



Cheerleading Manual 2009-2010

MSHSAA
Missouri State High School Activities Association

MISSOURI STATE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

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PLEASE NOTE: New wording has been underlined,
and areas of emphasis are in **bold** text.

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PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

- A. **PURPOSE OF MANUAL:** This manual has been prepared to provide a better understanding of the regulations and policies pertaining to cheerleaders of MSHSAA member schools and the provisions for the cheerleading squads at the MSHSAA sponsored events. This publication will serve as a guide to the participating schools and will provide for greater consistency. Supplementary information relating to cheerleaders may be included in the MSHSAA Journal or a Special Bulletin to all schools.
- B. **PHILOSOPHY OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES:** Interscholastic activities are intended to supplement the secondary curricular program. These activities can provide the student with educational experiences and learning outcomes that contribute toward the development of good citizenship. This can be accomplished only when the emphasis is placed upon teaching "through school activities." Interscholastic activities can be justified only when this is its primary philosophy and purpose.
- C. **PHILOSOPHY OF CHEERLEADING:** Being a cheerleader is a privilege and honor. Cheerleaders should be the school's most effective student leaders. Cheerleaders have the responsibility to serve as a support group for the various interscholastic activity programs within the school. The squad should strive to boost school spirit, promote good sportsmanship, develop positive crowd involvement and help their school achieve the most worthwhile educational objectives in its interscholastic program. The cheerleading squad is not intended to solely develop their physical skills and talents for the purpose of entertainment. The area of entertainment should be placed in perspective within the educational program. The activity of cheerleading should serve to develop leadership, confidence and skill, while maintaining their commitment to support the school activity program.

Cheerleaders are in a position of great influence and high standards of conduct are essential. Personal behavior communicates! Appropriate behavior will help earn the respect of the student body and this is the core of developing effective school spirit and student involvement.

Cheerleaders are a very important component of the interscholastic program. A clear minded assessment of the basics will help these young leaders face the challenges of today.

- D. **SUPERVISION OF CHEERLEADERS, PLAYERS AND FANS:** MSHSAA By-Laws hold a school responsible, both at home and away, for the conduct of its players, students, coaches, and fans. Coaches and sponsors are required to supervise their respective groups of young men and women. A coach's respect for others and school property is necessary in order to instill in his/her students a respect for others and school property. Students staying overnight in hotels or motels in conjunction with any interscholastic athletic contest should be well chaperoned. The good conduct of students will leave a good impression for the entire school.

SECTION 1: USING THIS MANUAL

All cheerleading coaches and principals are urged to read the instructions in this manual carefully. Information on eligibility standards, tournament regulations and suggestions for conduct and sportsmanship are included in the manual. The MSHSAA wall calendar includes dates for all state series tournaments referred to in the manual.

NOTE: New wording has been underlined and areas of emphasis are in bold text.

SECTION 2: GENERAL INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

- A. **INTRODUCTION:** Being selected as a cheerleader is a privilege and honor which carries with it many responsibilities.

It should be understood that your appearance and conduct at the games will reflect on your school. Those who chose you for the position did so because they think you will make a favorable impression and it is your responsibility to live up to their expectations.

The cheerleader is in a position to provide a very positive influence in guiding student conduct at games and each individual should maintain the proper dignity in this leadership role.

A cheerleader is one of the school's most effective, visible and powerful student leaders and the person who Makes Things Happen! The challenge facing today's young leaders rests in a clear minded assessment of basics. An effective cheerleader will develop the necessary skills to stimulate and promote positive crowd involvement. Enthusiastic cheering from the crowd is one of the most exciting portions of an athletic contest. For cheerleaders to abandon this crowd involvement for the sake of becoming feature performers to merely entertain the fans is a cheering technique that greatly detracts from the cheerleader's effectiveness and purpose. Avoid the pressures of simply becoming an entertainer and, instead, put the 'Leader' back in the Cheerleader!

- B. **OBJECTIVES:** Once the cheerleading squad has been selected, the coach should see that a list of objectives is established to serve as goals the group will attempt to attain. This list should include the following in addition to specific outcomes which might be unique to your school.
1. To promote the type of sportsmanship that will help students acquire the basic attributes of good citizenship.
 2. To develop a wholesome school spirit.
 3. To develop loyalty to your school and team regardless of the outcome of the contest.
 4. To promote a cooperative spirit between the student body, the faculty, and the school administration.
 5. To help your school achieve the most worthwhile educational objectives through the interscholastic activities program.
- C. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPERVISION:** No individual student, team, or activities group shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic events without being accompanied and supervised by a member of the school faculty or administrative staff. A school faculty member or administrator must be present at all events and practices in which cheerleaders participate whose primary responsibility is to supervise the cheerleaders. It is not allowable for one faculty member from one school in a multiple high school/middle school district to supervise all students of all schools of the multiple high school/middle schools districts under this provision. **(By-Law 103)**
- D. **STANDARDS FOR CHEER COACHES:**
1. First Aid Requirement: A school head cheerleader coach and dance team coach and directors of other similar groups who are entering secondary school coaching for the first time or after being out of coaching for more than three years shall be required to satisfactorily complete an MSHSAA Sports First Aid Course as a prerequisite to coaching for a head coach position and within the first year of coaching as an assistant coach. **(By-Law 151.0)**
 2. Rules Meeting Attendance: Each school shall be responsible for requiring its head cheer coach and head, dance team coach(es) to attend an MSHSAA spirit rules meeting. When a coach/director does not attend, the school shall justify the absence in writing to the MSHSAA office. **(By-Law 152.0)**
 3. Approval of Non-Certified Cheer Coaches and Dance Team Coaches: A non-faculty head coach (cheer or dance team) who does not possess a professional teaching certificate must successfully complete the MSHSAA Coaches Education Program as a prerequisite to approval. A non-faculty assistant coach must satisfactorily complete the MSHSAA Coaches Education Program as a prerequisite for approval to serve in a subsequent school year. **(By-Law 153.0)**
- E. **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CHEERLEADERS:** All cheerleaders shall meet and follow the standards listed under By-Laws 100, 105, 152, 210-219, 231, and 270 of the MSHSAA Official Handbook.
1. Pyramids and Partner Stunts: CHEERLEADER SAFETY REGULATIONS - The following safety regulations shall govern the activities of all cheerleader and dance teams throughout the calendar year.
 - a. All partner stunts and pyramids are limited to two levels high. The top person (flyer) receives primary support from one or more bases who is/are in direct, weight-bearing contact with the performing surface (NFHS 2-3)
 - b. The use of mini-tramps, spring boards, spring assisted floors, or any height increasing apparatus is illegal for use during performances/competitions (NFHS 2-1-7).
 - c. The safety regulations contained in the National Federation Spirit Rules Book and the MSHSAA Cheer Manual shall be followed. **(By-Law 105.0)**
 2. Certification of Cheerleading Eligibility Through the Online Membership System:
 - a. Each student, prior to participating in an interscholastic contest, must be certified as eligible through

