



Wood River Cheerleading Handbook 2018-2019

PHILOSOPHY

The cheerleading program at Wood River High School will provide its participants with many opportunities involving leadership, teamwork, spirit, and enthusiasm. The purpose of our program is to:

1. Support our athletic programs and school through various activities and events
2. Promote and uphold school spirit and enthusiasm of spectators at athletic events
3. Develop a sense of good sportsmanship through competition
4. Promote Wood River High School by being involved in the community

ATMOSPHERE

Our goal is to create a family atmosphere. You will be treated as students first and cheerleaders second. There will be high expectations of each member of this program to represent WRHS to the highest standard. With these high expectations, you can expect to get much in return, personally. These expectations will all focus on making you and our program successful for years to come. Our primary focus is to use the spirit of cheerleading to teach some of life's most important lessons: teamwork, character, integrity, discipline, dedication and hard work. But most importantly this program will be fun and create positive memories that will last a lifetime.

VISION

The cheerleading program shall be an integral, well-coordinated part of events on campus. This program will continue to help grow leadership skills, positive role models, and effective time management skills.

MISSION

The mission of this program is to promote and uphold school spirit, unity and pride year round. To represent the school to the highest degree. To set an example of good behavior and sportsmanship in uniform and out. To promote friendship with each other and good sportsmanship with other schools and to promote the development of lifelong values and skills.

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Cheerleaders must understand that teamwork and the maintenance of discipline is the key to the success of the spirit program. Cheerleaders are dedicated to promoting school spirit, enthusiasm and a positive winning attitude through example. Adherence to the Cheer Program Rules and

Regulations is vital to achieving these goals. All members must realize that the manner in which they conduct themselves, in or out of uniform, directly reflects on the entire team and school. It is recognized that these standards are necessary to maintain squad morale, squad and individual discipline, and effective learning. Consistent enforcement of rules and regulations is also necessary to ensure the safety and general well-being of each individual spirit leader. Participation in spirit leading is voluntary, not mandatory. It is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked by the school personnel when a spirit leader violates the rules and regulations.

PARTICIPATION

- Athletic clearance forms and physical exams must be up to date to begin summer practices. All athletic forms must be turned into student services by June 18th in order to participate at summer practices.
- Squad members MAY NOT arrive to practice late. This is due to the proper warm up required to properly and safely participate.
- ALL GAMES are mandatory
- Squad members must be dressed accordingly to participate.
- Dressing on game days is an important way to communicate to your peers to come and support that day's game. Anyone that does not dress on game days will be benched from that day's game including halftime. Dress code uniform is defined as the shell, skirt and cheer shoes. If the weather is cold then warm-ups can be worn in place of. After two "non-dress" days a parent discussion will be required before they can continue to participate in the program
- Cheerleaders that quit during season will not be allowed to try out for one season.

Cheerleading Constitution

1.) The Role of a Cheerleader

- represent the school to the highest degree in and out of uniform
- be a positive leader and a role model
- set a good example through behavior and sportsmanship at all times
- positively contribute to the atmosphere of the team
- balance academic requirements and demands with extra-curricular and personal activities

2.) Standards of Behavior for Cheerleaders

Cheerleaders will be **held to high expectations**. If you are selected, you will act as such. Remember that there are people watching everything you say and do. Because of this, the Wood River High School Cheerleaders are expected to set high standards for their school and to set a good example for their fellow students.

- All cheerleaders must maintain an attitude of enthusiasm and cooperation with the squad member and the coaches at all functions. Working together may mean making personal sacrifices at times for the good of the whole squad and doing so with enthusiasm.
- As a representative of Wood River, cheerleaders are expected to uphold all handbook policies and state laws while in uniform or out of uniform. Any violation of these rules or conduct deemed improper and unsuitable for a cheerleader – **no matter where the incident takes place** - will result in consequences administered at the discretion of the cheerleading coach and/or the athletic director including dismissal.
- **Social Media!!!** ~ be extremely careful of what you post and/or are tagged in on social media. You will be held accountable. You are representing our school. Also NO bullying whatsoever!!

