

WELCOME

This is an exciting time of the year! When a young lady becomes an SCS Cheerleader, her entire family becomes involved as supporters, spectators, and helpers. Being on the Cheer Team makes many demands upon the family in terms of time, money, and emotional involvement, but we are confident you will find it a rewarding and enriching experience for all of you.

Purpose: The purpose of the SCS Cheerleader is to create and promote loyal school spirit, encourage quality performance and high academic standards. Through the development of spirit and cheer technique, leadership, cooperation, self-discipline, and sportsmanship in each individual athlete, the SCS cheerleaders will encourage their student body and their community through support in the promotion of athletic events and activities which will inspire the athletes to perform to the best of their ability.

Commitment: Cheer is a FULL year commitment. All members, including seniors, are required to participate the entire school year. Family schedules may sometimes have to be adjusted to accommodate Cheer commitments. This is a team activity, so each girl must be present and on time for practices, games, performances, and other cheer team events. Parents are asked to volunteer to work on various events like helping with pep-rallies, and perhaps most important, to attend as many of their daughter's performances as possible.

Cost: Every effort is made to keep expenses reasonable, but there are considerable costs associated with the Cheer Team.

Communication: Each girl will have her triumphs and disappointments on the Cheer Team, and the love and support of her family will be important to her. Celebrate her triumphs – she has worked hard to earn them. Console her disappointments, but remember that learning to deal with frustration and pressures are part of her maturation process. Your positive attitude will influence your daughter's reaction to her experiences. You and your daughter should always address your concerns and suggestions to the coach. Many problems arise from simple misunderstandings, and there are always improvements to be made, so communication is the only way to affect a solution. As each girl is a part of the Cheer Team family, it is important that we respect each person's individuality while recognizing that we must consider what is best for the whole. What might not be a problem for one person could be difficult for another, so we must be willing to "give and take" for the sake of the team. By working together, we will have a wonderful Cheer Team family!

All Southwest Christian Cheerleaders must adhere to the following articles in addition to the Athletic Guidelines, as they apply. It must be understood that as a member of this organization, the student becomes a representative of Southwest Christian School and each member must maintain high moral and ethical standards.

Southwest Christian School

Cheerleading Guidelines and Procedures

2016-2017

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a framework for the cheerleading program at SCS. The intent is to help students grow in the program through a positive, athletic-based experience.

ARTICLE I- Purpose

1. Promote and uphold school spirit
2. Develop good sportsmanship
3. Cheer at scheduled SCS games and events
4. Represent the school as ethical leaders
5. Model of respect for classmates, teachers and other cheerleaders
6. Develop and grow in skills
7. Represent SCS at annual TAPPS competition

ARTICLE II-Members

Section A – Membership Eligibility

1. Tryouts
 - a. Returning cheerleaders must have fulfilled the current year's obligations and be in good standing.
 - b. All prospective members must be registered to attend SCS for the upcoming school year. New students signing up must have completed the application process to attend SCS for the following year. Once an applicant has received acceptance into SCS and has completed the other eligibility requirements, she will be then be considered a cheerleader.
 - c. All cheer candidates must be registered with SCS and cheer by the last day of school in May in order to be considered a member of the cheer squad for the next school year.
 - d. All prospective members must fill out the online information by announced deadlines in order to be eligible.
 - e. No candidate shall have a chronic display of misconduct or absences beyond the allowed number per class per semester. Students who have one "U" or two "N"s in citizenship are not eligible to sign up for cheer team.
 - f. Parent/guardian(s) must attend the orientation meeting or contact the director for an appointment prior to the deadline for membership.
 - g. All candidates for membership must also turn in a copy of their report card by announced date.

Section B-Membership Clinic

1. Cheer Clinic will be held on a date designated by the coach and spirit department.
2. Candidates will be evaluated by a panel of qualified judges .
3. Evaluations & the week long clinic will be closed to the public.
4. There will be a coaches evaluation based on previous year for all current members and the weeklong clinic for all prospective members.
5. Attire
 - a. Clinic days: solid shorts (any color), cheer shoes or tennis shoes, t-shirt. Hair up and out of face. No jewelry.
 - b. Tryout day: solid black shorts, plain white t-shirt, cheer shoes or tennis shoes, white socks, hair in a clean ponytail out of their face, and tryout number. A bow may be worn. No jewelry.
6. Material
 - a. Each candidate will perform one cheer, one dance, one chant, jumps, standing tumbling, and running tumbling.
 - b. Skills shown at evaluations are expected to be perform throughout the entire cheer year
7. It is highly encouraged to attend cheer clinic all days to get all material taught.