- the MSHSAA Online Membership System by an administrator of the junior or senior high school the student attends. Changes in eligibility at the beginning of second semester shall be made on the system by an administrator.
- b. New additions shall be certified as eligible as described above prior to allowing the student to participate in an interscholastic contest.
 - c. If a participant is omitted from the eligibility certification process in error and is certified in writing by the principal to have been eligible at the time of the participation, the Board of Directors shall have discretionary authority to determine whether a penalty is appropriate and the nature and duration of such penalty. The principal shall submit a report to the executive director explaining the circumstances of the omission error. **(By-Law 271)**
3. **Awards:** Any award received for cheerleading shall be symbolic in nature or a merchandise award not to exceed a suggested manufacturer's retail price of \$100.00 as defined in By-Law 231. **Editor's Note: No cash or gift certificates shall be presented as awards. (By-Law 275.0)**
 4. **Physical Exams and Insurance:**
 - a. The school shall require of each student participating in cheerleading a certificate of an issued physician signed and authorized by a physician, advanced nurse practitioner in a written collaborative practice with a physician or a certified physician's assistant in collaboration with a sponsoring physician stating that the individual is physically able to participate in cheerleading activities at her/his school. A student shall not be permitted to practice or compete for a school until a complete, signed certificate is on file at the school. The medical certificate is valid for the purpose of this rule if issued on or after February 1 of the previous school year.
 - b. A student shall not be permitted to participate in any cheerleading activity for a school until it has verification that she/he has basic accident insurance coverage. **(By-Law 276)**
 5. **Cheerleading Conditioning Requirements:** Each squad must have a minimum of 10 days of conditioning practice and each individual must have participated in a minimum of 10 school conditioning practices on 10 different days during the three consecutive weeks immediately preceding the first calendar date on which the first cheering activity is scheduled. **(By-Law 277)**
 6. Any student who violates any of these requirements shall be ineligible to represent the school in interscholastic cheerleading activities for a period not to exceed 365 days from the date of the violation. **(By-Law 278)**

SECTION 3: GUIDELINES, CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP SUGGESTIONS

- A. CHEERLEADER CONDUCT GUIDELINES:** Cheerleading squads should be informed of standards of conduct which they are to meet at both home and away athletic contests. Cheerleaders should be impressed with the necessity of conduct above reproach because they are most particularly influential in dealing with spectators. The importance of cheerleaders as representatives of the school and the community should not be underestimated.
- The following are suggested standards for cheerleaders in addition to those listed in the National Federation Spirit Rule Book:
1. Cheerleaders should always be on their best behavior. Other people will judge your school by their conduct. A good motto to remember is "You never get a second chance to make a good first impression".
 2. The primary factor in sportsmanship for cheerleaders is to always cheer positively. It is never an asset to the contest or school to cheer against the other team or to cheer at an opposing player's mistake; it is much more effective to cheer for your own team.
 3. Cheerleaders should be impressed with the importance of accepting the decision of officials and of discouraging disagreement with them by the crowd.
 4. Cheerleaders should realize the importance of setting the proper influence. By setting a good example, cheerleaders can positively influence the conduct of student and adult spectators.
 5. During a free throw, a short "sink it" chant may be done only from the sideline and before the free throw is attempted.
 6. Uniforms should be worn only for games and pep assemblies unless permission is given by the cheerleading coach for other school related activities.
 7. All cheerleaders should have and abide by a written constitution established by the cheerleading coach and school administration. Acknowledgment of this constitution should be verified by the signature of the cheerleader and his/her parents.

B. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. The hair must be worn in a manner to minimize risk for the participant. Hair devices, if worn, must be secure and appropriate for the activity. (See NFHS Rule Book, Rule 2-2-3)
2. Do not practice in loose or slippery clothing. Body lotion, oil or perspiration can also be dangerous.
3. Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept at an appropriate length (short, near end of the fingers) to minimize risk for the participants. (See NFHS Rule Book, Rule 2-2-2)
4. It is considerate to kneel down in front of the crowd when an injury occurs and cheering should not resume until game officials signal to continue play.
5. Do not wait until the squad is completely exhausted before quitting for the day. When the cheerleaders start getting tired, the chances of accidents are greatly increased.
6. Tumbling and partner stunts shall not be performed on wet surfaces.
7. Placement of spirit squads at basketball contests:
 - a. Spirit coaches should coordinate the placement of the spirit squad with the school administrator in charge.
 - b. When possible, squads should cheer along the sidelines close to the intersection of the sideline and end line. If space does not permit that, the squad should be located along the end line but not beneath the basket or within the area of the free throw lane extended.
 - c. In all locations, the squad should be at least 3-4 feet from any boundary line unless the facilities do not permit.
 - d. Spirit squads should be aware of actions occurring within the contest and be prepared to move as play advances. They should be aware of the movement of game officials and not interfere with their game responsibilities.
 - e. No actions by the spirit leaders should be made to purposely distract the players.
9. Performing of stunts may only be done during time-outs, quarter, and half on the playing area of the gym, not on the sidelines in basketball.
10. Cheerleaders should alternate all non-injury full time-outs. **NOTE:** The time between quarters is considered a time-out and should be included in the rotation. Cheerleaders shall not go onto the floor to do a cheer during a thirty second time-out.
11. Placement of spirit squads at wrestling contests:
 - a. The mat area includes the wrestling mat and also a space around it of at least 10 feet where facilities permit. In this 10 foot area you would have the team benches and the officials' table. This area should be free of spectators, photographers and cheerleaders. Therefore, in facilities that would permit, the cheerleaders should be placed at least 10 feet from the wrestling mat.

NOTE: It is very important that cheerleading coaches, the school administration and cheerleaders establish clear guidelines for cheerleading. The above list is not all inclusive of guidelines which individual schools may wish to establish. Consult the National Federation Spirit Rules Book for additional guidelines.

C. SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR CHEERLEADERS: Each school is responsible for establishing and enforcing safety standards for the conduct of its cheerleader program. The safety regulations contained in the National Federation Spirit Rules Book shall be followed. The following guidelines have been developed by the MSHSAA Cheerleader Advisory Committee and approved by the Board of Directors to serve as a guide for the school to use in drawing up its own standards. The lists in the following areas are not intended to be all inclusive.

1. Safety guidelines for partner stunts and pyramids:
 - a. Beginning partner stunts and pyramids shall be mastered before progressing to more advanced partner stunts and pyramids.
 - b. All new partner stunts and pyramids shall be reviewed and approved by the coach prior to execution. Assisted spotting shall be required until new stunts are secure.
 - c. Spotters should be positioned in front, back, and on the sides when practicing new partner stunts and pyramids.
 - d. Always have exact positions drawn out on paper in advance before building a pyramid so that each person will know exactly what she/he is to do. Visual knowledge of the pyramid will help eliminate accidents.
 - e. Partner stunts and pyramids shall be practiced in a properly matted area.
 - f. Components to pyramids should be practiced separately before building the complete pyramid.
 - g. Every participating member of the squad should have a thorough understanding of the components of the stunt or pyramid before attempting to execute.
 - h. Before building, verbal communication should be established to use in case of trouble. The pyramid should be dismantled from top to bottom quickly.
 - i. When building, everyone should remain quiet except the person in charge. Full concentration at all

- times is imperative.
- j. Always spot the head and upper torso of the top person to ensure safety in case of a fall. Protect the head and neck areas above all else.
- 2. Rule 1 of the National Federation Spirit Rule Book contains definitions only. Refer to Rules 2 and 3 for determining the legality of specific skills, stunts or transitions.
- 3. Guidelines for gymnastic activities incorporated into cheers:
 - a. All new gymnastic activities shall be reviewed and approved by the coach prior to execution.
 - b. Gymnastic stunts should not be executed without the use of a spotter unless they can be performed consistently and without difficulty and approved by the coach.
 - c. Gymnastic stunts requiring the use of a spotter shall be preceded by verbal communication of the intended stunt.
 - d. New gymnastic skills shall be mastered on the mat. If a mat is not available assisted spotting should be employed. New tumbling skills should not be learned on hardwood or similar surfaces. **(See NFHS Rule 2-1-3, 2-1-4 and 2-1-5)**
- 4. For regulations regarding tosses and catches refer to Rules 1 and 2 in the National Federation Spirit Rule Book.

NOTE: All tosses are considered advanced skills and should be executed only by an advanced skill level squad.

