

**CHARLENE MCKINZEY
MIDDLE SCHOOL**



McKINZEY MIDDLE
GOLDEN LIONS
BOLD. BRAVE. FEARLESS.

**CHEERLEADING
HANDBOOK
2022-2023**

INTRODUCTION

McKinzey cheerleaders are an integral part of the total school experience and membership is considered a **PRIVILEGE**. The policies, procedures and regulations in this handbook are in compliance with school board policies and administrative procedures. They are designed to provide for successful experiences for students and the efficient operation of the cheerleading program. Its purpose is to help answer student/parent questions and to serve as a guide for defining the policies and procedures for the cheerleading team. You, the cheerleader, are accountable and responsible for all guidelines contained within this handbook and for any additions that your respective sponsor might add.

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PURPOSE

The Charlene McKinzey Middle School Cheer Team supports athletic and school organizations and performs for the entertainment of the greater Mansfield community. We believe that an exemplary cheerleading program is an extension of the classroom. Cheerleading offers our students an opportunity to develop and grow physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Our goal is that our cheerleaders develop dance and cheer technique, as well as acquire performance skills. We want the cheerleaders to become self-disciplined and self-confident. It is vital that we promote team spirit and nurture an opportunity for artistic endeavors; and finally, we want our cheerleading team to learn the values associated with working as a team, competition, and service.

GENERAL CONDUCT RESPONSIBILITIES

CMMS cheerleaders will observe all policies set forth by the Mansfield Independent School District. All members have the responsibility to give their all, and they are expected to maintain a character above reproach. **We are judged by the company we keep and our actions in everyday life, both private and public, and are the direct reflection of the cheerleading team and our school.** Students and their parents must sign and return to the cheer sponsor the form of consent to the standards of conduct as a condition of participation on the cheerleading team.

REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

As **LEADERS** of our campus, CMMS cheerleaders are required to do the following:

- Participate in all activities in which the organization is involved.
- Exhibit and maintain a satisfactory attitude toward school policies and regulations.
- Attend summer camp
- Maintain acceptable academic standards (no pass, no play)
- Demonstrate good choices, strong character and responsibility at all times.
- Attend all required practices
- Complete and turn in all required paperwork

Teams are only as strong as the weakest link. **We believe that learning as a team is imperative.** To insure that we are the best cheer squad, all McKinzey cheerleaders are expected to:

- Practice to the best of their ability at all times, no matter what. Cheer requires and demands a high degree of determination, hard work, strength, dedication, and commitment.
- Abide by rules and follow directions
- Understand that any decision(s) made by the sponsor is in the best interest of the team and its individual members.
- **Have the desire to be a part of a TEAM. Individual exhibitions are neither desired nor tolerated.** There is no "I" in team.
- **No drama or gossip about another team member or anybody else for that matter**

SOCIAL MEDIA AND CELL PHONE USE

Maintaining a higher standard of conduct includes ensuring that all cheerleader social media accounts and internet usage are appropriate. The internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible form of communication. Any communication such as Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, TikTok, photo sharing, texting apps or texting in general etc. appearing on the internet is public domain even if it is marked private. Members are responsible for their personal accounts and postings, as well as posting from or on other students' websites. The areas of appropriateness will include by are not limited to profane, foul, or disrespectful language (abbreviated or alluding to), pictures, suggestive poses, clothing, references to drugs, and/or tobacco, and postings (either verbal or photos) that could be interpreted as being negative or threatening towards other MISD teaching staff or team members, or that demonstrate poor sportsmanship or a disrespectful attitude towards other schools. **Any such incident will result in review by the principal (or designee) and may lead to probation or dismissal from the cheer team.**

Cheer squad members that violate the above guidelines shall be subject to the following:

- **First Offense:** The member will be asked to remove any offensive items from the website(s) and will be asked to give an apology and plan of action to deter this behavior to the principal, sponsor, and cheer team members. Parents/guardians will be contacted and made aware of the offensive behavior.
- **Second Offense:** Same as above PLUS suspension from all cheer team activities for a period of 3 days to 3 weeks to be determined by admin and sponsor.
- **Third Offense:** The member will be removed from the cheer team.

ATTENDANCE

CMMS cheerleaders will be required to attend practices before or after school, as well as during the summer break months. Time specifications will be established as school, camp, and other schedules become available to the sponsor. Summer practice is mandatory upon notification of these dates and times. Because of the importance of these practices, the demerit system will be strictly enforced.

