

Round Rock Independent School District



**CHEERLEADER AND
MASCOT HANDBOOK**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL
2009-2010**



Round Rock ISD Athletic Department

February 10, 2009

Round Rock ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disabilities in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs in accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title XI of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and Title II of the American With Disabilities Act. For information on compliance with these, contact RRISD Athletic Department, Round Rock Independent School District Administration, 512-464-5480. Each parent and cheerleader candidate will be provided a current copy of the RRISD Cheerleader/Mascot Handbook. An electronic copy of the current handbook will be accessible on the RRISD Athletic Department web page and a copy will be filed with each Campus Principal, each campus Cheerleader Coach, the Athletic Director(s), the District Cheerleader Program Director and the Round Rock Central Administration Office.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topic	Page Number
Preamble	1
Article I – Purpose	2
Article II –Membership	2
Section A – Squads	2
Section B – Organization	2
Article III – Requirements.....	2
Section A – Participation.....	2
Section B – Academic.....	3
Article IV – Qualifications	3
Section A – Mandatory Parent Meeting.....	3
Section B – Administrative Approval	3
Section C – Required Forms.....	3
Section D – Candidate Applications	4
Article V – Expectations	4
Section A – School Leadership	4
Section B – Physical Functions.....	4
Article VII– Procedures	4
Section A – Jurisdiction.....	4
Section B – Consequences for Misconduct	5
Article VII – Responsibilities	5
Section A – Performance Uniforms	5
Section B – Personal Presentation.....	5
Section C – Student Safety	5
Article VIII – Financial Expectations	5
Section A – Uniform and Equipment	5
Section B – Payments and Funds	6
Article IX – Parent/Coach Communication and Booster Club	6
Section A – Communication of the Parent.....	6
Section B – Communication of the Coach	6
Section C – Appropriate Communication.....	6

Round Rock Independent School District



CHEERLEADER AND MASCOT HANDBOOK **MIDDLE SCHOOL ~ 2009-2010**

PREAMBLE

The Cheerleader and Mascot Handbook guidelines have been developed to outline the expectations and accompanying procedures for each Round Rock Independent School District middle school cheerleading program. This handbook was designed and prepared as a basic operating instrument to define and explain qualifications and responsibilities of the cheerleading programs.

All extracurricular activity participants will be subject to the provisions of the Round Rock ISD Student Code of Conduct, Round Rock ISD Extra Curricular Code of Conduct, University Interscholastic League (UIL) regulations, and the Side by Side Texas Education Agency's (TEA) guidelines for cheerleading. The TEA and the UIL does permit a school district to impose stricter standards than those in the TEA or UIL requirements, but the district shall not impose more lenient standards. Additional cheerleader program expectations may be published by each campus. Therefore, in case of a conflict between this handbook and a campus handbook, this handbook will prevail.

The RRISD Athletic Department will review and evaluate campus decisions for district-wide consistency and continuity in following the intent and spirit of this handbook. The handbook guidelines and procedures are reviewed annually and revised when warranted by the Athletic Department. The contents of this handbook are not contractual, and do not give rise to a claim of breach of contract against Round Rock Independent School District. Furthermore, the contents of this handbook apply to all students of the district, as the contents now appear in the handbook or may be amended in the future.

Revised February 2009 – Round Rock Independent School District – Athletic Department

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

The purpose of cheerleading is to create, promote and uphold school spirit and a positive school environment by participating at athletic events and extracurricular activities as deemed appropriate by the campus administration and cheer coaches and/or sponsor. Participation in the regular curriculum is a right afforded to each student, while participation in the extracurricular program is a privilege that carries additional expectations for acceptable conduct.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

The number of candidates selected to participate in the cheerleading program for each campus will determine whether or not there is a need for multiple squads per grade level.

Section A – Squads

1. The cheerleading sponsor/coach and campus administration will determine the number of squads appropriate for each campus.
2. The cheerleading participants will be divided by proportionate numbers rather than by ability.
3. Tryouts for squad selections are prohibited.

Section B – Organization

1. The cheerleading participants will be placed on a squad by the coach and/or sponsor.
2. Squad membership will exist from the day the approved candidates are announced to the last of the subsequent school year.
3. Membership of a cheerleading squad will be determined by academic record and behavior requirements, attendance to a mandatory parent meeting, current physical and emergency card, and a completed candidate application by the due date. (See Article III and IV)
4. Squads may or may not include the selection of a captain or head cheerleader to be determined by the coach and/or sponsor(s).
5. Squads may or may not include a school mascot(s).
 - The school mascot will be known as a squad member and he/she will promote school spirit at athletic events by assuming the identity of the school mascot.
 - The number of individuals portraying mascots selected per campus will be determined by the Campus Principal or his/her designee.

ARTICLE III – REQUIREMENTS

Section A – Participation

1. Cheerleaders must attend all scheduled practice and performances.
 - Cheerleaders absent from a practice or performance will be subject to discipline, unless extenuating circumstances exist.