D. **MSHSAA PROHIBITED STUNTS** (See By-Law 105 on page 4 of this manual).

E. **SPORTSMANSHIP:** The promotion of sportsmanship is the prime responsibility of cheerleaders.

1. Good sportsmanship is conduct which imposes a type of self-control involving honest rivalry, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of results. School spirit is a reflection of these attitudes and behavior. If a school is to succeed in one of its prime functions, that of developing good citizenship, it is necessary that student groups radiate proper sportsmanship conduct. Sportsmanship is good citizenship in action.
2. Cheerleaders shall always cheer in a positive fashion. It is in poor taste to cheer against the other team. It is unsportsmanlike to do anything to distract an opposing player during a free throw.
3. Cheers and chants with suggestive words and/or motions shall not be used as in many situations they bring about an inappropriate response.
4. The use of a hello cheer is optional. If used, the cheer should be done at the start of the game. It is unsportsmanlike for one squad to be performing a floor cheer while the other squad is cheering. Wait until the floor cheer is completed before starting the chant. A plan between the home cheerleaders and the visiting cheerleaders should be devised prior to the start of the game. Cheerleaders should alternate all non-injury time-outs (the time between quarters is considered a time-out and should be included in this rotation). This will eliminate confusion and prevent delays in the game. A thirty second time-out is not a time that cheerleaders may go onto the floor for a floor cheer. As a result, a thirty second time-out should also not be included in the rotation.
5. When the official signals for the game to begin after a time-out, the cheerleaders shall leave the floor at once. Officials can call a technical foul against the school who violates this procedure. Cheerleaders should not stand along the end of the floor during basketball games as it interferes with officials, players and increases possibility of injury. Cheerleaders for these reasons shall stay clear of the playing area during the contest.
6. Cheerleaders should call attention to the importance of sportsmanship at all pep rallies. Placing sportsmanship posters on the wall of the gym is helpful.
7. Cheerleaders shall discourage their followers from yelling while an opponent is shooting free throws and/or directing unpleasant remarks towards players or the opposing school. Intimidation or degrading of opponents has no place in high school athletics.
8. Cheerleaders are in a position to preview spirit signs that will be posted for their school's contests. Discouraging inappropriate signs from ever being posted is a great assistance to local administration and helps create and maintain a positive crowd atmosphere.
9. Obnoxious behavior by fans is inappropriate and should not be encouraged nor tolerated. All players, officials and fans should be treated with respect.

NOTE: If inappropriate crowd behavior continues, assistance should be obtained from a school administrator or the contest management.

F. CHEERLEADING TECHNIQUES:

1. Create and direct positive crowd response.
2. Choose the appropriate cheers for the game situation.
3. Be certain that words and actions used in cheers do not provoke or suggest a negative response from the crowd.
4. Do not use bells, horns, or noisemakers at indoor sporting events.
5. Use gestures that are synchronized, pleasing to watch, and easy to follow.
6. Divert the crowd's attention by starting a popular yell when booing develops.
7. Do not conduct a cheer or chant at the same time as the opposing cheerleading squad.
8. Cheerleaders should get the crowd to respond, not perform for the crowd. Big definite motions receive the best response.
9. It is important that the cheerleader look at the crowd while leading a cheer; his/her facial expressions to the crowd are very important in generating enthusiasm and a strong response.
10. Emphasize each word and cut all words off sharply so that each word is distinct and the cheer may be understood and followed easily.
11. Remember - Cheerleaders are present at the ball game to encourage crowd response to their cheers. An effective squad of cheerleaders is one of the most important assets a school can have.

**SECTION 4: CHEERLEADING PROVISIONS AND POLICIES
FOR STATE TOURNAMENT SERIES**

A. BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, AND WRESTLING POLICIES:

1. Drums, musical instruments and mechanical noisemakers are prohibited at all MSHSAA district, regional, sectional and state basketball and volleyball tournaments. Megaphones may be used by cheerleaders only to direct instructions, cheers and chants to their pep squad and fans. The megaphones are not to be used as noisemakers directed toward the field or court of play.
2. Because of problems resulting from the school display of some banners and posters, all such banners and posters are prohibited at all MSHSAA basketball and volleyball tournaments with the exception of the school's official banner. Likewise, such practices as the tearing of paper for the use of confetti which creates a fire hazard, the tearing down of an opposing school's banner, balloons, etc., shall be prevented. Pom poms (except those used by cheerleaders), towels to wave, enlarged fingers depicting we're #1, etc. are examples of items that are prohibited.
3. No mechanical noisemakers are to be allowed at the district, sectional or state wrestling tournaments.
4. To insure that all fans attending the activity have an unobstructed view, the audience should remain seated during the contest. For basketball and volleyball districts, sectionals and quarterfinals, please refer to Appendix C regarding continuous standing.

B. ADMITTANCE POLICY FOR STATE TOURNAMENTS: Cheerleaders will be admitted, at no charge, to each session in which their team participates, provided the squad is in uniform and their coach must be present with the group as they enter through the pass gate. **SPECIFIC SPORTS DO REQUIRE PASSES FOR ADMITTANCE.** (NOTE: See the following table for the number of cheerleaders to be admitted at no charge.)

1. Each sport is specific in relation to the number of cheerleaders allowed, in uniform, to enter the event with no charge. (Passes as required.) The maximum number per sport is indicated in the following table. If special provisions exist between levels of play i.e., sectional level to state level, these differences are listed in the table.
2. Bus Driver's: Cheerleading bus drivers must have a pass from the school's allotment.

FALL SPORTS

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Level of State Series</u>	<u>Provisions for Cheerleader Admittance</u>
Cross Country	(District, Sectional & State)	No provision for cheerleader admittance.
Football	(Sectional, Quarterfinals, Semifinals and Finals)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.
Girls Golf	(District & State)	No provision for cheerleader admittance.
Girls Tennis	(District & State)	No provision for cheerleader admittance.
Boys Soccer	(All levels of State Series)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.
Softball	(All levels of State Series)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.
Boys Swimming	(State)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.

FALL SPORTS cont'd.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Level of State Series</u>	<u>Provisions for Cheerleader Admittance</u>
*Volleyball	(All levels of State Series)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.

WINTER SPORTS

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Level of State Series</u>	<u>Provisions for Cheerleader Admittance</u>
*Basketball (Boys & Girls)	(District, Regional, Sectionals, Quarterfinals, Semifinals & Finals.)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport. NOTE: Due to limited floor space at the <u>semifinal and final sites</u> no more than 12 cheerleaders from one school are allowed on the floor at one time to cheer.
Girls Swimming	State	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.
*Wrestling	(Districts and Sectional)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.

