

Elysian Fields ISD

Cheerleader Constitution

2023-2024



I.SQUADS

- (A) **Varsity** 12 cheerleaders, 1 mascot, 1 manager - classified as freshman, sophomores, juniors, or seniors for their year of service.
- (B) **Junior High** 10 cheerleaders – classified as 7th or 8th graders for their year of service.

II. Coaches

Each squad will have a coach to advise and direct the squad in all activities. The coach will also serve as the connection between their squad and the school administration.

III. TERM 2023-2024

The year of service begins on the day of selection and ends at the conclusion of the following school year.

ELIGIBILITY

- (A) In order to try out, a candidate must be eligible according to University Interscholastic League (UIL) guidelines.
- (B) A candidate must maintain a grade of at least 70 in all subjects the six weeks prior to tryouts. If failing they must pass during 3 week progress reports.
- (C) A candidate must be enrolled in Elysian Fields I.S.D. for at least six weeks prior to tryouts.
- (D) A candidate must pass Elysian Fields I.S.D. teacher evaluation with a minimum average score of 18. Candidates will be evaluated on:
- a. Attendance/Punctuality
 - b. Respect for Authority
 - c. Respect for Peers
 - d. Effort/Quality of Work
 - e. Honesty and Integrity
 - f. Positive Leadership
- (E) After being selected, cheerleaders must pass a general physical examination which must be on file with the coach prior to attending summer camp. Physicals must be updated every other year.
- (F) A candidate will not be eligible if she or he has previous suspension or assignments to the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program School for the current school year.
- (G) A candidate will not be eligible to tryout if she or he resigned or was dismissed from the squad the previous season.
- (H) Each candidate and one parent/guardian must sign and return an acknowledgement and agreement of compliance of the Elysian Fields ISD Cheerleading Constitution. Each candidate and one parent/guardian must also sign and return an emergency contact form and consent to try out. These forms must be turned in on the appropriate due date or the candidate will not be eligible to try out.

SELECTION

- (A) Tryouts will be scheduled in the spring by the coaches and with the approval of campus principals.
- (B) Sponsors will schedule a time for all candidates to learn the cheer and chant that will be performed at tryouts.
- (C) The cheer and chant used for tryouts will come from *material* provided by a recognized cheerleading association.
- (D) Candidates, varsity and junior varsity must attend at least one out of three clinic dates in order to be eligible to try out, and middle school candidates must attend two out of three clinic dates.
- (E) Clinics will be closed to spectators.
- (F) Tryouts will be held in the Elysian Fields High School Gym. They will be closed (**NO SPECTATORS**).
- (G) Each candidate will perform an individual cheer and a group chant. Groups will consist of 3 or 4 candidates. Tryout order and groupings will be determined by blind draw immediately preceding the tryouts. Mock tryouts will be performed on a date prior to actual tryouts.
- (H) Candidates will try out one at a time with the other candidates in the dressing room. For group chants, only one group at a time will be allowed in the gym.
- (I) Tryout uniforms will consist of solid white t-shirt and black shorts (NO DESIGN, OPTIONAL TIGHTS), white socks and athletic shoes. Hair should be worn in a ponytail. Inappropriately dressed candidates will not be allowed to try out.
- (J) Cheerleaders will be chosen by a panel of three official NCA or UCA judges or by a panel of current collegiate cheerleaders. Experienced judges will always be requested. Each candidate will be judged on an individual cheer and on a group chant.
- (K) The coaches will be responsible for requesting judges that meet the above criteria.
- (L) Candidates will be judged using the following criteria:

Categories judged include:

Cheer		Chant	
-appearance	1-5	motion and technique	1-5
-spirit and enthusiasm	1-5	voice and projection	1-5
-motion and technique	1-5	interaction with audience	1-5
-knowledge	1-5	smile/facial expression	1-5
-voice and projection	1-5	knowledge	1-5
-jumps	1-5		
-gymnastics	1-5		

1. An average of the two categories will be taken and candidates with highest averages will be on the squad.
2. Any ties will be broken by the judges' vote. The judges will request a second performance prior to the tie-breaking vote.
3. The campus Principal or designee will witness the judging process and sign an affidavit indicating that all rules were followed.
4. Candidates will have **one** opportunity to perform the individual cheer and group cheer/chant for the judges. Excluding equipment failure, candidates may not leave and then return to the tryout area.

5. Incoming freshmen must try out for the JV squad. Sophomores and Juniors can designate which squad they will try out for and if they would like to be considered for JV if they do not make Varsity. All seniors will try out for the Varsity Squad.
- If there are not enough candidates to form a JV squad, then there will not be a JV squad for that next year. The incoming 9th graders will be allowed to try out for Varsity.
6. **The decision of the judges will be final.**

Head Cheerleader Candidate Requirements, Selection, and Responsibilities

- * A head cheerleader will not be elected for the Junior High squad.
- * Captain and co-captain will be elected for the Varsity Squad in the format outlined below.

