

# YDMS Spirit Group Constitution



Contact Information:

The guidelines set forth below are designed to ensure equality of all members when related to discipline issues. The coach/sponsor(s) reserve the right to make accommodations based on extenuating circumstances.

## SECTION I. MEMBERSHIP

### A. Qualifications

1. Scholastic – Squad members must maintain a passing grade in all classes, as well as a 2.5 GPA. Any failing grade results in demerits.
2. Attendance – Squad members must meet the CPSB Board Policy for attendance. Squad members absent from school on the day of an activity may not participate with the exception of a school function, doctor's appointment, or death in immediate family.
3. Character – Squad members must have exceptional citizenship and exceptional conduct in all areas of school activities. Squad members must have a wholesome attitude towards school, teachers, administrators, and peers.
4. Health – Squad members must be in good health and be able to participate in all activities. Medical excuses from parents will be accepted a maximum of two times per year, all other absences must have a medical excuse or they will result in an unexcused absence and demerits will be assigned. If there is a reason for a longer period of inactivity, a doctor's note will be necessary. For long illnesses such as flu, excused absences from school will suffice.
5. Spirit Calendar year – The year for new members begins once they have been selected for a squad. Current or returning members that are selected for a squad will have a year round commitment.

### B. Method of Selection

1. Tryouts will be held in the spring of each school year.
2. Tryouts will be closed to everyone except judges, principals, principal's designees, and cheerleader sponsors. There will be no students, parents or tryout participants in the tryout room/area, nor will they be involved in the collection or tabulation of scores.
3. Score sheets will be kept until the end of the school year following tryouts. At the end of the school year score sheets from tryouts will be destroyed. Parents may request to see their student's score sheet.
4. Candidate Requirements
  - a. Academic- Candidates must have a 2.5 GPA on their 3<sup>rd</sup> 9 weeks report card with no failing grades.
  - b. Disciplinary- Candidates must have a good record of conduct for the current school year with **no persistent misbehavior or assignment to OSS/ISS for any reason other than tardies and dress code.**
  - c. Teacher recommendations- Each candidate will be rated by their 7 teachers. Teachers will rate students in 12 categories on a scale from 1-5. The highest and lowest score will be dropped. Teacher recommendations will count for 30% of the final score.
  - d. Prior team commitment- All applicants must have participated and be in good standing in pep squad, a YDMS sport, or another administrative approved sport.
  - e. Mandatory Parent/Candidate Meeting – A parent or legal guardian **must** attend the mandatory informational meeting conducted by the coaches/sponsors.

- f. Required Documents- Candidates and parents must fill out and sign an application and parent permission form stating that they understand and will comply with all information in the packet before the student is allowed to participate in the tryout process. In the packet will be a copy of the Score Sheet in which the judges will be using during the tryouts.
- g. Tryout Clinic- All candidates **must** attend the clinic held after school. Candidates with a medical excuse should consult the coach/sponsor and the school administration if they are physically disabled at the time of tryouts. Time lost to practice at the clinic, due to an absence, can not be used as grounds for appealing the final squad selection.
- h. Judges- Candidates will be judged on cheering, dancing, jumping, and tumbling, and kick-line abilities. (Gymnastics are not required but may be helpful.) Professional judges who are not employees of Caddo Parish Schools will screen all candidates. Judges scores will count for 70% of the final score.
- i. All candidates will perform the same routine for try-outs.
- j. A candidate who has been dismissed from **ANY CADDO PARISH** cheer squad will be ineligible for try-outs.