WINTER SPORTS cont'd.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Level of State Series</u>	<u>Provisions for Cheerleader Admittance</u>
*Wrestling	(State)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.

SPRING SPORTS

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Level of State Series</u>	<u>Provisions for Cheerleader Admittance</u>
Baseball	(All levels of State Series)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.
Boys Golf	(District & State)	No provision for cheerleader admittance.
Boys Tennis	(District & State)	No provision for cheerleader admittance.
Girls Soccer	(All levels of State Series)	Varsity cheerleaders in official cheerleading uniforms and their coach will be admitted free to the session their team plays provided the school athletic administrator has submitted their names through the MSHSAA online district entry process. Cheerleaders must enter the gate as a group and they must be accompanied by their coach. Specific instructions on how to obtain the pass for the cheer coach will be included in the informational packet sent to each state qualifier by the MSHSAA Administrator responsible for that sport.
Track (Boys & Girls)	District, Sectional & State	No provision for cheerleader admittance.

***NOTE:** In volleyball, basketball and wrestling there is no limit as to how many cheerleaders may actually cheer. Please note that the state basketball tournament limits the number of cheerleaders on the floor due to lack of space. All sub-state tournament managers in volleyball, basketball and wrestling may limit the number of cheerleaders which may be on the floor if space is at a premium. (8 is suggested if a manager must limit the squad.)

SECTION 5: UNIFORMS

Uniforms should be functional and should be those which the school would approve within the school dress code. Skirts, sweaters, vests, jumpers and warm-up suits would all be appropriate attire for cheerleaders. Tennis shoes with soft soles and good support should be selected. Consideration should be given for climate conditions in which the uniform(s) will be worn. The uniforms should be comfortable and provide freedom of movement. Excessive bagginess in uniforms should be avoided because of safety. Jewelry, spirit buttons, etc. shall not be worn while cheering. When standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff.

SECTION 6: CHEERLEADING CLINICS

The MSHSAA sponsors one-day cheerleader clinics each year. Cheerleaders and cheerleading coaches are encouraged to attend the clinic nearest their school. The sites and dates of these clinics are published each year in the MSHSAA Journal. It is strongly suggested that schools select their cheerleaders in the spring so they can attend the clinics as a squad. Pre-registration forms and clinic brochures will be available via the MSHSAA website and also to all MSHSAA member senior and junior high schools in April, 2010.

These clinics are designed to be helpful to cheerleaders and cheerleading coaches with varying degrees of experience. Young cheerleaders and new coaches will find them worthwhile as will experienced coaches and cheerleaders.

New coaches will also find helpful information regarding "coaches and participants responsibilities" located on the NFHS website (www.nfhs.org). Select the sports tab to locate the spirit link.

SECTION 7: PREVENTION AND CARE OF INJURIES

Cheerleading is a very demanding physical activity. It is very important that the cheerleading squad understands the importance of incorporating a good warm-up and stretching program prior to all practices and games. The squad will be much more effective and dynamic if the cheerleaders are physically fit. The maintenance of a good level of physical fitness and proper warm-ups will not only produce a cheerleading squad that is energetic and pleasing to watch, but will also greatly reduce the risks for injuries and accidents.

- A. The cheerleading coach shall assist in the development of a conditioning and warm-up program for the cheerleading squad.
- B. Proper techniques in partner stunts should be used at all times.
- C. When stunts and pyramids are constructed, the squad should have spotters as needed for the particular stunt.
- D. The cheerleading coach should acquire a very basic knowledge of first aid and be prepared to treat minor injuries, strains, sprains, contusions, cuts, etc. A basic first aid kit should be located at the site of practice or games in case an injury occurs.

NOTE: If the cheerleading coach is not familiar with general first aid treatment, possible programs may be available through school in-service workshops in the physical education/athletic department or the local Red Cross. MSHSAA also sponsors One-Day Sports First Aid programs at locations throughout the state. Contact the MSHSAA office for current dates. At each MSHSAA One-Day Cheerleading Clinic a session on sports medicine designed especially for cheerleading will be offered.

SECTION 8: POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- A. MSHSAA By-Law 105 regarding pyramids, partner stunts and prohibited stunts. (Section 2-G-1)
- B. Cheerleaders required to have physicals before participating in cheering tryouts and activities. (Section 2-G-4)
- C. Cheerleaders required to show proof of basic accident insurance. (Section 2-G-4b)
- D. Required Rules Interpretation Meetings on the National Federation Major Rules changes will be held for all cheerleading coaches. (Section 2-A)
- E. Eligibility rosters must be completed through the MSHSAA Online Membership System. (By-Law 271, Section 2-F-2)

- F. Location of cheerleaders for basketball and wrestling contests specified. (Section 3-B-11)
- G. Alternation of time-outs specified. (Section 3-B-10 and 3-E-4)
- H. Ten days of conditioning practice required for cheerleading (Section 2-F-5)
- I. Thirty second time-outs in basketball are not considered a time that cheerleaders may go onto the floor for a floor cheer. (Section 3-B-10 and 3-E-4)
- J. A faculty member (cheer coach) or administrator must be present at all cheerleader events whose primary function is to provide supervision for the cheerleaders. (Section 2-D)
- K. Nonfaculty head cheer coaches who do not possess a professional teaching certificate must successfully complete the MSHSAA Approved Coaches Education Program as a prerequisite for approval. A nonfaculty assistant coach must satisfactorily complete the MSHSAA coaches education program as a prerequisite for approval to serve in a subsequent school year. (Section 2-E-3)

SECTION 9: ETHICS

Cheerleading is an activity which helps students develop skills in leadership, discipline, acrobatics, and many other areas. A properly designed cheerleading program can have a positive impact on the educational development of the students involved.