Section C – Membership Requirements/Eligibility to Participate

1. Members will participate in all activities in which the organization is involved, whether it is performance, or school and community related events.
2. Participation is for the entire cheerleading year which starts the week after tryouts until next season's tryouts.
3. *Cheerleaders are expected to represent the school with integrity, honesty, and morality.* Less that admirable behavior will not be tolerated. If at any time the coach feels that a cheerleader is no longer representing herself, her squad, or her school in a manner that is acceptable, disciplinary action will result.
4. Cheerleaders are expected to maintain squad business and discussions in **confidence**. The privacy of the squad must be maintained at all times.
5. Each cheerleader must have a physical exam on file prior the start of any squad practices. Students that do not have all the correct paperwork on file with the athletic department will **not** be allowed to practice until this has been cleared. Information will be sent out to all families after tryouts are complete.
6. Candidates who have been dismissed or who have resigned from the Cheer Squad may be allowed back in the program upon consent of the Head Cheer Coach and Athletic Director.

Section D – Grade Requirements

1. All cheerleaders must meet the standards set by Southwest Christian, SCS Athletics, and the TAPPS program.
 - a. Any member who has two failing grades will be put on academic probation until progress reports come out. During this time, all practices and meetings must be attended. The member will not be eligible to perform at any events during that time. Once eligibility is regained, the member may return to her original position.

ARTICLE III-Cheer Squad Structure

1. Fall Teams - In the Fall semester the Cheer Squad will be comprised of 2 teams.
 - a. Freshman/Sophomore/all New members -- *White Team*
 - i. White team will cheer at all home JV football games and select Volleyball games
 - ii. Provided that a member fulfills her commitment on the White team, she will be allowed to volunteer to also participate in the Varsity football games.
 - iii. Failure to fulfill the White team commitments or failure to show up for a game a member volunteered for will cause the member to forfeit the option to volunteer for other Blue team functions in addition to appropriate disciplinary measures.
 - b. Junior/Senior -- *Blue Team*
 - i. Blue team will cheer at ALL Varsity football games
 - ii. Provided that a member fulfills her commitment on the Blue team, she will be allowed to volunteer to also participate in the home JV football games and select Volleyball games.
 - iii. Failure to fulfill the Blue team commitments or failure to show up for a game a member volunteered for will cause the member to forfeit the option to volunteer for other White team functions in addition to appropriate disciplinary measures.
 - c. All teams will perform together as one squad at pep rallies throughout the fall
 - d. All members will have all the same attire and will attend camp together as one cheer squad.
2. SCS Competition Black Squad
 - i. All members of the SCS Cheer Team will be considered for the SCS Competition Cheer .
 - ii. The SCS Competition Black Squad will compete at the TAPPS State Competition, which is held in the Fall Semester.
 - ii. The number of members to the competition squad will be determined by the coach after cheer camp.
 - a. The competitive team will have responsibilities on top of their Blue or White squad commitments.

- i. The competition squad will have a separate practice schedule to be determined.
 - ii. Failure to attend more than 2 practices will cause a member to forfeit her position on the SCS Competition Cheer Team
 - iii. Absences will be handled case by case and must be approved by the coach.
 - iv. It will be expected for all Black Squad members to be present at all practices 3 weeks leading up to competition to maintain performance status.
 - v. Black squad members must attend all choreography days in order to remain eligible for Black Squad.
3. Black Squad Selection
 - a. Candidates will be chosen based on evaluations from judges, performance and camp, and coaches evaluation.
 - b. SCS Cheer Squad members can choose to not be on the Black Squad.
 - c. Numbers of cheerleaders selected for the Black Squad will be based on coaches discretion given factors such as safety, TAPPS divisions, and overall squad ability.
4. Spring Teams
 - a. The SCS Cheer Team will be split into 2 teams.
 - b. The teams will alternate Boys and Girls Basketball, Boys and Girls Soccer, and other Spring sports events and commitments.
 - c. For high importance games, all girls could potentially cheer together.
 - d. The SCS Cheer Team will remain split into two squads for the Spring semester as well.