- **Grades** will be checked periodically at the coach's discretion. If any grade falls below a "C," the cheerleader will be asked to seek a tutor for extra help and may be removed from participation if the grade does not improve. You will follow Academic Policy for Wood River Athletes. You are a student first and an athlete second. ****If your son or daughter does not make grades they are still REQUIRED to come to every practice, game or cheer event, wear their cheer uniform and sit with the team. If this does not occur, it may also result in dismissal.**
- Members of the cheerleading program will be expected to promote good sportsmanship, ignore or dissuade any negative responses at events should not use foul language at any time when on campus, excessive public displays of affection inappropriate photos and comments on any social media.
- Members shall dress appropriately at all times and all occasions. By accepting a position on the team you are accepting that your actions are more prominent than those not associated with such an activity. Because of this, exemplary behavior is mandatory at all times.
- Members must cooperate with all faculty members, squad members, game officials and coaches.
- Cheerleaders must display proper behavior in the classroom, including being on time, not skipping, not cheating and bring a positive image to the program. Cheerleaders are not to allow anyone to wear any of their cheerleading attire. This represents the program and if someone is caught in trouble in cheer apparel it will reflect badly on the program.
- Two in school suspensions (ISS) or an out of school suspension (OSS) will result in automatic removal from the squad. The cheerleader will be benched for one incident of ISS.
- Each case of discipline will be judged individually. The head coach, with the assistance of administration has the final decision in any discipline situation. Parents will be kept informed of all problem situations as they occur.
- **The following violations may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the cheer program:**
 - Underage alcoholic consumption, drug use, use of tobacco products including vaping, steroids or any other controlled substances. Possession or use of alcohol or other controlled or illegal substances on the way to school, at school, after school or at a school sponsored activity is grounds for immediate dismissal.
 - Fighting, bullying of any kind, administration discipline.

****Please Do NOT use cheer as a form of punishment for your child. They need to attend what they have committed to. If you pull your son or daughter from a practice or game the punishment now becomes the team and my problem. This is not ok and may result in pulling your child out of a performance.**

3.) Attendance Policy

- Cheerleading is a time-intensive sport with practice during spring, summer, and fall. Schedules will be given in advance and ALL cheerleaders are expected to attend scheduled meetings, practices, and events. Prior notice must be given to the coach if an issue arises.
- Cheerleaders must be in attendance at school to be eligible to participate in practice or performances. Examples of excused absences are: death in the family, medical illness, and school activities (approved by the coach prior to the missed event). Attending a partial practice is better for the team than not coming at all!!
- During season, vacations are not excused absences. We have some time off in the summer and also August 1-6th off due to new school rules about summer practices. Please plan accordingly. You may not miss competitions if you are on either comp. squad.

- Unexcused absences from school are not acceptable, a parent note at least is needed. You must be at school to participate in cheerleading activities. Unexcused absences will incur the following consequences:
 - 1st - conference with coach and sit 1/4 of game
 - 2nd - notification/conference, probation letter and benched a game
 - 3rd - Removal from squad
- If you are at school, you are expected to be at practice that day. Please schedule appointments during times that will not conflict with cheerleading.
- Missing practices that have valid excuses can still lead to being removed from a routine, position or stunt, due to not physically being available to practice and help you team. No spot is guaranteed.
- During game suspensions, the squad member will sit in uniform with the coach for the entire game.
- Attendance is key to a successful program and each cheerleader and family must be committed to a successful program and their contribution to such. Roll will be taken and meetings will be scheduled for attendance/tardy issues.

4.) Safety

- Stunting/tumbling must only take place in the presence of a coach.
- Shoes and proper clothing must be worn at all times.
- Only the stunts that have been approved and practiced will be performed at games and competitions.
- Jewelry is not to be worn at any cheerleading event or practice. (This includes all piercings. Before getting a piercing, remember that new piercings are vulnerable during stunting even without jewelry in them.)
- Nails are to be kept at a sport length because long fingernails and artificial nails can become a safety hazard. (Clear polish only is to be worn on nails.)
- NFHS Spirit Rules will be enforced at all times (see <http://www.nfhs.org>)
- Stunting and tumbling, by their very nature, pose some inherent risk of a participant being injured. These injuries could include, but not limited to the following: Sprains/strains, abrasions, unconsciousness, head injuries, fractured bones and paralysis. If selected to the squad, EVERY member must follow safety guidelines taught to them by instructors.
- Eating disorders often are common with teenage girls. Education of healthy habits will be addressed

5.) Cheer Season

Practices:

- Practices and workouts will be from 2-4 days per week depending on time of year. A schedule will be given in advance and practice times will depend on the gym availability. We recommend you also taking a weights, or aerobics/PE class at school for extra conditioning daily. We will be doing a lot of conditioning at practice and will also send home daily conditioning homework.
- Cheerleaders must be dressed and ready to begin prior to the start of practice. Food is to be eaten prior to practice.
- Summer Workouts will be held two times a week. These are needed for core strength and increasing endurance for our rigorous routine. This is also where we will really work on tumbling and stunting, so it is important to be there.