- Cheerleaders involved in numerous school activities with required conflicting practice times will be excused from practice during the corresponding season only.
 - Cheerleaders may be prohibited from physical activity and may be allowed an excused absence with a doctor's restriction in a written statement submitted to the coach and/or sponsor.
2. Cheerleading squads will **not** be allowed to participate, as a representative of the school, in cheerleading squad competitions.

Section B – Academic

1. Any cheerleader that receives a grade **below** 70 at the end of a grading period or who fails to meet the standards in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not participate in extracurricular activities for the allotted time set by the RRISD UIL Athletic Eligibility Schedule.
2. Any cheerleader that becomes ineligible, he/she will not be allowed to perform, travel with the squad, or wear his/her uniform for any reason for the term of ineligibility. The Head Coach will determine if the cheerleader(s) is required to attend an event without participation.
3. Any cheerleader that has been ineligible for more than two six-weeks grading periods during the current school year shall be subject to dismissal from the squad for the remainder of the year.

ARTICLE IV – QUALIFICATIONS

A candidate must be enrolled in a Round Rock ISD school and must follow all procedures to be eligible for a squad. Candidates are required to reside in the attendance area of the school or be entitled to an in-district transfer pursuant to Round Rock ISD policies.

Section A –Mandatory Parent Meeting

1. All candidates and their parent/guardian(s) must attend a cheerleader orientation meeting.
2. A sign-in sheet will be used for verification of attendance to this meeting.
3. If a parent/guardian is unable to attend the informational meeting due to extenuating circumstances, the parent/guardian of the candidate must notify the campus administration (1) to be absent, (2) name a proxy to take his/her place at the meeting, (3) must make arrangements to receive all written and verbal materials and information from the cheerleader information meeting.
4. Verification of the parent/guardian absence and attendance by a named proxy will be communicated by the campus administration to the cheer coach.
5. Failure of the parent/guardian or named proxy to attend the mandatory meeting will result in the candidate's being ineligible for a squad selection.

Section B –Administrative Approval

Cheerleader candidates will be limited to those approved by the designated campus principal, using the following criteria:

1. Candidates will not have been academically ineligible for two or more six-weeks grading periods during the current school year.
2. Candidates must have exhibited appropriate conduct in the classroom and other school and community settings in accordance with the Round Rock ISD Student Code of Conduct and the Round Rock ISD Extra Curricular Code of Conduct.
3. Citizenship and discipline records for each candidate will be considered for a measure of the conduct standards.
4. Any cheerleader who has resigned or been removed from a previous cheerleading squad must have the approval of the designated campus principal to be considered for a future squad. The determination of extenuating circumstances must be made by the designated campus principal and the approval must be given in writing, signed and placed in the student's file.

Section C –Required Forms

Completed and current forms to participate must be submitted to the coach and/or sponsor(s):

1. RRISD Emergency Information Card
2. RRISD Medical History & Physical Form

Section D – Candidate Application

All applications for a cheerleading squad will be reviewed and approved for placement by the coach/sponsor and the designated campus principal. The **Cheerleader/Mascot Candidate Application Form** will be available on each middle school campus and the district website listed under the Athletic Department.

1. A candidate application must be completed and submitted to the coach and/or sponsor in order to be eligible for consideration in the subsequent school year.
2. Each campus will designate and announce a deadline date for applications to submitted. Deadlines for submission of applications will be announced to all student populations.
3. Any student that has transferred into the district after the application deadline has passed may or may not be considered for placement on a squad by campus administration. In this situation, the placement of a candidate will be contingent on the availability of the required uniform and execution to all above mentioned procedures in Article IV.

ARTICLE V – EXPECTATIONS

Cheerleaders must enjoy learning and performing cheers, chants, and dances. Cheerleaders must promote and maintain relationships with faculty, administration, student body, and work cooperatively with athletic teams and all school organizations.

Section A – School Leadership

1. Cheerleaders are required to abide by rules and follow directions given by school authorities.
2. Cheerleaders will demonstrate determination, hard work, strength, dedication, and self discipline.
3. Cheerleaders will strive to cooperate and be a part of a cohesive unit.
4. Cheerleaders will strive to improve themselves and others through positive interaction and accountability.
5. Cheerleaders will exhibit loyalty to the squad and demonstrate leadership, honor, and integrity.
6. Cheerleaders will demonstrate good sportsmanship and promote school spirit which will be defined by a generosity and genuine concern for others.

Section B – Physical Functions

Cheerleaders must be capable of performing the essential functions for a cheerleader. Functions as listed:

1. Cheerleaders will demonstrate clear diction and vocal strength.
2. Cheerleaders will perform physical moves that may involve jumps, rhythm and coordination, balance, agility and upper body strength.
3. Cheerleaders will exhibit stamina in physical activities that involve physical endurance and fitness and they will be able to perform routines in both indoor and outdoor settings, in heat and cold weather.

ARTICLE VI –PROCEDURES

Cheer coaches or sponsors will manage daily decisions regarding the cheerleader program. Cheer coaches or sponsors may develop and enforce standards of behavior that are higher than the district and they shall be published for a campus with the approval of the designated campus principal.

