Stephen F. Austin

High School

Cheer Handbook



2021-2022

Coach: Brianna Gutierrez & Angel Cooper

*These guidelines apply to members of all Austin High School cheerleading squads, grades 9 – 12, including mascots. The guidelines provide a necessary framework to aid in developing a successful cheerleading squad and provide information about expectations for membership on the cheerleading squad.*

AHS Cheerleader Requirements

*The responsibilities outlined below are aligned with and in addition to the FBISD cheer handbook attendance and participation requirements.*

Welcome to the 2021-2022 Austin High School Cheerleading Program! We are excited to have you and look forward to a great year.At this point in time, you are under the guidance and policies governed by the AHS Cheer Coaches, FBISD Cheer Handbook, AHS Student Code of Conduct, FBISD Extracurricular Handbook and the AHS Cheer Handbook. You will be held accountable to all rules, requirements, expectations and policies from this point forward.

It is important that FBISD cheer members realize the level of commitment that is necessary to make a team successful. Attendance at all games and cheer events is not only crucial, but also mandatory. Absences jeopardize the entire squad and hinder success.

* Attending all practices, games, events, pep rallies, and fundraising activities is mandatory.
* Work or other team practices are not an excuse to miss cheer events!
* If a cheerleader foresees she/he will miss an event, **she/he must fill out the Cheer Conflict Microsoft Form at least 48 hours in advance**. Demerits will be given if the coach is not notified prior.
* Emergency situations should be discussed with the coach.
* An absence to a game/event will only be considered excused in the following circumstances:
* ***School Related Activity*** *– A written 48‐hour notification to the coach signed by the school official.*
* ***Family Death*** *– Verbal communication to the coach by parent/guardian followed by written notification.*
* ***Illness*** *– Verbal communication to the coach from the parent, followed by written notification, even if the child was not in school. If a cheerleader does not feel well enough to participate, the coach has the discretion to send the child home under an excused absence.*
* ***Doctor Appointments*** *– With written 48‐hour notification to coach signed by parent/guardian.*
* ***Religious Holidays*** – *will be excused from any count. Verbal communication to the Cheer Coach by the parent is required.*

\**It is the coach’s discretion which absences will be considered excused*

**Cheerleader Duties and Requirements**

* Cheer at required sporting contests and events as mandated by coach
* Cheer at pep rallies
* Attend summer cheer camp
* Attend socials and team bonding events
* Dress up for spirit themes
* Participate in fundraisers
* UIL Competition and events
* Exercise/ conditioning
* Maintain and progress tumbling skills
* Mandatory afterschool practices (TBA)

AHS Cheer Expectations

*A cheerleader may receive demerits(s) for breaking these expectations & other items listed in Cheer Handbook*

**General expectations:**

|  |
| --- |
| * Respect all team members and coaches * Be a positive role model * Have a positive attitude * Cooperation and good sportsmanship * Respect ALL members of AHS faculty and staff * Remain focused during games, practices, pep rallies, and other events * Abide by all FBISD Cheer Handbook   policies and rules   * Responsible use of social media * Responsibility to read communication from coach(s) * Be prepared for games/ practices/ events * Tattoos must be covered while in uniform * Cell phone use is prohibited during games, pep rallies, class, practice, and other events. * Maintain good academic standing * NO PDA * NO smoking, alcohol, drugs * Responsible use of social media * Notify coach if sick, absent from school, or if missing an event in timely manner * 5-minute changing time- This means you have 5-minutes after the tardy bell rings to be completely dressed, OUT of the locker room/restroom, and READY for class/practice to begin. * There will be times when cheerleaders must meet requirements determined by coach to participate in pep rallies, away games and/or other performances. Coaches will determine which cheerleaders will attend these functions. |

**Uniform:**

* All cheerleaders are expected to maintain their uniforms with care. When in uniform, cheerleaders should refrain from the following:
* Chewing gum
* Long fingernails
* Wearing jewelry
* Wrong socks
* Missing hair bow
* Wearing dirty uniform (this includes shoes and socks)
* No wearing your uniform outside of scheduled school events
* Do not allow peers to wear any part of the cheer uniform. This includes jackets, sweat pants, hoodies, team shirts, practice clothing, etc.
* Cheerleaders that receive a school owned uniform must maintain the uniform in good condition
* Cheerleaders are monetarily responsible for the up keep and maintenance of their school owned equipment
* School owned uniform should be returned to the coach at the end of the season, failure to do so may result in fines.