### C. Squad

1. The cheerleading squad will consist of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders for a total of up to 16 students. The dance line will consist of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders for a total up to 14 students.
2. All squad members will attend athletic events, practices, activities, and competitions designated by the sponsors. After being elected spirit group member, students who participate in conflicting activities may receive appropriate demerits if not coordinated ahead of time.
3. All squad members are expected to be on time and be enthusiastically participating at events. If there is a question to the time, the spirit group member needs to contact the coach.
4. All squad members are accountable for uniforms assigned by the school or purchased on their own. This includes cleaning them, repairing them, and having them ready to wear at all times. All uniforms will be selected at the coaches/sponsors discretion.
5. All squad members must be at school the day of the activity, or the day prior to the activity if the activity falls on a non-school day, in order to participate in an event that day.
6. All squad members must fulfill all other duties assigned to them by the coach/sponsor.
7. Each squad is eligible to have a manager and mascot. Each must adhere to all rules, regulations, and demerits, required by all cheerleaders that are outlined in this constitution. Managers and mascot are selected at the coach/sponsor discretion.
8. Each squad may select a captain and co-captain. The selection process is at the discretion of the coach/sponsor.
9. Spirit group members are to follow all NCA, NDA, UCA, UDA, other professional spirit associations, camp rules, or other local ground rules at establishments where the squads are performing, practicing, or attending other events designated by the cheer coach/sponsor.

10. Spirit group members are expected to leave all areas used by the team in a clean way. All food, trash, supplies need to be put up before practices, performances, camps, or other events designated by the cheer sponsors are over.

D. Disqualification from Squad

1. Benching and Suspension (Ineligible squad members must attend events with the squad with the exception of LHSAA ineligibility).

- a. Squad members must maintain appropriate grades as outlined in the student handbook in order to be eligible for the squad.
- b. If at any point during an event, the sponsor decides that a squad member is not practicing sound judgment, is not behaving in accordance to the spirit group constitution, is behaving in an unsafe manner, being disrespectful, or not following direction from the coach/sponsors and/or captain, the coach/sponsors reserve the right to bench the squad member for the remainder of the event and until such a time a conference can be scheduled between the coach/sponsor, squad member and a parent/guardian.
- c. Accumulation of 5 demerits will result in member being benched for one event.

2. Dismissal

- a. Persistent misbehavior or OSS/ISS direct placement for any reason.
- b. An accumulation of 20 demerits for the entire year will result in dismissal from the squad.
- c. If a student is ineligible for (2) consecutive grading periods (9 weeks) during the school year, the student will be removed from the spirit group for the remainder of the school year.
- d. Once a spirit group member is dismissed from the squad, that individual will not be allowed to tryout for the squad at anytime in the future.
- e. Voluntary Quit - Candidates selected to be a member of the spirit groups are expected to make a commitment to the activity for the full school year. Any spirit group member who voluntarily quits the squad before the end of the cheerleading year will not be allowed to tryout for the next year. They will lose all rights and privileges of a spirit group member for that school year. Anyone who wishes to quit the cheer squad must submit it in writing with a parent/guardian signature to the coach/sponsor.

## SECTION II. DEMERITS

The purpose of the demerits is to make sure that all spirit group members are accountable for their actions and are acting in a manner that is best for the overall squad.

- A. The coaches/sponsors, as listed below, will assign and record demerits.
- B. The record will list infractions for the entire school year. The demerit year will begin during the summer and expire at the end of the following school year. At this time a new record per spirit group member will begin.
- C. If a cheerleader shows up to an event out of "game day" dress and cannot immediately correct the outfit, then the spirit group member will sit out that game and receive applicable demerits.

If the outfit can be corrected, then the spirit group member will just receive applicable demerits.

- D. If a spirit group member is more than 15 minutes late to an event, then the cheerleader will sit out for that event and receive applicable demerits.
- E. An accumulation of 5 demerits will result in benching of 1 game. Benching will end when the demerits have been worked off, as outlined below.
- F. The following action will be taken for demerits:  
20 demerits = removal from the squad.
- G. Demerits include, but are not limited to the following:

## **DEMERIT SYSTEM FOR SPIRIT GROUPS, MASCOTS & MANAGERS**

### **AUTOMATIC DISMISSAL:**

- 1. OSS or direct assignment to ISS from school
- 2. Misrepresentation of team through actions either inside or outside of school (**Including but not limited to:** lewd behavior, sexual misconduct, drinking, smoking, fighting, drug use and/or inappropriate behavior, including on social media.)

