsal (10:00AM).
3. Once the Coach has all cheerleaders accounted for, the whole group should find their seats in the gym, no later than (10:15AM).
4. Rehearsal will begin no later than 21/2 hours (10:30AM) prior to the beginning of competition time (1:00PM).
5. The Cheer Director will ensure that all communities are accounted for and will make any necessary/emergency changes to the order of routines.
6. The Cheer Director will acknowledge the hosting community and Cheer Coordinator to thank all involved for the extra effort put into hosting the event.
7. The hosting Cheer Coordinator will review the agenda for the day's events and will facilitate an icebreaker activity and a warm-up activity to motivate the cheerleaders.
8. Squads will practice in the order they are drawn for competition.
9. Squads will each receive five minutes to rehearse on mats (the first team beginning no later than 1 hour prior to competition [12:00PM]).
10. Older Squad levels will be allowed to return to their designated classroom if their squad level is not practicing so they can have a snack, drink, and bathroom break, they will need to return to the gym 10 minutes prior to their practice time.



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11. The Cheer Director will dismiss all squads and state the designated time to return to the gym.

K. Competition Time

1. An announcement to welcome cheerleaders and spectator should be made prior to the start of competition (12:45) by the Mid-State Cheer Director and the hosting community Cheer Coordinator.
 - i. Introduce self and Mid-State Board of Directors/judges/each community squad
 - ii. "Spectators are reminded to keep all signs from obstructing the view of other spectators."
 - iii. Announcement to explain spectators, cheerleaders, and coaching staff are expected to act in good sportsmanship toward all others.
 - iv. Electronic audio/video/camera use is allowed and is encouraged, if used discreetly.
 - v. The Cheer Director will acknowledge the hosting community and Cheer Coordinator to thank all involved for the extra effort put into hosting the event.
2. The Cheer Director should identify that movement should stop during routines.
3. The hosting community will be expected to have fundraising to sustain competition costs and to provide the following.
 - i. Concessions
 - ii. Programs
 - iii. Fan memorabilia or other fundraising choices (optional)
 - iv. After Competition Routines are presented
 - v. The hosting community and cheer coach/squad are expected to clean up or designate a group to help if their team will play afterward.
 - vi. The Cheer Director will ensure copies of each judge's score sheet are made and given to a Mid-State Board member and to each Cheer Coordinator immediately following the last routine.
 - vii. During this time, Cheer Coaching Staff/squad moms shall return to their designated classrooms/areas to



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clean up their area and gather their belongings to bring to the gym.

- viii. Cheer Coordinators should meet in a designated area (not in the gym) to receive their score sheets, review them, and get clarification upon the completion of the awards ceremony. Any intent to file a grievance will be filed at this time and be brought before the Mid-State Board of Directors for final decisions.

L. Award Presentations

- i. Each team will be present and will remain for the award presentations.
- ii. The Cheer Director, Cheer Coordinators and Coaches will model and will encourage cheerleaders to be supportive to all other cheerleaders, using good sportsmanship.
- iii. Award medals will first be presented for academic achievements in each squad level/category/type.
- iv. Award medals will be presented to all squads that participated in competition.
- v. Award trophies and medals will be presented to the squads placing 1st and 2nd in each squad level/category/type.
- vi. The Cheer Director shall make any necessary announcements, including all spectators should remain seated temporarily to allow the cheerleaders to return to their seats for photos, and where the next year's competition will be held.
- vii. The Competition host or designee should announce that all squads return to their respective seats so team photos can be taken (for hometown newspapers, etc.)
- viii. Spectators will be allowed to also move around to take photos also.
- ix. Squads receiving the large traveling team trophies are expected to have their team information engraved on the trophy (paid by their community board) and will need to return the trophy prior to next year's competition for cleaning.



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M. Championship Game

- i. All coaching staff, cheerleaders, and spectators are encouraged to spectate for the football game and support the football players also.