

# Weslaco Independent School District



## Cheerleader Constitution





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## Mission Statement

### POLICY AE

The Texas Legislature has mandated that “a primary purpose of public school curriculum in Texas shall be prepare thoughtful, active citizens who understand the importance of patriotism and can function productivity in a free society with appreciation for the basic democratic values of our state and nation heritage.”

The mission of the Weslaco Independent School district is to utilize instructional, support, managerial, and community resources to educate all students to function successfully in a changing society.

The commitment merges an academic focus with a development of civic responsibility and interpersonal relationships.

## Goals

### POLICY AF, EA

All students shall acquire the necessary knowledge base, communication skills and problem solving abilities through a variety of educational and social experiences so as to function successfully in a dynamic interactive world.

All students shall demonstrate a respect for themselves and others by maintaining physical and mental health, fostering positive family and other social relations, and making responsible personal decisions.

All students shall view their education positively by demonstrating behavior that will maximize their success in school.

## Preface

This document, prepared in collaboration with the District's high school and middle school principals, sponsors, and cheerleaders/mascots, is for the purpose of providing guidelines pertinent to the cheerleader/mascot program.

Participation in the cheerleader/mascot organization promotes self-confidence and develops student leadership skills. Students must accept many additional responsibilities and commit to excellence to realize the purposes and objectives of the organization. Student success in the classroom and within the cheerleader/mascot organization is an underlying goal. Communication and a strong partnership between the home and the school are of utmost importance.

Information on activities and opportunities, as well as grading systems, procedures, rules and regulations specific to individual campuses, may be obtained from each school cheerleader/mascot sponsor and/ or principal. Additional sources of information include the District's (campus) publications entitled Student Handbook. Parents with questions or concerns should first contact the cheerleader/mascot sponsor and then the principal/designee.

## Motto

We, the cheerleaders of Weslaco I.S.D., in order to promote a better balanced and respectful organization, select qualified members, and elevate school spirit, in ideals of friendship, fair play, and loyalty, do ordain, and establish this constitution of the Weslaco I.S.D. Cheerleaders.

## Purpose

- A. A cheerleader's first responsibility is to her academic program. Participating in cheerleading should not interfere with the educational process.
- B. The primary function of this cheerleading program is to support interscholastic activities and promote school spirit and leadership throughout the year.
- C. This cheerleading squad has the responsibility to uphold, to reflect, and to project the goals and ideals of its school and community.
- D. If the cheerleading squad engages in cheerleading gymnastics and competitive programs, it should adopt and execute a comprehensive safety program.

## Article I

## Name

The name of the organization will be according to each Weslaco I.S.D. Middle and High School campus. (i.e., Cuellar M.S., Central M.S., B.Garza M.S., M. Hoge M.S., W.E.H.S., W.H.S. Cheerleaders.)

## Article II

## Membership

### Section 1 – Eligibility for Tryouts

- A. Tryouts are held in the spring.
- B. To tryout, for a Middle School squad, a candidate must have an overall average of 75 or better for the fall semester in all core subject areas. A **High School candidate** must have an **overall average of 70 or better on all subjects** for the **fall semester**. ***A 60 or above for all Pre-AP, AP and CC classes.***
- C. A candidate cannot have more **than 5 absences** for any period of the school day for the **fall semester prior to tryouts**. Any exceptions must be approved by the advisor(s) and the principal. Such exceptions can only be considered if absences are caused by circumstances beyond the control of the candidate or parents.
- D. Candidates must present a physical form from a medical doctor verifying that he/she is in good physical condition and is able to participate in vigorous physical activities.
- E. Candidates must turn in all medical forms, report cards, and parent permission forms at a designated time given by the advisor(s) prior to tryouts. Parents must sign the parent permission form stating that they have read the constitution and agree to give the candidate permission to participate.
- F. A written statement giving an approximate cost for cheerleading involvement shall be given to the parents whose children are trying out for cheerleader. This statement must be signed and returned to the advisor (s).
- G. To ensure uniformity, the advisor(s) shall specify the dress code for tryouts.
- H. Due to safety issues, candidates who are currently pregnant are not eligible to tryout.
- I. Candidates with an outstanding balance from any organization, club, or the school in general must clear their account prior to tryouts. At principal's discretion, arrangements may be made to clear outstanding balances.
- J. Candidates must not have been expelled or assigned to an Alternative Education Program (AEP) for the current school year.