**Game Day Guidelines**

* AHS Cheerleaders will arrive to games as a team
* AHS Cheerleaders must be in full uniform
* Pre-game is designated for practice and warm up
* If a cheerleader is deemed to be unfit to perform by the coach, whether due to injury, inadequate knowledge of cheers or dance, not 100% in uniform, or any other issue, the cheerleader may be asked to sit out at the discretion of the coach.
* All participants must remain on the sidelines for the entire game. No sitting in the stands during the game.
* During games, cheerleaders are to stay in formation and in cheer-ready position at all times.
* All cell phones must be put away in cheer bag during the game
* During Halftime, cheerleaders are allowed to take pictures with family and friends, eat a snack, check cell phones and use the restroom
* Cheerleaders are required to return to sideline positions with 5 minutes remaining on the clock
* Tardiness to the sidelines after halftime will result in conditioning

**Junior Varsity**

* JV cheerleaders will be required to cheer at some Varsity games, decided by coach(s), administration, athletic coordinators

**Varsity**

* Varsity cheerleaders will be required to cheer at some JV games, decided by the coach(s), administration, athletic coordinators

**Lettering Requirements**

* Only Varsity cheerleaders are eligible to letter.
* Cheerleaders must successfully cheer at 75% Varsity football games in order to be eligible to letter.

**Senior Cheerleaders:**

* Senior cheerleaders are required to facilitate with the 2022-2023 tryout material, clinics, mock tryouts with the assistance of the coach(s)
* Senior cheerleaders are required to assist on the official FBISD Cheer Tryout date in Spring 2023.

**Captain Positions (Varsity/Junior Varsity)**

The role of a cheer captain is to assist the coach(s) in reaching goals and visions of the AHS Cheer program. Outstanding captains are the backbone of the team and we work together to be the very best we can be. Coach(s) will turn to captains for their opinions in many areas, but ultimate decision making is made by coach(s), administration, athletic coordinators based on what is best for the program. A captain is a role model for the team. A captain must be compliant with the FBISD and AHS Cheer Handbook, supportive of coach(s) decisions, maintain good character, and be a leader outside of AHS. It is an honor to be a captain, but it also requires added responsibilities and continual sacrifice.

**Captain Responsibilities**

* Motivate and inspire AHS Cheerleaders to do their best
* Communicating with coach(s) for the team
* Supporting AHS Cheerleaders and holding them accountable for their behavior/ actions in and outside of school.
* Providing a safe and effective practice
* Teaching and critiquing cheers, dances, stunts, jumps, and other cheer techniques
* Brainstorming ideas for new cheer materials
* Leading the team at sporting events and other required events

**Captain Tryouts**

In order to try out for captain:

* Must be have served one year on the team
* Must not be on probation at any time during the school year
* Must be financially paid off by tryout date.
* Must complete the requirements in the Captain Tryout Packet

**Termination of Captains**

* Failure of a captain to set a proper example and follow the guidelines and expectations of the AHS Handbook and/or FBISD handbook.
* Becomes ineligible by UIL standards
* A captain can lose their title as captain for any inappropriate actions/events that the coach(s) see fit

**Stunting Without Approval**

For safety purposes, all stunting must be approved in advance by the coach. No stunting is permitted without a coach in attendance.

**Inappropriate Behavior / Disrespect**

Cheerleaders are expected to be role models and ambassadors of goodwill for their school and follow the Profile of a Graduate. Therefore, all cheerleaders are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior. The following shall be considered inappropriate behavior and subject to discipline:

* PDA – Public Display of Affection
* Report of misconduct by other teachers, administrators, and/or parents
* Distractions during practice/game/pep rallies
* Non-spirited attitude
* Unsportsmanlike conduct
* Disobedient behavior

**Unexcused Absence**

An unexcused absence is defined as the failure to attend any scheduled cheerleading activity as determined by the coach without prior and proper permission from the coach. Any outside activity, including a job and/or participating on another cheer squad, is an invalid reason for missing a scheduled cheerleading activity. Vacations should be scheduled around summer activities, camps, and practices.