All Game Expectations

- Arrive on time to the game (the coaches will let you know the time). Make sure you are in uniform, ready to cheer (hair and makeup done, no food)
- Travel using school transportation to all away events when required. If leaving with your parent, a signed note is required 24 hours prior to the event. A form is available to fill out.
- Have complete uniform at all games including poms. If you do not have the proper uniform, you may be benched during the game.
- Remain in the cheering area during the game. You may take care of personal business before or after the game. Cell phones will be kept in cheer bags during the games.
- Control and lead the crowd through positive cheers and chants. Work with the student section.
- DO NOT socialize during the game with your friends in the stands or your teammates. Friends may not socialize with you at the field fence.
- Follow the captains and do not tell them what cheers you do or do not want to do. (Captains will be chosen in a method determined by the coaches.)
- STAY IN YOUR CHEER AREA!!!
- Every team member will participate in the halftime routine during games.

Competitions:

- Competition season begins in December, districts are in February, and then state will be to follow. Several weekends will be taken up with Friday night games and Saturday competitions. Be prepared for this time commitment. Some competitions may take place during the school week.
- **Competing is a privilege, not a requirement.** The coaches will have the final say on whether or not the team will be competing at what event. Competitions may be added or removed based on the coach's decisions.
- Our choreography/tumbling/stunt coaches will come to SMAS/WRHS for practices and make changes to choreography. An additional monthly cost of \$40 each month is associated with this and must be paid in order to be on the competitive team. You must attend all of these practices! This is where we learn/change anything in our routine. You must be there for the team and your stunt group. If you cannot make this commitment you will be removed from the team.
- **NO ONE** is guaranteed a spot on the mat! A max of 24 people can compete at one time. Each spot is earned and the coaches will make changes frequently for the success of the team. If you are not in the routine you will still need to attend practices and comply with all regulations.

Fundraising:

- All cheerleaders **must** participate in fundraising. We will have a fundraising committee consisting of parents that will assist with this. More details will be announced when opportunities arise. Parents are needed to help as well. Fundraisers are very important to our program. We will have a variety of fundraisers throughout the season. The first fundraiser will go directly to the cheerleaders account as it is individual tickets. This money is raised for many things for the squads during the year including sweatshirts, workout gear, etc. Cheerleaders must work a certain amount of fundraisers each season to remain in good standing. We have many things in store and will share these at meetings. We love parent ideas as well.

Lettering:

- Varsity team members who end their season in good standing with grades, fundraisers and fulfilled the lettering policy will receive a certificate to obtain a Wood River High School Varsity Letter.

6.) Uniforms

- Each cheerleader is responsible for his/her uniform and warm up. Your uniform must be clean for every event. Each cheerleader is responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged item. Uniforms are to be worn for school activities only. You cannot lend your uniform to anyone.
- Alterations may only be made with prior permission from the coach. (Any alterations made must be removable.)
- If bought by the school, Uniforms are school property. They must be turned in at the end of every season. You will be responsible for replacing a lost/damaged uniform or if you choose to not turn one in.

8.) Parental Expectations:

- Communicate when there are concerns about anything. Any questions, concerns or pending issues should be emailed to smascheer@hotmail.com or heidikaminski@yahoo.com All emergencies that occur without advance notice must also be brought to the attention of Amanda Wilson or Heidi Kaminski through email and text (before practice or a game).
- To be supportive and non-argumentative of coaching decisions, questions should be brought up in a private and non-aggressive environment.
- Check emails-Be responsible for communication updates made regularly through email for updates.
- Let daughter or son solve own problems when there is drama between other squad members
- Understand that at times communication will be to cheerleaders through text messaging, FB page, if something immediate comes up and we must get the information out.
- If a parent or cheerleader has a question or concern about the program it is best to approach the coaches first by phone, text, email or in person. Both the Principal and Athletic Director have given our coaching staff their full support. The most reliable, accurate information can be acquired directly from the coaches. Please ask us! Feel free to set up a meeting as well, please don't bombard us at a practice or a game, so we can give you our full attention when addressing an issue. Please respect the coaches and their decisions, as they always have the cheerleader/team's best interest in any decision.
- **Please understand that taking cheer away from your son or daughter as a punishment will affect the entire team. Pulling them from practice or a game may result in dismissal from routine and/or team.**

7.) Points to Remember

- **If you are a returner and have an outstanding balance by the first day of tryout clinics you will not be able to participate! Clear this through the bookkeeper.**
- Be ready to practice every day. Wearing proper shoes and clothes, and with hair tied back.
- Arrive on time!!! (remember...early is on time!)
- You are responsible for cleaning up the gym... Do not leave your trash
- Cell phones will be put away at the beginning of all practices, games and competitions. If you need to contact your child feel free to contact the coaches and we will relay the message.

