



COACHES

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# CREATING A CHEER SQUAD CONSTITUTION

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Before the first day of tryouts begins, each potential candidate should know exactly what to expect from the upcoming season. A cheerleader constitution or contract will provide general information and goals of the program, as well as what is expected of individuals who wish to participate.

Schedule a parent meeting the week before tryout to present the constitution to the parents and potential cheerleaders. Go over the constitution in detail, and answer any questions they may have. Make sure this form is signed by both the athlete and his/her parent before the athlete can try out for the team.

Looking to revamp your squad's constitution? Here is a general list of topics that you should cover to make sure that everyone knows what you expect from them and what they (and their parents) should expect from you in the upcoming season. Make sure to present this constitution to your administration for approval prior to its use!

## PURPOSE

Begin with a mission statement that explains that the primary purpose of the cheerleading squad is to support athletics at the institution.

## TRYOUTS

Explain in detail the clinic information, what is required to be eligible for the squad, what skills will be evaluated, and the selection process.

## PRACTICES AND GAMES

Estimate the average number of practices per week and the average time of practice, so working students can plan around them. A good suggestion is to provide a monthly calendar, so schedules can be made in advance. Include number of excused/unexcused absences and the consequences of exceeding the allowance and any summer practices, so parents can plan their summer vacations around them. State that all practices, games, and competitions will be supervised by the coach, assistant, or a designated school official. Squad members are not released to practice stunts, pyramids or gymnastics without the direct supervision of the coach, assistant, or a designated school official.

## SAFETY REGULATIONS

State that the squad will follow accepted cheerleading safety guidelines and provide a copy of those guidelines to each member of the team.

## SUMMER CAMP

Note that the squad will be attending a summer training camp, and that the dates and location of the camp will be determined immediately following tryouts, if that has not already been determined.

## EXPECTED BEHAVIORS AND STANDARDS

If your school has a "Code of Conduct" for students, this section should state that students must abide by these rules.



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## **COMPETITION**

If you participate in competitions, state how much time will be devoted to this activity and that the purpose of competition is to provide a place to recognize the efforts of the cheerleaders and their athleticism.

## **FUNDRAISING/COST OF THE SEASON**

Be specific in this section what costs may be incurred throughout the season and how each cheerleader is expected to pay for them. List fundraisers you plan to organize to raise these funds, and state your attendance policy for these fundraisers. Also include how you plan to appropriate funds to cheerleaders who participate in squad fundraisers.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Explain your school's transportation policy. In many cases, if the school provides transportation, or if the squad travels with qualified drivers in a caravan from the school to the away game and back again, the cheerleaders are covered by the school's catastrophic insurance. If cheerleaders do not travel in this manner, they may not be covered!

## **DISCIPLINE -- SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL POLICY**

Explain what qualifies as a reason for suspension or dismissal from the squad. These may include: dropping below a certain G.P.A., unexcused absences, stunting without a coach present, use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol, conviction of a crime, etc. Conversely, state your policy for cheerleaders who choose to quit the team. Some coaches do not allow a cheerleader who quits the team to try out the following year.

## **ACCEPTANCE**

Have each cheerleader sign below a statement like this: "I have read and understand the above policies for participation on the cheerleading squad, and I accept them as governing my participation."