## Section 2 – Elections: The advisor(s) organizes elections

- A. High School and Middle School Cheerleaders will be selected by a panel of three outside judges. Tryouts are open to both males and females.
- B. Each candidate must participate in the prescribed tryouts and meet all requirements stated in Article II, section 1.
- C. The order of tryouts will be determined by the drawing of numbers. Candidates will be identified by a number only throughout the tryouts.
- D. The advisor(s) will select three neutral judges to be approved by the school principal. The judges cannot be affiliated with school district, the school or candidates.
- E. The advisor(s) and principal will determine the location for tryouts. It is recommended that the school's gymnasium be used for this purpose.
- F. Tryouts will be closed.
- G. Video taping of tryouts will not be allowed.
- H. In case of a tie, the participants will be called back to perform individual cheers. The judge's decision will break the tie. It is recommended that several participants be asked to perform. This would keep the two candidates from being concerned as to why they alone are singled out.
- I. Any candidate injured during tryouts or prior to tryouts and is unable to perform cannot tryout.
- J. School personnel will tabulate the judges' scores and will give the results to the principal or his designee. **The judges' decision is final.**
- K. The competition results will be announced on the same day as tryouts.

## Section 3- Membership Size of Squads

- A. The High School varsity squad will consist of no more than 20 female/male members. **The squad will only consist of students from the eleventh and twelfth grade classes who receive the highest number of points.**
- B. The Junior Varsity squad will consist of twelve cheerleaders, unless overruled by the school principal. **The squad will consist of tenth grade.**
- C. The freshman squad, selected at the end of their eighth grade year, will consist of no more than twelve cheerleaders. **The squad will only consist of incoming freshman.**



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- D. **The Middle School Squads will consist of only eighteen (18) members and one mascot from each campus. The squad will consist of students from the incoming 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> classes.**
- E. The mascot will be selected through the use of neutral judges as specified in the selection of cheerleaders. This selection process will be used if more than the desired number of candidates is interested in the position. This position is open to any male or female student. The mascot will be considered a member of the cheerleading squad; therefore, he/she is subject to the same rules and regulations. The mascot does not count towards the squad limit.

### **Section 4 – General Scholastic Requirements:**

#### **All Cheerleaders and the mascot must meet the following standards:**

- A. Once a candidate becomes a member of a squad, the grades necessary for participation will be governed by TEA and UIL rules.
- B. **All members must be enrolled in the cheerleading class throughout the year, if it is offered.**

### **Section 5 – Financial Obligation**

- A. All cost of uniforms and accessories will be paid by the members.
- B. All cheerleaders must pay required deposit by the specified date in order for their uniforms to be ordered. Also, all cheerleaders must pay for their account in full by the specified date or forfeit performances.
- C. Any member who drops out or is removed from the organization is financially obligated for all orders placed. **No refunds or cancellations on orders placed ahead of removal from the squad will be issued.**
- D. It is the responsibility of the cheerleader to reimburse the school for any lost cheerleading accessories that were purchased by the school.
- E. All cheerleaders must replace lost or stolen personal items that complete the uniform.
- F. Maximum required to pay may vary plus cost for summer camp.

### **Section 6 – Resignation/Termination**

Any member who resigns or is terminated will no longer be eligible to participate in any cheerleading function during the year.

## Section 7 – Cheerleading Season

- A. The cheerleading season ends in May; therefore, full participation is required.
- B. All practices are considered cheerleading activities and attendance is mandatory. Exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the advisors.

## Article III                      Cheerleading Captains

### Section 1 – Qualifications/Election

- A. High School Squads: There will be one captain, one co-captain.
- B. There will be one captain and one co-captain for the junior varsity squad and one captain and co-captain for the freshman squad.
- C. The captains will be chosen by the advisor(s)

#### **Captains will be chosen by advisor(s) based on:**

- 1/3 scores, 1/3 advisor(s), 1/3 squad vote
- A member of the squad the previous year.
- Junior and Senior
- GPA 80 or above

**\*\*\* Advisor(s) makes final decision. All decisions are final**

#### **D. Middle School Squads:**

There will be one captain and one co-captain for the squad. An additional co-captain may be added depending on the size of the squad and at the advisor's discretion.

#### **E. The Captain must be:**

- a. A person who was a member of the cheerleading squad the previous year.
- b. Voted in by the advisors, members of the squad, teacher evaluations and the judges' rating sheets. The score will be comprised as follows: ¼ advisor, ¼ squad, ¼ tryout rank, and ¼ teacher evaluations. A maximum of five teacher evaluations may be used.