- Attitudes must be positive and upbeat! You must always be willing to work and cooperate at both practices and games. Do not bring problems or an attitude with you to practices or games. Your coaches are always willing to listen at the appropriate times.
- Everyone must have a solid working knowledge of all stunts, cheer, chants, and dance routine in order to participate at the games
- Decisions are based on what is BEST FOR THE TEAM, not the individual. On the competition teams, we will have members that are on the team but not performing on the competition mat. Those athletes are expected to be at practices and participate.
- The teams will only order items that have been approved by Coaches for design and purchase. The WRHS logo is trademarked and must be purchased in order to use. Not all vendors are approved.

Demerit System

In order to keep disciplinary actions consistent, the following demerit system is in place. Demerits will be distributed accordingly for **any** behavior that is unacceptable, not limited to the examples listed. Please note that we may add or remove penalties throughout the year as necessary. Demerits do not restart at the end of the semester. Demerits may be issued to a cheerleader for such things as tardiness, inappropriate or disrespectful behavior, and miscellaneous items. An accumulation of demerits will result in such consequences as not being allowed to cheer at a scheduled event, probation from cheerleading activities for a period of time to be determined by the coach, and/or suspension/removal from the team. The following are examples of conduct unbecoming of a cheerleader and the penalty assessed for each violation. Probation is a consequence after 3 demerits.

Examples of Infractions

2 Demerit examples:

Referral to office/administrator for school tardies, electronic use, dress code, cell phone use during practice/game, tardy to practice/games, not prepared to practice, not prepared to cheer at a game, wearing jewelry at practice/games, talking to fans/friends during game time, unexcused absences, social media issue

3 Demerit examples:

Referral to office/administrator for defiance or disrespect, showing defiance or disrespect towards coach, not attending choreography practice, or not meeting the expectations of being a Wood River High School cheerleader.

Consequences of Demerits:

This letter is your WARNING!

2 Demerits - conference with coach, and sit 1/2 of the game

3 Demerits - sit out a whole game

4 Demerits - probation letter, and sit full game

5 Demerits - Removal from squad; forfeit letter, not eligible to tryout the following year

Order Sheet for Cheer Gear

(Turn in after making the team)

Cheerleader Name _____

T-shirt size for additional shirts we may order - XS S M L XL

Please reflect the item needed and quantity buying with the price.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Total \$</u>
Shoes (Varsity field shoe for sideline and basketball)	Size _____	_____	\$40-60	\$
Bows (2 needed for sideline and Competition, 1 for basketball)		_____	\$15 each	\$
Personalized Sweatshirt	Size _____	_____	\$40.00	\$
Body Suit	Size _____	_____	\$25.00	\$
Bloomers/Spankies		_____	\$20.00	\$
Camp/Workout Uniforms (set of 3 shirts/3 shorts)		_____	\$50.00	\$
Shell and Skirt (uniform) (estimate)		_____	\$200.00	\$
Summer Camp (Competition Teams)		_____	\$275.00	\$275.00
Monthly fee to SMAS for Tumbling/Stunt Classes/Competition (this is not to pay Amanda—it is for other Coaches/SMAS Gym time)		_____	\$40	

School will be buying warmups, poms, bags, leggings, headbands, gloves, and maybe uniforms if we can budget it in.

Personal Cheerleading Contract

- I have read the Wood River High School Cheerleading Handbook and understand the responsibilities and privileges of being a Wood River Cheerleader. I will abide by these rules and regulations if chosen for the 2018-2019 cheerleading squad. I understand that if I do not follow the rules, I will receive the outlined consequences and may be placed on probation, suspended and/or removed from the cheerleading squad.
- I will cooperate fully with the coaches and all persons and organizations concerned with promoting spirit and good sportsmanship at Wood River High School.
- **At all times, whether at school or away from school,** I will conduct myself in a manner that best represents the students and faculty at Wood River High School.

Printed Name

Cheerleader's Signature

Date

Competitive Cheerleading

It will be crucial for your child to attend mandatory practices with our expert coaches. These practices are vital for changes in the routine, stunts and pyramid. Absences will affect the entire squad as we do not have backups for our positions as in other sports. Your child may be taken out of the routine as a result. Please plan accordingly. There will not be a refund if your child is not in attendance. There is a monthly fee of \$40.00 paid directly to SMAS. You must fill out the required paperwork it is available at the gym and through the coach.

Please sign below that you understand and will comply with the payment associated with being a competitive cheerleader and the consequences of missing a payment.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Cheerleading Handbook Parent Signature Page

I have read through the entire handbook and understand the expectations of my child. If he/she is chosen as a member of the Wood River High School cheerleading team, I am aware of the financial obligations and time commitment involved in cheerleading, and agree to the payment schedule as outlined. I realize that my child will not be able to participate if my account is not paid in full. The first fundraiser will be put towards your child's account and sponsorship letters are available but funds must be secured by the individual.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

We are looking forward to a Fantastic Season!
Thank you for your Support ~ GO----WRHS----WOLVERINES!!