Cheerleaders need to arrive on time to scheduled events and practices; they are required to stay until dismissed by the sponsor. It is also important that all cheerleaders are picked up within 10 minutes of dismissal. Failure to comply with this guideline may result in the student losing the privilege of participation in the next performance.

In the event of an absence, it is the **responsibility of each cheerleader to notify the sponsor as soon as possible of the absence, and it is important to note that failure of notification can result in enforcement of the demerit system.**

Also, the sponsor may remove a cheerleader from a performance based on absences if it is in the best interest and safety of the team.

GRADES

Charlene McKinzey Cheer follows the UIL rule of "No Pass, No Play". It is the responsibility of the cheerleader to weekly check Skyward and all learning platforms for grades and assignments. If a cheerleader is failing on a report card, they must still dress out and attend all events/practices, but they will not be able to participate until their progress report shows a passing grade. Please ask the sponsor(s) about grading in Advanced classes. If the cheerleader fails 2 or more six weeks, dismissal from the team will occur.

INABILITY TO PERFORM

Any cheerleader who is ill and has a parent/guardian note may be excused from practice/performance/activity. If any cheerleader is suffering from an injury, they will be excused from practice/performance/activity only if a note is written from the doctor explaining the extent of the injury and workout limitations. In order to return to full participation, the cheerleader must have a medical release from the doctor on file. If a cheerleader is on probation or not performing due to demerits, they must still dress out and attend all events and performances.

TRANSPORTATION AND GAMES

The cheer team may occasionally travel to Lake Ridge for football and/or basketball games. Cheerleaders are responsible for their own transportation. Student conduct is to be the highest level on any trip. Cheerleaders will meet promptly at the designated place and time for all trips. Carpooling to events is permitted, but if a cheerleader is leaving an event with someone other than their parent/guardian, the sponsor needs to be made aware.

CHEER FUNDS

All cheerleaders must fulfill all financial responsibilities by the due date set by the sponsor. Failure to do so will result in not being able to try-out in the coming years. Before cheer disbands, all monies left in account will be spent on needed supplies to be used campus-wide.

EXPENSES AND UNIFORM

Please understand that participation on the CMMS Cheerleading team can be quite expensive. We have done our best to keep the expenses manageable. Once cheerleaders have been chosen, the next step is fittings and a parent meeting. Once all fittings and choices are complete, the sponsor will provide each cheerleader with their anticipated expenses. Expenses are estimated annually and may vary due to each member's needs and uniform choices. All expenses are due before uniforms are distributed. Failure to adhere to financial responsibilities may result in not receiving required cheerleading uniform and materials and possible suspension from the performance until financial obligations have been met. Cheerleaders may not wear the group's uniform/costume unless the sponsor so designates. Cheerleaders must wear all parts of the performance uniform while in public. The performance uniform includes shell, sports bra, skirt, spunks, shoes, white ankle socks, bow, and pom poms. **The uniform/costume should be respected at all times, and it should not be shared with non-members of the organization. This includes jackets and practice gear.** Uniform/practice wear checks will occur every time the cheerleader is required to wear it.

DEMERIT SYSTEM

Demerits may be given by the sponsor(s), and a record of demerits will be maintained by the cheer sponsor(s). Each demerit shall be acknowledged by that cheerleader's initials, and the cheerleader may review her demerit record at any time if a request is made to the sponsor. Demerits will be given starting from try-out to try-out with each cheerleader having a clean slate from year to year. **If a member receives 12 demerits in one year, she will be removed from the team immediately.** Conditioning must be scheduled with the sponsor, but typically occurs after a normal scheduled practice.

| Demerit # | Consequence |
|------------------|--|
| 1 | Warning |
| 2 | Warning |
| 3 | Conditioning determined by coach |
| 4 | Conditioning determined by coach |
| 5 | Conditioning determined by coach and a one event benching |
| 6 | 1 week probation determined by coach and parent notification |
| 7 | Conditioning determined by coach |
| 8 | Conditioning determined by coach and a one event benching |
| 9 | 1 week probation determined by coach and parent notification |
| 10 | Conditioning determined by coach |
| 11 | Conditioning determined by coach and a one event benching |
| 12 | 3 rd probation, dismissal from the squad and parent notification. |

One (1) Demerit will be issued for each violation of the below expectations (CL=Cheerleader):