### **10 DEMERITS**

- 1. Indirect ISS assignment
- 2. Insubordination and/or disrespect to any coach, YDMS employee, administrator, faculty or staff member

### **7 DEMERITS**

- 1. After school detention
- 2. Insubordination and/or disrespect to any team member. Includes slandering or being disrespectful to a fellow member, including social media
- 3. Stunting without direct approval/coach supervision
- 4. Unsportsmanlike conduct at games, pep rallies, and other school functions

### **5 DEMERITS**

- 1. Unexcused absence from a practice, game, event, or other function
- 2. Leaving a game, event, or practice early or arriving to a game, event, or practice late (15 minutes=absence)
- 3. Failing on a report card

### **3 DEMERITS**

1. Talking or distracting while participating (combing hair, talking to people in the stands, talking on cell phones, or players, sitting down, etc.)
2. Touching any male (hugging, holding hands, etc.) while in uniform
3. Lunch detention

### **2 DEMERITS**

1. Turning in money, forms, etc. past the stated deadline
2. Not in full uniform
3. Returning late after any break
4. Late for practice or meetings
5. Failure to know materials (cheers, chants, dances)
6. Being picked up late from a game or other event (10 minutes after announced ending time)
7. Being out of assigned area during an event

### **1 DEMERIT**

1. Nail polish at performance
2. Gum at practice/performance
3. Jewelry at practice/performance

### **Demerit System:**

- Each member will be allowed to receive 19 demerits for one year. If a member receives 20 demerits, she will be removed from the squad for the remainder of the year.
- Demerits will be issued by the coaches. Coaches will keep a log for each member of the squad
- The demerit system will be enforced at all times under the discretion of the coaches.
- Demerits may be work off, at the discretion of the coach, by earning merits.
- A member will sit out one performance for every 5 demerits she receives.
- At second benching, a parent conference must be held.

### **Merits**

AB Honor Roll	5 merits
Perfect attendance per semester	5 merits
Attending outside tumbling/dance classes	3 per month
Attending a non-mandatory school athletic event or production	3 per event
Bringing extra requested supplies	3 per item
Assisting coaches in any way beyond regular responsibilities	1-10
Making extra posters for sports events	1 per poster

### **SECTION III. ATTENDANCE TO PRACTICES AND ACTIVITIES**

- A. Attendance to all assigned activities is expected. Failure to attend practices can result in removal from the squad.
- B. A member must go to and from all events with the team, walking or bus trips.
  - 1. Extenuating Circumstances
    - i. With prior approval, a written notice must be presented to the coach/sponsor absolutely no later than two days prior to the event. The form must state the members name, date of the event, and the signature of the parent/guardian. This procedure may only be used for important issues.
- C. Excused absences include:
  - 1. Personal illness or accident with a parent note, up to two times. All other absences must have a doctor's note.
  - 2. Funeral or death in the immediate family
  - 3. School functions that are approved in advance by the coach/sponsor.
- D. In order to receive an excused absence from an activity, a member must present a written note from the parent or guardian to the coach/sponsor within a reasonable amount of time.
  - 1. When a member is absent, it is his or her responsibility to call the coach to find out what information was missed. For example, it is the squad members' responsibility to find out what hairstyle and accessories have been decided on before the next event.
  - 2. The squad member must still be present at the event in uniform unless otherwise informed by the coach/sponsor.
- E. Practice
  - 1. Practice is required during the summer as well as during the school year. Summer schedules will be disclosed in the tryout packets.
  - 2. All practices are closed to the squad members, mascots and the coach/sponsor. No parents, friends or other family members are allowed to attend practice.
  - 3. Medical excuses from parents will be good for no more than two days. If there is a reason for a longer period of inactivity, a doctor's note will be necessary. For long illnesses such as flu, excused absences from school will suffice.
  - 4. All spirit group members are expected to dress out for every practice, in the correct practice uniform, hair up, approved shoes, and NO jewelry. If the cheerleader does not dress out, then the spirit group member will receive applicable demerits. If it cannot be immediately corrected, then the spirit group member will sit out for that practice and could be ineligible to perform at the next game or event.