- (A) Must be an upcoming junior or senior, have one year experience on the varsity cheer squad and possess an overall 80 average for the Fall Semester.
- (B) If the head cheerleader is benched ONE time for any rule infraction, the captain will be relieved of her/his title and duties as captain.
- (C) Candidates for the head cheerleader position must submit a notebook prior to tryouts. The coach will meet with the candidates and detail what is to be included in the notebook. The notebook will include items such as: formations, pep rally ideas, pyramid ideas, etc.
- (D) One head cheerleader will be elected using the interview and recommendation of the panel of tryout judges, teacher evaluation form, and coach's recommendation. Recommendations will count as follows:

Judges	50%
Teacher Evaluation	25%
Coach's Recommendation	25%

- (E) The candidate with the second highest score will be elected as co-head cheerleader. Electing a co-head will be done at the coach's discretion.
- (F) If an elected head cheerleader is not able to complete his or her term as officer, the co-head cheerleader will be promoted to head cheerleader.
- (G) The duties and responsibilities of the head cheerleader and co head (if chosen) cheerleader are listed below:
1. It is your responsibility to make a notebook that contains the following:
 - a. words to all of the cheers and chants
 - b. formations for each cheer
 - c. roster of cheerleaders including emergency contact information
 - d. cheerleader constitution
 - e. game schedule
 - f. practice schedule
 - list of stretches/exercises to improve jumps

This notebook should be organized with the information typed. You should distribute this information as appropriate to other squad members.

1. It is your responsibility to relay information to the squad members per the coach's instructions.
2. It is your responsibility to see that each cheerleader performs their assigned duty at games.
3. It is your responsibility to set an example for the other cheerleaders at all times, both in appearance and in action.
4. It is your responsibility to help keep the squad working together as a team and eliminate all bickering as soon as it starts.
5. It is your responsibility to start all cheers and chants; therefore, you must know all cheers, chants, and dances thoroughly prior to performance.
6. It is your responsibility to aid in helping the other squad members follow directives from the coaches.
7. It is your responsibility to lead the planning of pep rallies. Furthermore, you must delegate responsibilities and communicate appropriately with those involved.

MASCOT

- (A) Mascot tryouts will be held immediately after the completion of the cheerleader tryouts. Mascot candidates must follow the same rules and regulations as cheerleader candidates.
- (B) Mascot judges will be the same as cheerleader judges.
- (C) Mascots will be judge on the following criteria:
 - a. Characterization
 - b. Creativity
 - c. Prop design
 - d. Dance
 - e. Music
 - f. Overall effect
 - g. Perfection of routine
- (D) Mascots will be financially responsible for camp, camp outfits, shoes, and one dry-cleaning of the mascot uniform.
- (D) The varsity mascot will follow the same rules, guidelines, and activity schedule as the varsity cheerleaders.
- (F) The mascot will be responsible for preparing and performing skits for all pep rallies.

MANAGERS

- (A) Managers will be chosen by the cheer coach.
- (B) Managers will be held to the same standards as cheerleaders and mascots.
- (C) Managers serve at the discretion of the sponsor.
- (D) Managers are not required to attend camp.

- (E) Managers will be required to purchase a warm-up and spirit shirt to serve as their uniform. This may cost up to \$200, and the manager may fundraise to offset the cost.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- (A) It is required that all cheerleaders be able to finance the cost of cheerleading and meet payment deadlines. Failure to meet deadlines will result in demerits being issued and possible dismissal from the squad. Cheerleaders may not cheer until all payments have been paid.
- (B) Fundraisers may be held to offset some of the squad costs. Each cheerleader must participate fully in the fundraising projects to be eligible to receive benefits.
- (C) Activity Attendance

*Partial squad at sponsor's discretion

Varsity

- summer camp
- all practices
- pep rallies
- Meet the Jackets
- all Varsity football games
- JV home football games (divided up between girls)
- home district basketball games
- all playoff games
- Homecoming Spirit Week Activities
- Athletic Banquet
- Stinger Cheerleader Camp
- UIL Cheerleading State Championship

Junior High

- all practices
- Junior High pep rallies as scheduled
- all 7th & 8th grade football games
- High school pep rallies at Principal's discretion

- (D) Maintain UIL eligibility each grading period and uphold the image and attitude of a leader. Grades will be checked each eligible period.
- (E) Squad members selected must meet UIL eligibility Guidelines and be knowledgeable of UIL rules.
- (F) Squad members must comply with the Elysian Fields High School/Middle School Student Handbook.
- (G) Squad members must comply with the Elysian Fields ISD Drug Testing policy.