ARTICLE IV-Practices and Performances

Section A- Attendance Requirements

1. Every member must be present for all announced functions which include but are not limited to:
 - a. Summer Camp, including practices and activities
 - b. Junior Eagle Cheer Camp
 - c. Sign Painting
 - d. TAPPS Competition (for ALL cheer squad members not just Black Squad)
 - e. All assigned Athletic events including but not exclusive to: football, volleyball, basketball, soccer, baseball, and softball
 - f. Pep Rallies including Homecoming Pep Rally and Homecoming game
 - g. Playoff Games (determined by record and TAPPS)
 - h. Choreography
 - i. Cheer class & extra practices
 - j. Special performances
2. It is the responsibility of each member to notify the coach of an absence BEFORE practice or scheduled event. Failure of notification will result in an unexcused absence and will receive demerits.

3. Work schedules, doctor and dental appointments, and vacations are expected to be scheduled outside of all announced cheer activities and will be considered unexcused.
4. Any absence can result in a benching based on the coach's discretion to be determined by events going on for the team at that time.
5. Excused Absences
 - a. Excused absences are those excused with a doctor's note or family emergency (*i.e. hospitalization, death in the family, etc.*).
 - b. Parental notes may excuse *two* days of non-participation in *practice*. A doctor's note will be required after. (See Athletic Guidelines)
 - c. Other SCS extracurricular activities will be excused within reason. We want students to participate in several activities while in school at Southwest Christian. The coach will determine whether it is acceptable for a practice to be missed due to conflicting activities. However, it is the cheerleader's responsibility to talk with the coach ***in advance*** about conflicts. If the cheerleader fails to do this then it will be an automatic unexcused absence. (See SCS Athletic Guidelines)
6. Unexcused
 - a. Unexcused absences are those that do not accompany a doctor's note or those that do not follow proper procedures for procuring "excused" status.
 - b. Depending on frequency, unexcused absences may result in dismissal.
7. Tardies
 - a. Cheerleaders are expected to be punctual to all announced events including practice. Arrival times will be announced and are expected to be adhered to, otherwise the cheerleader will be considered tardy.
 - b. Cheerleaders are expected to be ready with all personal needs, uniform/practice clothing needs taken care of, jewelry removed, hair up, etc. taken care of prior to the announced arrival time.

Section B- Practice Expectations & Requirements

Practice schedules will be announced each year by the Cheer Coach and as soon as schedules are available.

1. All members are expected to be on time for practice.
2. The coach may call additional practices as deemed necessary.
3. All members are expected to be dressed and ready to practice at the start of class or practice time.
4. Proper practice uniforms shall be worn.
5. Hair should be pulled back and out of the face.
6. Cell phones need to be on silent during practice.
7. All members should always be ready to listen to directions from the coach or spirit leaders.

Section C- Cheer Event Expectations & Requirements

1. All members are expected to be on time for all cheer events.
2. All members are required to attend games in uniform regardless of cheering status.
3. If the coach feels the member does not know the routine well enough for the performance, she may be benched from any specific cheers, chants, or routines for that week.
4. Members must never leave the group at any event without permission from the coach.
5. Members must always pay attention to the cheer captains and follow their commands.
6. Cell phones are not allowed out at any event without coach permission.
7. No part of the uniform should be removed at anytime.
8. Members should not have conversations with others during cheer events. They are to remain with the group unless they have permission to move.

ARTICLE V-Uniform/Grooming

1. All cheerleaders must look alike while at scheduled events. The cheerleader will not be allowed to participate if uniform pieces are missing.
2. Use of uniforms
 - a. Uniforms shall be worn only at scheduled events.
 - b. Uniforms, or any part of the uniform, must remain in the care and possession of the identified cheerleader throughout the year. No other persons are allowed to wear any cheerleader items that represent the team (*i.e. jackets, t-shirts, etc*).
3. NO jewelry of any kind (except medical alert bracelets) may be worn while the cheerleader is in uniform, performing, or practicing.
4. Fingernails may not be an extreme color or of extreme length or shape. This is to the coaches discretion and should be discussed with her prior to paying to have your nails done.
5. Hair style must conform to the coach's specifications for each performance as announced.