## Section 2 – Captain/Co-Captain Duties and Responsibilities:

The duties and responsibilities of the captain will be to:

- A. Work closely with the advisors to organize practices, performances, and any cheerleading squad activities.
- B. Make sure that all members are informed of all activities and the proper attire for said activities.
- C. Make all decisions with the assistance of the members. The final authority rests with the advisors.
- D. Make sure that all pep rallies are planned in advance. Give a copy of each program to the principal, coach, band director, advisor(s), and any other person(s) asked to participate in the pep rally. The program must be ready at least two days before the pep rally.
- E. Issue infractions to herself and to any member not conforming to this constitution in any way. The advisor must approve infractions.
- F. Make sure that all members help in returning equipment to the proper person(s) and/or place after games, pep rallies, or any cheerleader sponsored activity.
- G. Call for group vote in case of disagreements with in the squad. The advisor(s) will have the final authority.
- H. Begin all practices promptly at the designated time.
- I. A captain may be removed from her position if she is academically ineligible for a six weeks period.
- J. The co-captain will assist the captain and will take on the captain's responsibilities when she is not present.

## Article IV

## Uniforms and Accessories

### Section 1 – Uniforms

#### High School Squads:

- A. The decision of the design of the uniform will be by the majority vote. The final decision the uniform will come from the advisor(s).

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### **Middle School Squads:**

The final decision of the design of the uniform will be made by the advisor(s).

- B. All uniforms will be made by the same person or company.
- C. No part of the uniform is to be worn except for games, pep-rallies, or other cheerleader sponsored activities unless permission is granted by the advisor(s).
- D. Accessories may consist of one pair of pompoms for each squad member, a megaphone, a personal bag, practice/game shoes, body suits, camp wear socks, and bows.

## Article V      Meetings, Practices, and Activities

### **Section 1 – Cheerleading Meetings and Practices**

- A. If during the day of a game a member is absent for more than half of that day, he/she will not be allowed to cheer or perform unless the absence is excused.
- B. Practices shall start promptly. The penalty for tardiness, unless excused by the advisor(s), will be the same as that for any other class.
- C. If the members of the squad are participants of other organizations, they are expected to put cheerleading first. Other activities must not interfere with practice sessions; games, pep rallies, or any other cheerleading sponsored activities. Exceptions will be reviewed by the advisor(s) on case-by-case basis.
- D. All members are required to attend the summer cheerleading camp as a squad. The cheerleading camp is selected by the advisor(s) and approved by the principal. Any members unable to attend the summer cheerleading camp must have prior approval from the advisor(s). Failure to attend two or more summer practices will exclude the cheerleader from performing during the summer camp pompom routine.
- E. Required summer practices will be designated by the advisor and approved by the principal. Any member unable to meet the summer practice schedule must receive prior approval from the advisor(s). Dismissal from the squad may result if missed sessions have not been approved by the advisor(s).
- F. Due to safety precautions, all attempts should be made to hold practice at appropriate school facilities.
- G. During the regular term (August through May), cheerleading practice shall be limited to a maximum of eight hours per week outside the school day. The school day is defined as beginning at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 3:00 p.m.; the school week is defined as 7:30 a.m. Monday to 3:00 p.m. Friday.
- H. During the summer, cheerleading practice should be limited to a maximum of ten hours per week.

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### Section 2 – Transportation & Attendance

- A. All members must ride to and from all scheduled out-of-town activities as a group. In case of a conflict, the principal will intervene and a decision will be made.
- B. Attendance is required at all meetings, practices, and cheerleader sponsored activities.
- C. The members of the squad will cheer at all activities as needed.
- D. All members must be at the activity location a minimum of thirty minutes before game time unless the advisor approves the time change.
- E. Each member of the squad must give full cooperation to the captain as well as to the other members in all projects, games and activities.
- F. When the cheerleading squad conducts fund raising projects, attendance and participation are required by all members.

### Section 3 – Excused Absences (Please call advisor(s) ahead of time)

- A. Absences from meetings, practice sessions, performances or other activities are excused for:
  - a. An absence from school on that day.
  - b. Personal illness
  - c. Death or serious illness in the immediate family.
- B. Reasons for absences must be in writing, signed by the parent and given to the advisor(s) on the school day after the absence, otherwise the absence will be unexcused and will affect your grade.

## Article VI                      Termination

### Section 1 – HIGH SCHOOL:

#### THE FOLLOWING MAY RESULT IN TERMINATION FROM THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR:

- A. Three (3) unexcused absences from a practice session and/or cheerleader function
- B. Excessive absences (5 per semester)
- C. Accumulation of ten (10) cheerleader demerits due to lack of performance or lack of participation as required by the organization.
- D. Suspension of three(3) games.