- CL is tardy to beginning of practice or game or coming back from a break
- CL is absent from practice and CL does not give notice to sponsor(s)
- CL is unprepared (doesn't know material)
- CL has jewelry on (of any type) or gum during practice/game/event
- CL displays insubordination
- CL shows disrespect to any coach/teacher, another squad member, or student
- Sponsor(s)/Coach(es) receive email from CL's teacher in regards to poor choices/work ethic
- CL is caught cursing or displaying inappropriate gestures
- CL acted in an unsafe manner
- CL leaves trash or belongings at any practice/game/event.
- CL allows non-member to wear any CMMS cheer clothing.
- CL is not wearing appropriate practice wear or not in correct uniform for game day
- CL does not have hair pulled up/back for practice/game/event
- CL did not complete or return things by due date
- CL is not maintaining proper sideline etiquette and behavior (excessive talking, unsportsmanlike conduct, breaking formation, not paying attention etc.)
- CL is in possession of cell phone during practice/game/event without permission
- CL shows lack of effort
- CL shows lack of effort in school spirit (i.e. pep rallies, dress up days etc)
- CL has bra strap showing with uniform (this includes bright colored sports bras)
- Assignment to ISS results in a 2 event probation.
- Assignment to BIC results in automatic removal from the team.

MERIT SYSTEM

The merit system is in place to ensure that cheerLEADERS are the true LEADERS of the school. **MERITS DO NOT COUNTERACT DEMERITS.** The cheerleaders are required to earn 6 merits per six weeks, but more is always better. Cheerleaders will be required to submit a Merit Tracking Form to the sponsor(s) by the end of each six weeks. **Failure to complete merits will result in a 1 event probation.**

| | |
|---|---|
| All A Honor <i>(copy of report card must be stapled to merit form)</i> | 5 merits |
| Perfect Attendance <i>(no unexcused absences/copy of Skyward attendance report stapled to merit form)</i> | 4 merits |
| A & B Honor Roll <i>(copy of report card must be stapled to merit form)</i> | 3 merits |
| Community Service outside of school <i>(signature required)</i> | 1 merit per hour |
| Making and hanging up spirit signs to decorate the school <i>(must be approved by coach)</i> | 2 merits per sign (Only 1 a six weeks allowed) |
| Create a cheer for the team to perform that includes a jump or standing tumbling | 1 merit per cheer (Only 1 a six weeks allowed) |
| Any other merit approved by the coach(es) PRIOR to obtaining merit. | Amount determined by coach |

PROBATION, DISMISSAL, RESIGNATION

Failure to comply with any regulation as stated in the handbook may result in probation for the cheerleader in question until the reason for probation is corrected to the satisfaction of the sponsor. Please refer to the demerit system.

A cheerleader on probation may not participate in performing activities, but she is required to fulfill all other responsibilities. A cheerleader on probation must still dress out and attend all events.

Cheerleaders must display appropriate behavior both in and out of school. Probationary status and/or dismissal from the cheer team may be given to members for the following reasons:

- Use of alcohol or controlled substance
- Smoking
- Physical or health condition not related to illness or injury
- Inappropriate behavior as determined by sponsor
- Failure to abide by school policies or city, county, state, or federal law
- Failing 2 six weeks
- Lack of respect towards sponsor, MISD personnel and school property
- Assignment to BIC
- Unexcused absence
- Losing interest in group
- Refusal to participate in scheduled activity
- Violation of any of the conditions required for membership
- Probation or dismissal due to demerit system

A cheerleader who is dismissed from the team for disciplinary reasons may try-out for the following year. Quitting the team is NOT an option for any cheerleader at any time unless there are serious circumstances that are determined by school administration and sponsor. If choosing to resign, the cheerleader must write a letter to the team explaining why they are resigning.

CHEER CAPTAIN(S)/CHEERLEADER(S) OF THE MONTH

It is the sponsor's decision whether or not to follow the cheer captain election process or the appointed cheerleaders of the month for each season. The decision depends on how many veterans return to the team for their 2nd year and the maturity of the team.



Charlene McKinzey Cheer
Code of Conduct
Acknowledgement and Contract

I, _____ have read and understand the entire contents of the CMMS Cheerleader Handbook. I agree to adhere to all of the rules, and I will strive to uphold the expectations of my sponsor, my parents, my fellow CMMS cheerleaders, and my school.

Member Signature

Date

I, _____ have read and understand the entire contents of the CMMS Cheerleader Handbook. I expect my student to adhere to all of the rules and expectations set out by MISD and the CMMS cheer team and sponsor. I will strive to uphold my role as a positive CMMS parent and supporter.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date