ARTICLE VI - Safety Guidelines

1. Tumbling will be done a variety of surfaces, including but not limited to football fields, basketball courts, grass, sand, and dirt.
2. Cheerleaders may not tumble, stunt, or jump without direct supervision from the coach.
3. Tumbling, stunting, and jumping surfaces will be evaluated by the coach for safety hazards.
4. Cheerleaders must master skills in a progressive nature before learning or performing more advance skills.
5. The coach has the right to remove a cheerleader from participation if he/she feels that the cheerleader's behavior, attitude, or physical state would be a distraction of safety hazard to the squad.

6. *Cheerleaders should never practice or perform stunts unsupervised.*

ARTICLE VI–Spirit Leaders

Section A–Spirit Leader Eligibility

1. A candidate must have served as a SCS cheerleader for a minimum of one full year and be in good standing.
2. A candidate should have a passing average in all her current classes for the current school year in order to be eligible.
3. A candidate should not have received an out-of-school suspension, two in-school suspensions, or two Saturday schools.
4. Must agree to put Cheer commitments above a job or other extra-curricular activities that might interfere with her duties as Spirit Leader, or they may be removed from their position.

Section B–Duties & Responsibilities of the Spirit Leader

1. Cheer Spirit Leaders are expected to follow all guidelines as set forth in this document.
2. Maintain a 70 average in all classes.
3. Maintain good organizational skills.
4. Demonstrate responsibility
5. Work with the Coach(es) as needed on choreography, performances, etc.
6. Meet with the Coach(es) after practice to discuss the development and progress of the team.
7. The Spirit Leaders are responsible for making decisions for the team when the Coach is not available. They report directly to the Coach.
8. Spirit Leaders are expected to aid the Coach in any manner requested.
9. The Spirit Leaders are expected to communicate clearly and consistently with the Coach.
10. Set an example for other team members by maintaining a positive and cooperative attitude, by promoting school spirit and team unity, and by remaining calm and flexible in times of crises.
11. Spirit Leaders will inform squad members about practice times, dates, and games.
12. Spirit Leaders should plan on arriving five minutes prior to any function and stay ten minutes after any function or until the Coach(es) dismisses them.
13. Spirit Leaders are expected to learn to work together regardless of what squad they are a part of.
14. Spirit Leaders are expected to promote unity amongst all the girls on the SCS Cheer Team, always leading with humility.
15. Spirit Leaders are to always remember they are the example and not the exception.

Section G–Spirit Leader position removal

The Cheer Coach can remove a Spirit Leader from her leadership position for any infraction listed in this document as deemed appropriate by the Coach and any member of SCS administration.

ARTICLE VIII–Demerits

The SCS Cheer Team will follow a team demerit system. Any member who fails to uphold any part of the constitution, rules and guidelines set forth by the cheer team and coach will receive demerits according to this system. Demerits are the means by which the coach determines which members are not upholding their obligations and responsibilities to the team. Demerits can be given at any Cheer Team function.

The Cheer Team Demerit system does not replace the SCS Discipline Demerit system and will work completely independently of the SCS system.

Issuing of Demerits

1. Demerits will be issued by the Coach
2. Demerits will be maintained in the demerit notebook and all members must initial when receiving demerits.
3. Demerit counts begin a new each week.

ARTICLE IX-Demerit Schedule

Section A-Attendance and Tardiness

- 1. Tardy to any event 2
- 2. Unexcused absence to practices, performances or mandatory activities..... 5
- 3. Failure to inform coach ahead of time before an absence or being late (not calling)..... 5

Section B-Uniforms and Equipment

- 1. Incorrect practice uniform..... 2 per piece
- 2. Wearing any kind of jewelry in uniform at practices, games, & performances .. 2
Please note that wearing jewelry is a violation of NFHS and AACCA rules for safety
- 3. Losing/leaving uniforms, poms, and equipment 2
- 4. Incorrect or missing uniform pieces 5

Section C-Conduct

- 1. Chewing gum at practice or in uniform 2
- 2. Eating in uniform without permission 2
- 3. Failure to turn off cell phones at practice or performances 2
- 4. Use of cell phone without permission at practice or performances 2
- 5. Talking on field at inappropriate times 5
- 6. Disrespect to fellow members 5

ARTICLE X-Grading Policy

- a. Cheerleading at SCS is a Pass/Fail credit
- b. Attendance will be taken daily
- c. The Cheer demerit system will help determine the cheerleader’s weekly grade.