One concept that cheerleading coaches have an obligation to convey is that of integrity. Students can learn, through modeling, that rules put in place by the National Federation are to be followed without exception. Through strict enforcement by cheerleading coaches of the National Federation Spirit Rules, students will benefit from a safe environment in which to participate and learn that rules governing an activity are to be followed and never ignored. The fundamental concept of integrity can be re-enforced by clearly communicating these rules and expecting that they be followed daily by all cheerleaders.

Cheerleading coaches also have an obligation to observe other cheerleading squads and take action if rules violations are observed. Coaches can approach the coach of the squad, the school athletic director, or principal and discuss the violation if that approach seems appropriate. If that approach does not seem appropriate, the coach should advise the MSHSAA Office of the violation by phone or in writing and the school will be contacted by the MSHSAA staff. It is important that rules violations be communicated to the appropriate parties in one of these methods for the safety of the participants and to assist in the uniform enforcement of the Spirit Rules.

APPENDIX A

TECHNIQUES OF DEVELOPING POSITIVE CROWD INVOLVEMENT AT INTERSCHOLASTIC EVENTS

Cheerleaders have a very important responsibility at our interscholastic contests. Through their leadership the student body and other fans can cheer exuberantly for their team in a manner becoming of good sportsmanship. Cheerleaders contribute to "crowd control" through positive crowd involvement. The thoughts provided below are just a few techniques which have proven to be successful in developing school spirit and positive crowd involvement.

1. Educate the student body of the expectations of a good crowd. Good communication with the student body and the public of what the expectations of the school are for good sportsmanship is vital.
2. If a student group evolves which is somewhat rowdy the group should be educated to work with the cheerleaders. This group must feel a part of the system. This may be accomplished by having them help with a pep assembly, having them meet with the cheerleaders, or have the cheerleading coach or activities director visit with this group regarding their role in promoting school spirit.
3. The administration must give positive support for good sportsmanship and crowd involvement. Administrators emphasizing good sportsmanship and proper conduct at every opportunity is vital in this area.
4. Poll students as to what cheers and chants they like and will follow. The cheerleaders can use this information to select the popular cheers to use during contests which will gain support from the student body.
5. Have a session where the athletes may educate the cheerleaders on the athletic contest. This will help the

cheerleaders to begin chants and cheers which are appropriate for the game and the situation which is occurring in the contest.

6. Good communication is necessary to have between the administrators, the coaches, the cheerleaders, and the student body. This will help provide clearer expectations to the students, and the student body. This will help provide clearer expectations to the students, fans, and coaches for actions during athletic contests.
7. Use your vocal students to your advantage. For example, if a student body group starts a good chant, have your cheerleaders join in. This shows a mutual respect between the two groups who, in essence, are wanting to work together as one.
8. The pep or jazz band can be very helpful in promoting school spirit by working with the cheerleaders as they try to promote positive crowd involvement.
9. The band director can have a pep band play over a booing situation if it is at an appropriate time for the band to play.
10. Before a game starts cheerleaders can have a chant followed by playing the school fight song or other song in which the student body will participate. This helps get the crowd involved and set the tone at the beginning of the contest.
11. Parent groups may be formed such as "Proud Parents" to encourage the adult fans to work together in a positive manner supporting the school athletic program. For example, a sign could be placed on the wall designating a reserved seating area for the "Proud Parents" and include a statement such as "Proud Parents don't boo." This could also be done with the school booster club. The idea is to reinforce positive behavior by parents and other adults attending the athletic contest.
12. A column in the school newspaper or weekly bulletin may be used to print some of the chants that will be used at the upcoming contests for that week. The cheerleaders may also list in the school paper or bulletin a thank you to particular clubs and other school groups for coming to the game and supporting their school team.
13. Conduct a pep rally before the game starts. Cheerleaders have an opportunity to go over the words of the cheers and chants to be used that night and also indicate what is appropriate behavior. This would cause the cheerleading squad to plan out the basic cheers and chants they will be utilizing that evening.
14. Conduct an elementary cheerleading clinic. Have the cheerleaders work with the upper elementary grades and get them involved in a few of the simple cheers and chants. Have a special night where these students, as a group, will do a couple of cheers. Perhaps set aside a special section in the bleachers for the students on that night. One possibility is to have an elementary clinic and give T-shirts to all of the children who attend and have them wear these shirts to the high school or junior high contest.
15. Cheerleaders must be assertive in their leadership role. They must be able to go into the crowd and help get the crowd excited and involved. It will take some guidance to help teach and develop this type of leadership. The cheerleading coach must teach the cheerleaders that they should not turn around and ignore the inappropriate actions. The coach must be able to foster and teach how to be the desired type of a leader.
16. Incorporate cheers which will use a card to elicit a crowd response i.e. "Go Big Red" and each of the words is on a card which the cheerleaders will hold up indicating to the crowd this is the response they should give at that particular time.

APPENDIX B

SPORTSMANSHIP...A TEAM EFFORT

A mainstay of our interscholastic athletic program is good sportsmanship. If our interscholastic activities are to be worthwhile and afford continuing supplemental educational experiences for our boys and girls in relationship to our educational goals and objectives we must have good sportsmanship at our schools.