* After school practices
* Saturday practices
* Games
* Pep rallies
* Cheerleading fund raisers
* Cheerleading community projects
* Leaving or arriving halfway through practice
* Any other scheduled activity by Cheer Coach.

**Social Media**

Cheerleaders are representatives of their school and community. Being an Austin High School Cheerleader requires members to exercise good judgement in their use of social media websites, and to conduct these activities in a responsible and respectful manner. It is impermissible for a cheerleader to post information, photos, or other representations of sexual content, inappropriate behavior (e.g., drug or alcohol use), inappropriate language, or items that could be interpreted as demeaning or inflammatory. It is not permissible to comment on injuries, any decision made by the coach, or team matters that could reasonably be expected to be confidential to team members. Threatening language, cyber bullying, pictures of illegal/ irresponsible acts could face discipline for violation of the standard as an AHS Student-Athlete.

**Parent Expectations**

* Attend cheerleading parent meetings.
* Sign and return all paperwork on time.
* Support your cheerleaders throughout the year.
* Read, sign and abide by rules of the cheerleading parent contract.
* If a parent at any time would like to meet with a coach in regards to cheerleading skills, performance, policies and procedures, or squad conflicts please contact the coach to request a meeting. It is important to not approach the coach at practices or events since our attention needs to be on our athletes at all times. Please make the coach aware of the purpose of the conversation. The coach has the option to invite other coaches and athletic director to the meeting to ensure a positive outcome.
* Confidentiality between coach, parent and athlete is upheld and respected at all times.

Austin High School Cheer Financial Responsibilities

* Payment schedules may be set up with Coach(s)
* All cheer members must be current with the payment schedules
* Any cheer member not current with payments may result in missing cheer events
  + In the event that a cheer account is not current, permanent suspension is at the discretion of the coach and administration. In that case, the cheer member will still be responsible for the amount due to their program.
* Cheer members that owe a balance on their account, will not be eligible to try out for the following year until balance is paid in full
* NO personal checks will be accepted
* Acceptable forms of payment include: RevTrak(extra fees apply), Money Orders, cashier’s check
* A late payment may be instituted if the pay schedule is not met
* Cheer members who quit, resign or are dismissed from a team, may or may not be responsible for unpaid balances. Items that are not able to be returned must be paid for by the cheer member.

Payment Deadlines for 2021-2022

After fitting dates, each member will receive an invoice from the coaches for your personal payment responsibilities. Below is an **ESTIMATE** for general expenses.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Payment | Due Date | Amount |
| 1st Payment | **April 23, 2021** | $250 (Camp/ Camp Wear/ Uniform) |
| 2nd Payment | **May 14, 2021** | $250(Camp Wear & Uniforms) |
| Final Payment | On or before **June 4, 2021** | TBD by your final balance total |

\*\* You may pay in full any time before June 4, 2021\*\*

*\*Please review & understand the FBISD policy regarding payment expectations & consequences for not staying current. The FBISD Cheer Handbook states, “All cheer members must be current with their payment schedule. Not being current may result in missing cheer events or games. In the event that a cheer account is not current, permanent suspension may result at the discretion of the coach and administration. In that case, the cheer member will still be responsible for the amount due to their program.”*

Austin High School Cheer Guidelines and Expectations Verification Form

2021-2022

After you have read and understood the policies and expectations, please sign the form below and return it to the coach by the given due date. Signing the form shows you have read and understood the policies and expectations outlined in the Austin High School Cheer Handbook.

We, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

(Cheerleader) (Parent/Guardian)

have read and agree to follow the Austin High School Cheer Guidelines and Expectations for the 2021-2022 school year.

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Cheerleader Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Cheerleader Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_