



Mt. Carmel High School CHEERLEADING Handbook 2019 / 2020



Philosophy

The Mt. Carmel Cheer Squad will serve as an athletic organization that supports athletic teams and activities that comprise MCHS. The purpose of the squad is to create a unified group of athletes who share in a similar commitment to promote school spirit and good sportsmanship. The squad will also encourage and sustain crowd involvement, help student participants and spectators enjoy the spirit of the event, and above all exemplify class.

The MCHS cheerleaders are highly visible on the school campus and in the community; therefore, high standards and appropriate conduct are essential at all times. The squad must demonstrate positive personal behavior and cohesiveness and provide a standard in which others should emulate.

Part A ~ PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

Cheerleaders are student athletes who exemplify and promote school spirit, pride, and sportsmanship. Cheerleaders enhance a positive school climate by exhibiting leadership skills such as respect for individual differences, academic excellence, and modeling appropriate behaviors, in and away from school, at all times.

Cheerleaders are expected to be athletically skilled in the field of cheerleading and both mentally and physically fit. As a representative of MCHS, members of the cheerleading squad will be expected to maintain a higher standard of behavior than that of their peers, both on and off campus. In or out of uniform, cheerleaders always have a responsibility to meet these expectations.

Composition ~ The cheerleading program will consist of two separate cheer squads: Junior Varsity, and Varsity. The recommended numbers for the 2019/2020 school year are: Junior Varsity 16-18; and Varsity 20-24.

Recommended Academic and Citizenship Requirements ~ A minimum GPA of 2.5 is preferred for all members of the cheer team, at all times, including tryouts. If a student falls below a 2.5 on the progress report following tryouts, student will be benched until grades have been brought up. Grades will be checked at each progress report period (ie – 2 times per season)

If a student falls below the minimum at the end of each grading period, the student is considered ineligible. During this period the cheerleader is still required to attend all practices and activities, but is benched for all games, performances and any extracurricular activities until the next grading period or proof of grades above 2.5. Upon a second drop below a 2.5 (during any grading period), student will be dismissed from the squad.

Fundraising: This is a necessary component of every team or group! Money earned is used to fund the cheer program. There will be several fundraising opportunities throughout the year, and each member of the squad is expected to participate in at least 50% of the planned events. It is essential that every member do his/her part. Individuals who do not participate in Fundraising will not earn the right to a Varsity Letter.

Part B ~ Guidelines and Expectations

Uniform and Dress Code: *Failure to wear any part of the uniform or practice gear during game day and / or required school activities, practices, or games, as identified by coaches, staff or other personnel, will result with the cheerleader not being allowed to perform/participate at the coach's discretion. All athletes are required to have one pair of non-distressed blue jeans for specific Community / Fundraising events.*

- * **Before any alterations to the uniform it MUST be cleared by your Coach.**
- * The cheerleader is required to be in uniform (skirt, shell, briefs, approved shoes/white “no show” socks, & bow) prior to arriving at the game or event. (The coach will determine hair style, and whether the liner and/or warm-ups will be worn.)

- * **There will be no putting on make-up, doing hair or changing on the field, court, or bleachers.**
- * As long as you are in full uniform, no other pieces of clothing may be worn (Ugg's, flip-flops, jackets, etc....). After games/activities DO NOT wear partial uniform.
- * **No jewelry of any kind including body piercings** may be worn during practice, game or performance.
- * Nails must be kept at short sport length at coach's discretion.
- * No visible Tattoos (must be covered)
- * No gum chewing or candy during practice or games
- * Hair must be pulled back and off the face.
- * **All pieces of gear (to include uniforms, bows, poms, boxes, warm-ups, etc.) will be brought by the cheerleader to each event, game, and practice.**
- * For Practice Days ~ Required attire for practices are shorts, t-shirts, sweats, leggings, athletic shoes, socks. Male athletes must wear compression shorts under their practice clothes. Female athletes must wear uniform briefs and sports bras under practice clothes. It is unacceptable to wear a sports bra by itself. No loose clothing that hangs off shoulders. There will be a weekly practice attire rotation announced on a monthly calendar.
- * Game Days at School ~ The coach will determine what is worn on these days prior to Game Day. If you show up and you're missing any part of your attire, you will sit out 1 quarter of game. If your missing uniform or box arrives in the middle of quarter, you will sit out until the next quarter starts.

Cheer Behaviors and Expectations

- * Above all, cheerleaders will abide by all school rules and regulations.
- * Cheerleaders will be dressed out and ready to practice by specified practice time.

- * Cheerleaders will know all chants, cheers, and routines.
- * Cheerleaders will not use cell phones, I-pods, or other devices during practices, games, or other cheer events unless otherwise requested by coach.
- * Cheerleaders will not eat during practices, games, or events unless given permission by the coach (this includes gum).
- * Cheerleaders will be focused and on task at all times.
- * Cheerleaders will be respectful of themselves and others.
- * Cheerleaders will be responsible for their actions, attitudes, and performances. Coaches have the right to pull cheerleaders from games/events if they feel cheerleader is not performing up to their expectation or he/she is not reflecting the appropriate attitude.
- * Cheerleaders will maintain a positive and outgoing attitude when cheering.
- * *Cheerleader are expected to be flexibility with new material, formations and/or stunt positions.
- * Cheerleaders will use appropriate language at all times.
- * Cheerleader's will use appropriate displays of affection, especially in uniform or spirit wear at games and at school.
- * Cheerleaders will represent the school in a positive manner on and off campus.
- * Cheerleaders will always give the task at hand 100%, and without complaint.
- * *Cheerleaders are expected to support the coaching and captain's decisions. If you have concerns, please refer to the hierarchy.
- * Cheerleaders will ALWAYS represent themselves with class on ALL SOCIAL MEDIA including text messages. Foul language, inappropriate pictures/videos, hazing or harassing on any social

media will not be tolerated. As this issue is taken very seriously on our campus, depending on the severity and occurrence of the incident, any bullying / cyber bullying issues or social media conflicts will result in parents being notified, a written write up or dismissal from the squad which is left up to the discretion of the Head Coach and Athletic Director.