Good sportsmanship is built and maintained through a collective effort by administrators, coaches, players, cheerleaders, and spectators. A team effort is necessary in your school if good sportsmanship is to exist.

To help prepare "your team" for the season the following suggestions just may give you the edge over the opponent...poor sportsmanship.

1. Administrators must work to create the best environment possible for interscholastic activities. This shall include facilities, officials, game equipment, supervision and behavior of all involved.
2. Administrators shall communicate clearly the expectations of behavior on the part of all those involved with athletics and the consequences for inappropriate behavior.
3. The administrative staff should develop a plan of action to address inappropriate behavior at interscholastic events. This procedure should be discussed with cheerleading coaches and clearly explained to other person-

- nel involved with supervision.
4. Administrator and cheerleading coach should discuss and develop a procedure to deal with difficult situations regarding sportsmanship.
 5. Identify how the cheerleaders can assist in developing and promoting good sportsmanship.
 6. The cheerleading coach, with the administrator's guidance, should work with the squad to effectively deal with spectators and learn to recognize situations which need adult intervention.
 7. The cheer coach should know who to contact in the event the unsportsmanlike acts are not easily resolved. Cheerleaders nor their coach should permit themselves to be placed in a "no win" situation with the crowd. However, their techniques should be developed to lessen the likelihood of unsportsmanlike conduct.
 8. Cheerleading coaches must continue to emphasize to the squads what an important role they play in the school's overall program.
 9. At the beginning of school have the administrator, cheer coach and squads meet together to discuss and clearly understand each other's role and how they will work together for good sportsmanship.
 10. Cheerleaders, with help from the coach and administrators, can actively work to promote good sportsmanship. This can be accomplished by developing expectations for behavior for 1) their school, 2) all schools within a conference and 3) expectations for visiting schools.
 11. The expectations can appear in programs, posters, etc. These expectations can be provided to all visiting schools.

These are just a few "pre season" suggestions to help your team be good sports and expect the same from others.

APPENDIX C

Board Policy on Continuous Standing

The district tournament committee (as defined in the MSHSAA Basketball Manual) shall establish specific guidelines regarding student cheer and spirit groups. (For purposes of this section, the site host and representatives of the participating schools shall be considered the tournament committee for sectional and quarterfinal contests). The committee shall create these guidelines with a primary focus on sportsmanship and respect for other schools and spectators. The guidelines shall also consider the seating needs of the host facility. If the establishment of designated student seating sections is recommended by the tournament committee, the following criteria shall be enforced:

- a) At least one empty row must serve as a buffer between the floor and the student sections.
- b) The student sections shall be specifically marked and separated (such as by rope, pennants or other barrier) from the general spectator seating areas.
- c) The student sections shall be cleared out at the conclusion of each game for use by the schools playing the next contest. If a school is playing back-to-back games with its boys and girls teams, that school may remain in its section for both contests, as long as remaining in that section does not conflict with criteria d below.
- d) In the interest of sportsmanship and positive behavior, the student sections for competing teams shall not be adjacent to each other, directly behind either goal or directly behind the bench of the opposing team.
- e) The student sections shall be placed in locations that minimize the obstruction of other patrons when the students stand in unison.
- f) Sportsmanlike behavior is expected at all times from the student section.
- g) An administrator with the responsibility of supervising students should be present at all contests involving that particular school and be present throughout the contest in the vicinity of the student section or in an area designated by the host site administrator.
- h) An administrator from each participating school, the host site administrator and a representative of the game officials shall meet prior to game time to reiterate the site's guidelines for student cheer and spirit groups, discuss the sportsmanship goals of the contest, and confirm the physical location of the school administrators during the contest.