PRACTICES and APPEARANCES

- (A) Cheerleaders will attend all assigned practices dressed out appropriately.
- (B) All practices are closed to friends and parents.

- (C) Members must be at school the entire day in order to participate in the performance/event scheduled. The cheer coach may only grant exceptions to this rule after receiving approval from the principal. Failure to perform in a scheduled event will result in demerits.
- (D) Participation will be determined on knowledge of and performance of the cheers, chants, dance and other routines. Students may also be disqualified from participation because of disciplinary action and failure to participate in weekly practice.
- (E) Ineligible candidates may not wear their uniform or be on the field or in the area of performance.
- (F) Squad members, ineligible to participate with the squad, may attend the event as a spectator.
- (G) All members must wear the appropriate uniform to participate in the performance. Each uniform worn for a performance will be selected by the coach, including warm-ups. Failure to comply will result in benching from the event and demerits being issued.
- (H) The cheerleaders will perform, if appropriate, at half-time shows.
- (I) All appearances, routines, cheers, and stunts must first be approved by the cheer coach. If the appearance of performance is altered, it will result in demerits.
- (J) Squad members must be on time for all practices and appearances. Furthermore, squad members must be picked up from practices and appearances in a timely manner. Failure to arrive or be picked up on time will result in demerits.
- (K) The practice and appearance scheduled is determined by the cheer coach. Attendance to all scheduled practices and appearances is mandatory unless prior arrangements have been made with the cheer coach.

SUMMER CAMP and PRACTICES

- (A) Summer Camp is selected by the cheer coach and is mandatory for all cheerleaders and mascots, **NO EXCEPTIONS**. If an elected cheerleader is unable to attend cheer camp, their position must be relinquished. (Family emergencies and severe illnesses may be excused at the discretion of the cheer coach and principal.)
- (B) Camp dates will be released by the first of April.
- (C) Varsity cheerleaders must attend mandatory practices during the summer.
- (D) Summer practice schedules will be released by the end of April.
- (E) Cheerleaders will be allowed one free absence during summer practices. All other absences will be subject to disciplinary action.
- (F) Varsity cheerleaders are required to participate in Stinger Camp as part of a fundraising effort. Failure to attend will result in disciplinary action, and the funds earned by the squad will only extend to those who participated.

UNIFORMS and COST

- (A) Uniform fittings will be held no later than one month after tryouts.
- (B) At the time of uniform fittings, a \$250.00 deposit will be due. Failure to make the deposit will result in disciplinary action.

- (C) Parents may attend the uniform fitting if they choose. However, the cheer coach has the final say on sizing.
- (D) Prior to finalizing the uniform order, parents must review and sign off on the final order.
- (E) If items must be reordered, it is the financial responsibility of the cheerleader.
- (F) All alterations must be approved by the coach. Failure to secure approval for an alteration can result in a cheerleader receiving demerits and being benched until the uniform is returned to its original state. In extreme cases, uniforms may have to be reordered and will be the financial responsibility of the squad member.
- (G) If uniforms are lost or damaged, the member is required to replace it at their own expense.
- (H) All uniforms must be neat, clean, and acceptable to the coach.
- (I) The cost of cheerleading ranges from \$1200.00 to \$1500.00 depending on the squad type. Junior High cheerleading is usually at the least expensive end of the spectrum with Varsity being on the more expensive end.
- (J) The cost of cheerleading is the sole responsibility of the cheerleader. Failure to pay will result in demerits, benching, and possible dismissal from the squad.
- (K) The total cost of cheerleading will be broken down into payments. Depending on the squad, payments may fall between the months of March and August.
- (L) Uniforms may be held by the sponsor until payment is received.
- (M) All payments must be current in order to attend camp.
- (N) The full balance must be paid before the first game. Otherwise, a cheerleader will be benched until all money is paid.
- (O) Fundraising may be required depending on the squad. If fundraising is required, participation is required to receive the benefits. Failure to participate or meet deadlines may result in demerit
- (P) Money earned during fundraising is received as a reimbursement. The full balance will always be paid by squad members, and fund raising money will be paid after the fact.

*Uniforms include the shell, skirt, camp clothing, warm-ups, and all other accessories (poms, bows, socks, etc.).

GAME, PERFORMANCE, and PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

- (A) Squad members must be on time for all practices, games, and events.
- (B) During the school year, practice will be after school as needed. Extra practices will be assigned according to the discretion of the coach throughout the school year.
- (C) Cheerleaders will attend all assigned practices, games, and events dressed out appropriately, including shoes. The cheer coach will determine practice attire.
- (D) No jewelry is to be worn at events or practices, this includes any body piercing. Nails, make up, hair style, and accessories shall be determined at the direction of the cheer coach.