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E. Failing any two six weeks.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

A. Unwilling to submit to the authority of the advisor and captain or co-captain.

B. Unexcused absences from a practice session and/or cheerleader function.

C. Failure to assume responsibilities or carry out cheerleading assignments.

D. Failure to maintain proper decorum.

E. Ineligible for two consecutive six (6) weeks due to failing grades in one (1) or more classes.

F. Excessive absences (more than eight (8) absences per semester).

G. Accumulation of cheerleader demerits due to lack of performance or lack of participation as required by the organization.

### **Section 2 – Permanent Dismissal**

**THE FOLLOWING WILL RESULT IN PERMANENT DISMISSAL FROM THE ORGANIZATION. FURTHERMORE, NO INDIVIDUAL WILL BE ALLOWED TO TRYOUT FOR ANY W.I.S.D. CHEERLEADING SQUAD FOR THE FOLLOWING SCHOOL YEAR.**

A. Becoming pregnant (safety first)

B. Placement in AEP (guidance center)

C. Placement in ISS for 4 days.

D. Expulsion

E. Disorderly conduct/behavior towards administration, staff and/or advisor(s).

F. Showing up to a practice or any event under the influence or drugs and/or alcohol.

G. Charged and convicted for possession/under the influence of a controlled substance or alcohol on or off campus.

H. Three violations of Level II General Misconduct Violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

**DISMISSAL PROCEDURES WILL ADHERE TO DISTRICT DUE PROCESS POLICY. ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL AND THERE WILL BE NO APPEALS.**

### **Section 3 – Compliance**

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Any member of the WISD Cheerleading Squad, serving as a cheerleader, will comply with the rules and regulations of this constitution and/or accept the consequences as written in this constitution. DEDUCTION OF POINTS (DEMERITS WILL BE ISSUED), REFERRALS, BEING BENCHED AT GAMES, OR SUSSPENSIONS.

### Cheerleader RULES

#### A. CHEERLEADER MUST:

1. Be prepared to cheer.
2. Be on time.
3. Be spirited and cheerful.
4. Put forth a “good face”- do not let the public see your troubles.
5. Be at attention while in formations- do not wave or talk to public.
6. Not chat with each other while in formation.

#### B. CHEERLEADER MUST ALSO:

1. Be neat and well groomed.
2. Wear clean-pressed uniform and clean shoes.
3. Wear appropriate accessories (bows, etc.) with uniform.
4. Wear proper day uniform.
5. Have hair held back from face in a secure ponytail.
6. Not wear jewelry with uniform
7. Keep nails trim.
8. Not chew gum at any performance, practice, or activity.

**C. CHEERLEADER MUST:**

1. Be respectful and responsible.
2. Not use profanity.
3. Be attentive when captain or advisor(s) is giving instructions
4. Not leave a game, practice session or any required activity without permission from advisor(s).
5. Participate with minimum requirements of fundraisers.
6. Turn in money on due date.
7. Not wear all or part of the uniform without advisor(s) permission.
8. Not lend uniform parts to non-members.
9. Do an equal share of work to keep cheerleading running smoothly.
10. Be responsible for your actions.

**Section 4 – Extenuating Circumstances**

After considering the circumstances, if the breach of conduct is judged by advisor(s) and principal to be serious enough, a member may be dismissed from the organization.

**Section 5 – Demerits**

1. A demerit will be given to cheerleaders not following rules and regulations of cheerleading. One demerit for each offense will be given each time a rule is broken or conduct is disruptive.
2. Two demerits will be given for not attending a practice of cheerleading event. Exceptions will be reviewed by the advisor(s) on a case-by-case basis.
3. Cheerleaders will be allowed a maximum of three demerits per week. The fourth demerit will mean loss of performance for the week. The demerit occurs at the end of the week, consequence will carry over for the following week. If it is absolutely crucial for the team member to perform a routine, the cheerleader will perform only that routine, and sit out the rest of the performance.
4. A cheerleader will be informed when receiving a demerit.
5. Demerits will be given by the sponsor only, but can be brought to the attention of the sponsor by any member of the squad.
6. Demerits will be given the first time, and every time the offenses are committed, as the cheerleader should be familiar with all the rules, regulations and discipline laws of cheerleading.



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7. Once a cheerleader has accumulated fifteen demerits, dismissal procedures will begin in accordance to district due process policy. Expectation will be viewed by the advisor and principal on a case-by-case basis.

## Article VII    CHEERLEADING COMPETITION: HIGH SCHOOL

### Section 1 – Regional and National Competition:

#### HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS:

- A. Advisor(s) and principal approval is given
- B. Final approval rests with the WISD School Board.
- C. In order to qualify for national competition, the cheerleading squad must receive a bid rating at the regional competition. Cost to and from the national competition site and all expenses incurred will be the responsibility of each individual participant and the participant's parents.