Grading Scale

- 1. Weekly Participation Grades-50 percent of grade
 - a. Points will be deducted from the participation grade for all demerits issued each week
 - b. Points will only be deducted for the week the demerit(s) was issued
- 2. Performance Grades-50 percent of grade
 - a. Perform at event-100 percent
 - b. Practice for event but had excused absence to event-95 percent
 - c. Unexcused absence to event- Zero will be received

ARTICLE VI- Consequences, Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Resignation

Section A-Consequences

“Reminders”: For non-severe, infrequent infractions. (See SCS Athletic Guidelines)

Section B-Probation /"Benching"

1. Probation is a period designated in which the member continues to uphold all responsibilities of being a cheerleader but may not participate in cheer events.
2. If a cheerleader is on probation she must be in uniform and sit with the coach. She may not perform the spirit line, fight song, pep rally, sidelines, or half time, but must attend every Cheer Squad function.
3. A cheerleader may be benched if she is not in compliance with any part of this constitution.
4. If the reason for the probation is not corrected within the time frame established, the member is subject to suspension or dismissal.
5. Reasons for Probation
 - a. Failure to follow the Cheer Constitution and Guidelines or SCS Athletic and/or school policies.
 - b. Failure to comply with absence policies.
 - c. Failing two classes for the nine-weeks grading period (including AP classes)
 - d. Any behavior seen as unacceptable by the coach and SCS administration.

Section B – Dismissal

1. Dismissal involves a loss of membership from the organization.
2. All school equipment and uniforms must be returned and all financial obligations must be cleared immediately.
3. Once a member has been dismissed, she loses all privileges of the organization.
4. Reason for Dismissal
 - a. Any behavior seen as unacceptable by the Cheer Coach and SCS administration.
 - b. If a member fails to meet necessary requirements to be removed from probation, she could be dismissed from the team.

Section C – Resignation

1. Resignation shall be defined as “a choice made by the individual member that she no longer desires to participate in the organization.”
2. Resignation procedures involve a conference with the Cheer Coach and/or SCS Spirit Coordinator or Athletic Director if necessary.
3. All equipment must be turned in and financial obligations cleared at the time of resignation.

4. In the event of dismissal or resignation during mid-semester, the counselors will help determine appropriate class placement.
5. Resignation could result in loss of credit for the class.

ARTICLE VII-Transportation & Awards

Please see SCS Athletic Guidelines for this information.

1. Letter jackets can be earned by performing in 80% of a season's performances. Members are responsible for the cost of the jacket.
2. Cheerleaders will not be allowed to transport other cheerleaders to and SCS Cheer event if it is **mandatory** for all girls unless the Student Travel Release form (for off campus locations) form has been filled out per the Athletic Handbook.

ARTICLE VIII- Finances

Section A-Membership Expenses

1. Each cheerleader is expected to provide all items as outlined in the audition packet each year. Many of these items will be ordered through the coach and/or Spirit Coordinator during a fitting shortly after tryouts.
2. Each member should be aware that additional expenses may be incurred for any unforeseen activities.
3. All fees and costs will be outlined prior to auditions.

Section B-Payments

1. At fitting the first deposit for Cheerleading is due. Initial deposits will be \$600 which will include payment for camp and a deposit on cheer clothing. Payments for uniforms are non-refundable. No uniforms will be ordered until the deposit is paid. The remainder of the initial order will be due prior to attendance to camp.
2. Once orders are placed and camp is registered for, all payments become binding and must be paid in full regardless of status on the team.
3. Any future expenses for other items or events will be billed upon notice of the expense & is to be played in a timely manner.

ARTICLE IX-Interpretation

The interpretation of this constitution is the sole right of the Coach and SCS administration. They have the right to add or change those things they feel must be changed for the benefit of the organization. This constitution is meant to be a basic operating instrument and is not intended to cover every operating policy. Furthermore, the SCS Athletic policies not expressly addressed in this document are to be adhered to by all cheerleaders.