Time Commitment ~ Being a member of the Mt. Carmel Cheerleading team requires a major commitment from athletes and their families. Cheerleading is a two-season sport including Fall and Winter. Successful cheerleading teams require many hours of work from each athlete. Our goals include developing as an individual and as a team. These goals take no less than 100% effort from each individual. Therefore, it is important for athletes to understand the necessity of time management. Calendars are essential! Calendars will be reviewed weekly at practices.

Outside commitments should not conflict with any student's cheerleading duties. Please consult the practice and cheer calendar before making personal appointments. By committing to the program, the athlete is making cheer their primary responsibility. Other outside commitments, including work, must not interfere with participation in an event, game, and/or practice. Conflicts should be communicated via the Conflict Form at the beginning of the season. Any additional, unexpected conflicts must be communicated with the coach on an individual basis via email.

- * Team Fundraising events, community service events, rallies, and showcases

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROCEDURE: Policies and procedures are put forth in this handbook to ensure that all aspects of the cheer program run smoothly, and that each member has a fair, safe, positive, and successful experience.

At times, unforeseen circumstances may dictate modification of a policy. In this case, modifications will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion and judgment of the coach.

- * Any cheerleader who is ineligible for any reason is expected to attend all practices and games in full uniform/practice gear and sit where designated by the coach; this includes injured members.
- * The entire squad is expected to be at games, rallies, practices, and events on time.

- * Transportation, when not provided by the school, will fall upon the cheerleader.
- * **If a cheerleader is absent for any reason for any event, he/she must contact the coach prior to the absence.** Do not send word with another team member, we will not accept messages from anyone but the parent or cheerleader that is absent. Calling the school to clear attendance will not clear the cheerleader from cheer. If we do not hear from the cheerleader or parent prior to practice, game or event, the cheerleader will be docked as an unexcused absence. It is not the coach's responsibility to figure out where you are.

Attendance/Discipline ~ *The school policies for attendance and discipline, as stated in the school handbook, will be enforced. If at any time a cheerleader acts or speaks inappropriately, causes harm to another student, or simply acts with conduct detrimental to the organization, the coach reserves the right to choose the appropriate consequence. Any member who quits (for an unexcused reason) will be disqualified from trying out the following year. Any member who quits or does not complete a full Cheer Season forfeits their right to earn a varsity letter or certificate of completion.*

Attendance: Good attendance is a priority at MCHS and a key to academic and athletic success. Attendance Reports are provided and monitored on a weekly basis. Every 3 unverified school absences and/or 3 tardies will result in being benched from a portion of the game.

Absence: All cheerleaders will be allowed a total of 3 "sick days" per trimester. A "sick day" will be classified as a day in which the cheerleader is absent from school due to illness and is not seen by a doctor. If a cheerleader is sick before/during/after school, **he/she must still check in/contact their coach** and it will be up to the coaches' discretion. If cheerleader has limitation due to injury, they will sit out until cleared by a doctor.

Discipline: Every school discipline occurrence will result in being benched for a portion of the game. (Class cut, dress code, defiant at any time, caught with electronics) MCHS school discipline will be checked weekly.

Cheerleaders must inform coaches of all school activities in order to be cleared from an absence/tardy and all vacations must be given in a 1- 2 weeks advance notice.

➤ **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

- Illness (more than 3 days provide doctor note)

- Injury with doctor note that prevents attendance
- Doctor/dentist appointment (with note provided- 3days to clear)
- Funeral
- Religious holiday & vacations with 1 - 2 weeks given notice
- Emergency (contact coach); absence pre-arranged and approved by the coach.

➤ **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

- Doctor/dentist appt. without a note;
- Work/job; uniform/dress code violation;
- Tardiness
- Vacation (not cleared 1 - 2 weeks in advance)
- Extra-curricular outside of school (must be approved by coaches 1 - 2 weeks in advance).

Mt. Carmel's 2019/2020 Cheer program will document discipline and behavior. Each cheerleader will have the same expectations to follow school rules. **Depending on the severity and occurrence of the incident, the coach reserves the right to determine the appropriate action to take, which can include dismissal from the squad.**

Complaint/Concern Procedures ~ Please follow this hierarchy:

- 1). Bring your concern/complaint to your squad's coach's attention first. Most issues can be resolved at this time.
- 2). If then you are still not satisfied, contact Aubry, Twamley, Head Cheer Coach overseeing the cheer program at aubry.twamley@gmail.com.
- 3). If the above steps have been done and you are still not satisfied, then you may make an appointment with the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director and or Principal will not meet with parents unless the above steps have been taken.

Communication – Communication will be relayed to the Athletes and Parents via a weekly email. The Calendar will be posted on the Cheer Website (www.mchscheer.com) and will be updated periodically. Coaches can be contacted via emails. Emails should be responded with 48 'business' hours.



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Cheerleading Handbook Acknowledgement

Signing the *Cheerleading Handbook Parent/Student Acknowledgement* form confirms agreement to the expectations outlined on the previous pages.

The cheerleader must follow the rules and expectations throughout the entire season. Failure to follow this contract may result in dismissal from the squad.

Student Signature X _____

Student Name (print) X _____

Parent Signature X _____

Parent Name (print) X _____

Coach's Signature X _____

Date ~ _____