- (E) All practices are closed to friends and parents.
- (F) Squad members are responsible for material learned in their absence.
- (G) Any tutorials or make-up work should be done around practice. Practice time is not time to take care of tutoring needs. Special arrangements will have to be made with the coach to make up missed material.
- (H) Failure to know material may result in demerits and benching.
- (I) Members must be at school the entire day in order to participate in the performance/event scheduled. The sponsor/director may only grant exceptions to this rule after receiving approval from the principal. Failure to perform in an scheduled event will result in two demerits.
- (J) Squad members who miss a practice or game due to a medical issue must present a doctor's note upon their return. Furthermore, if a cheerleader experiences an injury that prevents them from certain physical activity, they must present a doctor's note to excuse their participation in said activity/activities. They must also present a doctor's note allowing them to return to full activity. Demerits will be issued to squad members who fail to present proper documentation of absences and injuries.
- (K) Breaks during events will be at the discretion of the sponsor/director. Squad members must return from breaks on time.
- (L) No talking, gum chewing, food or drink during an event other than break time. Water will be allowed on the sideline.
- (M) Cheerleaders will abide by rules of good sportsmanship within the group and at all school events.
- (N) No early dismissal from games or meetings unless previously approved by the sponsor/director and principal/designee.
- (O) No visitors are permitted in the area for performance.
- (P) The cheer coach will set forth proper guidelines and expectations for games and performances. Failure to meet these guidelines may result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to stretching, jumping, cheering, spirit, body position, etc.)

CONDUCT, DEMERITS, and DISMISSAL

Cheerleaders/mascots will exemplify and model the Student Code of Conduct. The following expectations for behavior and demerit assignments become effective immediately after being selected for the squad:

Offense	Number of Demerits
Out of school suspension or placement in DAEP	10 demerits
Leaving a game without coaches knowledge or approval	10 demerits
Placement in SAC	5 demerits

Displaying unsportsmanlike conduct	5 demerits
Improper Conduct/Insubordination	5 demerits
Not attending a scheduled game or event for reasons other than a documented illness or family emergency	4 demerits
Not attending a scheduled practice for reasons other than a documented illness or family emergency	3 demerits
Tardy to practice, event, or game	1 – 1-9 minutes 2 – 10-15 minutes 3 – 15 or more
Failure to meet payment deadline	2 demerits
Failure to meet fundraising deadline	2 demerits
Incomplete or modified uniform	2 demerits
Disrespect to the coach or squad member	2 demerits
Unladylike conduct/Display of affection	2 demerits
Causing unnecessary disturbances during practice, events, or games	2 demerits
Failure to cheer, spirit, jump, etc. for reasons other than medical at practices, events, and games	2 demerits
Improper sideline behavior – talking, horseplay, showing disrespect	1 demerit
Chewing gum, eating and drinking during game or performance	1 demerit
Wearing jewelry during practice, events, or games	1 demerit
Not participating in spirit week events or theme days	1 demerit
Disrespect to the coach or squad member	2 demerits

- (A) With 3rd Demerit: Conference with cheerleader, parent/guardian, and cheer coach
- (B) With 5th Demerit: Conference with cheerleader, parent/guardian, cheer coach and principal. The member will be put on probation and benched from the next activity/game including pep rally if applicable
- (C) With 10th Demerit: Dismissed from squad.
- (D) Members may be dismissed for any of the following:
- a. Disorderly conduct – fighting, arguing, disruption of school environment
 - b. Smoking in uniform
 - c. Drinking alcoholic beverages at school related events
 - d. Disobeying team rules
 - e. Disobeying school rules
 - f. Benched for the same offense 3 times

- g. Ineligible for any 2 academically eligibility grading periods based on UIL
- h. Not attending required games repeatedly
- i. Failing to fulfill any duties as assigned
- j. Fighting
- k. Any violation of Zero Tolerance that results in a suspension
- l. For any pre-existing or current medical or physical condition which may prevent a cheerleader or mascot from fully participating in all activities, a medical doctor's written permission is required for the student to continue participating in all activities.
- m. Altering an approved appearance or performance.

- (E) The cheer coach and principal will decide when to dismiss members.
- (F) A member may not rejoin the squad for one calendar year if she or he has previously resigned or been dismissed.
- (G) The cheer coach reserves the right to have squad members run as punishment.

CHEERLEADER VACANCIES

- (A) The next highest alternate may fill cheerleader vacancies provided there is an adequate time span for training, camp, and replacement of appropriate uniforms.

Any situation not provided for in this document will be decided by the sponsor in conjunction with the principal.