APPENDIX D

Most Commonly Asked Questions Regarding Cheerleading

- Q1:** *Our school would like to sponsor a competitive cheer squad to participate in various competitive events throughout the school year. There are members of our sideline cheer squad who would like to participate on the competitive cheer squad as well. Is this allowed?*
- A1:** MSHSAA has no jurisdiction over competitive cheer. Therefore it would be considered a “club activity” (e.g. ice hockey, boys lacrosse, etc.) with oversight of this activity administered through the local school administration. However, please be advised that participants are covered under the MSHSAA catastrophic insurance for **sideline cheer** only. Any injuries sustained while involved with competitive cheer are not covered under the MSHSAA insurance policy. **(By-Law 270)**
- Q2:** *One of our varsity football cheerleaders would like to compete during the high school football season with an independent cheering squad. May she do so?*
- A2:** MSHSAA has no jurisdiction over competitive cheer. Whether a school sideline cheerleader may participate in competitive cheer with an independent squad during the season she is cheering for the school is a local school administration decision. **(By-Law 270)**
- Q3:** *Our school has recently added competitive cheer as a “club activity”. Is it allowable for the competitive cheer squad to wear the school cheerleading uniform when participating in competitive cheer events?*
- A3:** MSHSAA has no jurisdiction over competitive cheerleading. If a school sponsors a club competitive cheer squad, the use of the school cheer uniforms and equipment is up to local administration. **(By-Law 270)**
- Q4:** *A local business has invited our high school cheerleading squad to attend and participate in a ribbon cutting ceremony for a new supermarket. Would their presence be allowable under MSHSAA By-Laws?*
- A4:** No, as this is a commercial/promotional/endorsement type event. **(By-Law 274).**
- Q5:** *The local university has invited our high school cheerleading squad to perform during the mens basketball half-time this weekend. Is this allowable and can they wear the school uniform?*
- A5:** Yes and Yes. MSHSAA By-Law 272.1-c allows a maximum of three **non-competitive** cheer events per year. The uniform may be worn in accord with MSHSAA By-Law 274-c. **(By-Law 272 & 274)**
- Q6:** *Does cheerleading conditioning practice count toward the 14 days of required practice for any other athletic sport (i.e. volleyball, soccer, basketball, etc.)?*
- A6:** No. Cheerleading conditioning practices will not count toward the athletic conditioning requirement. **(By-Law 270)**
- Q7:** *Is a student who is participating on an athletic squad required to meet the conditioning standard again if the student will be participating in cheerleading the next sports season?*
- A7:** No. Sports conditioning practices will count toward the cheerleading conditioning requirement, as long as no more than seven days has elapsed between the last game or sports practice and the first cheerleading practice. **(By-Law 270)**
- Q8:** *Our school will be conducting sideline cheer try-outs this spring for the next school year. We have been contacted by a family who will be moving into our school attendance area this summer and enrolling a child for classes during our fall registration period. The child would like to participate in the try-outs this spring; however the student is not currently an enrolled student at our school. Our school does not conduct fall try-outs for the sideline cheer squad. Can the student participate in our spring try-outs?*
- A8:** This is a local school decision as the MSHSAA transfer rules do not apply to MSHSAA sponsored activities (music; dance; sideline cheer; speech, debate & drama; or academic competition). Some schools have addressed this issue by holding a spot open for fall try-outs in case any student who was accepted to the squad in the spring left the district and to also address any new students who moved into the district over the summer. A student shall not be permitted to practice or represent a school until a complete, signed certificate of an issued physical is on file with the school (this would include sideline cheer try-outs). Further, the school should note that the MSHSAA catastrophic insurance would not cover an injured student that is not enrolled at the time of try-outs.

APPENDIX E

GUIDELINES FOR BANDS PERFORMING AT BASKETBALL CONTESTS--Part of the excitement at many of our interscholastic basketball contests involves the spirited music supplied by a pep or jazz band. The performances of the musical group are enjoyed by all attending the game. To ensure full appreciation of the group's performances certain guidelines indicating when to play should be followed. Band directors are reminded that as a courtesy to the teams and cheerleaders of both schools the performance numbers by the band should be limited to a certain schedule. The guidelines listed below indicate an appropriate playing schedule for the band.

1. The band should play before the game begins. The director should coordinate the schedule so that team members may be announced if desired by the host school.
2. The band should play at halftime of the contest.
3. The band should play in between contests, again, coordinating this schedule so that team members may be announced.
4. The band may play at the end of the contest if desired.
5. The band should not play during time outs or the break between quarters in order to allow cheerleaders the opportunity to lead cheers.
6. Musical instruments may not be used as noise makers during the contests.

The band director and his/her performing group will display courtesy and respect to the players and cheerleaders by playing at specific times. Players and coaches need to be able to communicate clearly with each other during time outs. Cheerleaders need to be able to lead cheers during the break between quarters.

With good planning and cooperation the school pep band will be an integral part of the excitement and spirit of the contests.

GUIDELINES FOR BANDS PERFORMING AT FOOTBALL CONTESTS--The participation of bands at a school football contest is an exciting aspect of the event. The band contributes to the event by increasing the level of excitement and adding a "touch of class" to the festivities. In order to maintain a proper perspective and to insure equity in competition for the participating teams, a few guidelines must be followed.

1. During the contest, bands are to play only during pre-game, half-time, post-game, the time between quarters, time-outs (except injury time-outs) and between plays (stopping prior to the referee's whistle for "ready for play").
2. Bands that are seated near the end zone should not play if the line of scrimmage is inside the 10-yard line on the end close to the band. After a touchdown, field goal, extra point, or safety, the band may play the school fight song, etc., however, the director must be sure to stop playing when the official blows the ready for play whistle to start the next play.
3. When bands warm-up prior to half-time, directors should arrange this so that it is done in an area that is not a distraction to the contest. Note: No whistles may be used while the game is in progress.
4. Because the band acts as a spirit group, members should always act in a positive manner and must not do anything to distract or negatively affect the opposing team. It is the director's responsibility to prevent his/her band from playing at inappropriate times, playing inappropriate music, or taunting the opposing team.

The band must display courtesy and respect toward the players, cheerleaders, and fans. To do anything else is not only a distraction from the contest but also reflects negatively on the band, the director, and the school. Support your school and team in a positive manner!

APPENDIX F

Hazing: Willful conduct directed at a student that is intended to physically or emotionally intimidate, punish, embarrass, humiliate, ridicule, or place any student in a disconcerting position for the purpose of initiation, affiliation, inclusion or membership in any team or organization.

Harassment: Unwelcome conduct by a person that is sufficiently serious, persistent or pervasive, so that it affects another person's ability to participate in or benefit from the school program or activity by creating an intimidating, threatening or abusive environment.

It is the policy of the MSHSAA Board of Directors that hazing and harassment have no place in school-sponsored activity programs and pose a significant risk to the physical and mental welfare of students. Coaches, directors, sponsors and administrators must take an active role in the prevention of all forms of hazing and harassment. Students directly or indirectly involved in hazing incidents, on or off school grounds, could be considered ineligible by the school administration under the MSHSAA citizenship standard, By-Law 212.

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