Section A - Jurisdiction

1. Cheerleader issues and decisions will be determined by a final resolution made by the Campus Principal or his/her designee and the coach and/or sponsor.
2. Any conflict between two or more school activities or events will be resolved between the campus program directors and a final resolution will be determined by the appropriate campus administrator.

Section B – Consequences for Misconduct

1. Cheerleaders are not permitted to use hazing with initiation activities related to any cheerleader organization.
(RRISD Policy FNCC)
2. Cheerleading squad membership may be terminated for unacceptable standards of conduct by the Head Coach and/or sponsor and the Campus Principal or his/her designee.
3. Suspension or probation will eliminate the cheerleader from participation in performances and special events for a determined length of time.

4. Dismissal or removal from the squad will be a loss of membership and he/she will forfeit all privileges of the program.
5. Resignation will be a choice made by the individual member that he/she no longer desires to participate for the duration of the school year.
6. Any member dismissed, removed or resigned of his/her position in the cheerleader program must complete all financial obligations for non-returnable/non-refundable merchandise, and turn in all school-owned uniforms.

ARTICLE VII- RESPONSIBILITIES

Being a member of the RRISD cheer program is an honor, a responsibility and a privilege. Due to the level of the visibility of campus cheerleaders, it is imperative that squad members set a good example for peers.

Section A – Performance Uniforms

1. Uniforms will be worn by squad members only when instructed by the coach and/or sponsor.
2. Uniforms worn during the school day must meet the Round Rock ISD dress code regulation.
3. Cheerleaders must ensure the uniform is clean and in good condition before each performance.

Section B – Personal Presentation

1. Cheerleaders will wear hair and fingernails as designated by the coach and/or sponsor.
2. Cheerleaders will not chew gum or eat during practice, pep rally, game or performance.
3. Cheerleaders may not wear jewelry while in uniform, practicing, or performing.
4. Cheerleaders may not wear navel rings, tongue jewelry, and any other type of body piercing.
5. Cheerleaders may not wear bandage coverings, a spacer or retainer inserted into a pierced area.

Section C – Student Safety

1. Cheerleader performances shall be in accordance with the National Federation Spirit Handbook.
2. Cheerleaders will remain under the supervision and follow the direction of the coach/sponsor during all performances and scheduled practices.

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Parents must purchase the necessary uniform and provide money for other clothing or equipment costs of being a squad member. Cheerleaders may be required to participate in fundraising activities to compensate for the costs.

Section A – Uniform and Equipment

1. A maximum **out-of-pocket expense of \$400** per cheerleader may be incurred for required cheerleader clothing, uniforms, and equipment.
2. Additional funds may be required to attend an optional summer camp. If a squad member cannot attend the summer camp, he or she will not be subject to disciplinary action.

Section B – Payments and Funds

1. Payment plans may be cooperatively arranged with the coach and campus business administration to cover cheerleader costs. The payments must not extend beyond the school year in which the student participates on a cheer squad.
2. Cheerleader activity funds will not be used to purchase gifts of any type for athletes or other cheerleading squads. (UIL.480/2)

ARTICLE IX – PARENT, SCHOOL AND COACH COMMUNICATION

Parents have the right to know, and understand the expectations placed on them and their children. Coaches have the right to know if parents have a concern; a parent should discuss concerns with the coach at the appropriate time and place.

Section A - Communication of the Parent

Communication coaches should expect from parents:

1. Concerns regarding a son/daughter expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place.
2. Specific concerns with regard to the coach's philosophy and/or expectations.
3. Notification of any schedule conflicts to the coach.
4. Issues appropriate for discussion with the coach and/or school administrator is encouraged:
 - o Mental and physical treatment of a student.
 - o Improvements on which a cheerleader/mascot may need to focus.
 - o Student behavior.
 - o Student safety.
5. Issues **not** appropriate for discussion with a coach:
 - o Squad selection of cheers, chants, stunts or elements of a performance.
 - o Any situation that deals with other student athletes or squad members.

Section B – Communication of the Coach

Communication parents should expect from their student's coach:

1. Requirements the coach has for his/her student and the squad.
2. Locations and times of practices and performances.
3. Squad requirements of fees, special equipment, uniforms, squad rules, travel arrangements and off-season expectations.
4. Procedures in the event his/her student becomes injured during a performance or practice.

Section C – Appropriate Communication Between Parent, School and Coach

There are situations that may require a conference to promote resolution to the issue.

If a parent has a concern to discuss with the coach, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Call the coach to set up an appointment.
2. Outline and define objectives for a meeting and stick to discussing facts only.
3. Do not confront the coach before, during or after a practice or performance. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution of the situation, but often escalate it.
4. Do not attempt to enter the cheerleader practice session without **prior** written permission from the Campus Principal or his/her designee. Parents and guardians are restricted to campus visits under the guidelines for campus visitors in Round Rock ISD.
5. If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, a parent or guardian should call the Campus Principal to set up a meeting with the coach.