### **SECTION IV. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- F. Pep Rallies
  - 1. Uniforms may be worn to school on pep rally days and game days as determined by the coach/sponsor or Administrator.

2. Spirit group members must be ready at a time designated by the coach/sponsor before the pep rally.
  3. All members will be held accountable for the set up and clean up of all pep rallies. No one leaves the pep rally until the gym has been cleaned up.
- G. Rules for Summer Camps
1. Summer camp is required for all spirit group members and mascots under the direction of a coach/sponsor.
  2. Any group attending a camp is representing its school and must act accordingly.
- H. Game Rules
1. These functions are required for all spirit group members. The only excused absences are those for personal illness or death in the family.
  2. For all games, members will be at designated site at time designated by coach/sponsors and will check in.
  3. Permission must be obtained from the coach/sponsor before errands are run.
  4. Members must remain in areas designated by the coach/sponsor.
  5. While performing there will be no socializing with the spectators or fellow members.
  6. All other sports/playoff games will be assigned by the coach/sponsor.
  7. Members will be expected to know the rules and official signals in all sports and be able to lead an appropriate cheers/dances corresponding with the call.
  8. After the game has ended all members will checkout with the cheer coach/sponsors and make sure that everything has been cleaned up. No one leaves until everything is cleaned up.
- I. Dress Code
1. Gum chewing is not allowed when cheering or practicing.
  2. Uniforms must be clean and neatly pressed at all times.
  3. Shoes must be clean and in good condition at all times.
  4. No display of affection in uniform per sponsor's directive.
  5. While performing in uniform or at practice, members:
    - i. Will not wear heavy make-up
    - ii. Will not wear jewelry
    - iii. Will wear all hair secured and as designated by the coach, if constant fixing is required then the proper demerits will be given.
    - iv. Will not wear ANY color on nails
    - v. Will keep nails trimmed per coach/sponsors' directive.
    - vi. Will wear cheer appropriate to games. The member will wear the appropriate footwear based upon where the practice is held. Cheer or athletic shoes must be worn on hard surfaces; socks may be worn on specialized tumbling surfaces; this will be at the discretion of the coach/sponsor.
    - vii. Will wear proper undergarments and no said undergarments shall be showing, i.e., no bra straps should be showing.

## **SECTION V. EXPENSES**

Any and all uniforms, shirts, wind suits, etc. that are required by the coach/sponsors will be at the expense of the individual squad member. (An estimated list of expenses is presented before try-outs) Uniforms and accessories that the school provides will be property of the school. The squad member must pay for any damage or loss of these items. Other expenses may include but are not limited to cheer bags, items for goodie bags, hair ribbon, camp fees, items for donation and holiday gift exchange items. Uniform and Camp fees must be paid in full by the deadline specified.

## Uniform Expense & Deadline Information

The Pep Squad fee is **\$500** and includes the following items:

Uniform: Performance top, skirt, shell, shoes, poms, bag, jacket, and practice t-shirt.  
Miscellaneous – the fee will also cover food before games, transportation to away/playoff games and other activities planned throughout the school year.

There will be a **uniform fitting on August 27<sup>th</sup>** at 3:15 pm in the school auxiliary gym.  
The full balance of \$500 will be due at this time.

All payments must be made by cash, check, or money order with phone number and address printed on the check or money order. If a check is returned the parent/guardian is responsible for payment and the bank fees incurred. **ALL FEES MUST BE PAID ACCORDING TO THE SCHEDULE ABOVE. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE. IF FEES ARE NOT PAID BY THE ABOVE DATES, YOUR CHILD WILL BE RELEASED FROM THE TEAM.**

I have read the YDMS Spirit Group Constitution and I understand the rules it includes. I will adhere to the Constitution and help support the cheerleading or dance squad by following the rules and ensuring that my child follows them. I agree that I will comply with the financial and time commitment as stated in the Constitution and try-out packet.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I have read the YDMS Spirit Group Constitution and I understand the rules of being on the squad. I will adhere to the Constitution and help support the cheerleading and dance squad by following the rules.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date