

## West Chester East High School Cheerleading Handbook Rules & Guidelines

If you have been selected as a Viking Cheerleader, you will be representing a very fine school and district. Your appearance will reflect favorably or unfavorably on East High School and your coaches. If you are unable to abide by the rules, you may be benched, suspended, or dismissed from the squad (disciplinary action may also be taken).

### **I. Organization**

A. These rules and guidelines have been written and adopted for the West Chester East Cheerleading Team. The team and its rules are governed by West Chester East High School, the coaches, the athletic director, the principals, and the team members.

B. Henceforth, the name of the organization shall be East Cheerleading

C. The purpose of the East Cheerleading Team is to:

i. Create school spirit, pride, and loyalty

ii. Promote interest in school activities, perform at team games, and participate in competition

iii. Develop responsibility, teach self-respect, encourage honest effort, strive for excellence, and develop character.

iv. Teach teamwork and pride in quality performance through maintaining high standards

D. An advisor hired by the West Chester Area School District upon recommendation of the principal will be responsible:

i. Daily running of activities for the cheerleading team

ii. Administering all disciplinary procedures

iii. Placing certain restrictions on team members

### **II. Practice** – Cheerleading is a team effort. If one member is absent everyone suffers!

A. Practices are scheduled by the coach. You are expected to attend ALL practices. This is a sport and a team sport.

Those that miss practices, cause the team to be unable to stunt. Stunting is critical in this sport. PRACTICES ARE NOT OPTIONAL.

B. If you are absent from school, you may not attend practice or cheer at a game on the date of the absence.

C. ABSENCES: If you are going to be absent from a practice or a game, you must notify the coach as soon as you know you will NOT be in school. The following excuses MAY be considered excused, upon coach's decision:

Weddings, funerals, family emergencies, college visits (Jr. & Seniors only – with prior notification).

i. Absences without prior notification or approval will result in consequences and/or demerits.

ii. The coach must be made aware of medical appointments and you must provide a signed note from the doctor's office with a phone number. We recommend and encourage making appointments on days we don't have scheduled practices and/or have night games. PLEASE MAKE APPOINTMENTS AFTER PRACTICES

### **III. Game, practices or other squad events**

A. All cheerleaders are required to arrive PRIOR to the assigned arrival time.

B. Uniforms must be clean. Everyone must have the same uniform with them in case the temperature changes. If someone is also unprepared, they will receive demerits. If someone refuses to wear the assigned uniform, they will receive demerits and if they are asked to leave the event. (Uniform is defined as – Bow, skirt, shell, liner, RED bloomers/boy shorts, poms, and sweat suit/jacket and cheer sneakers.)

C. No chewing gum

D. No eating or drinking while cheering (unless allowed by the coach). ONLY CLEAR DRINKS ALLOWED WHILE IN UNIFORM.

E. Do not comb hair or apply make-up in front of fans.

F. No jewelry during practice, games, or performances.

G. Inappropriate behavior while in uniform will result in demerits that will lead to being benched, suspended from the team, or possible dismissal from the team.

H. Not cheering while on the field or court may result in being benched or suspended.

I. Not following a captain's request, especially when performing will result in demerits.

J. Misconduct or insubordinate behavior will be dealt with on an individual basis & consequences will be assigned at the discretion of the coach, athletic director, & grade level administrator if necessary as well as demerits!

#### **IV. General Guidelines**

##### **A. Academic Eligibility –**

- i. Everyone will be included on a weekly eligibility list. If you are failing two subjects, you are not permitted to cheer until you are passing at least one of the two subjects. After 15 days of being academically ineligible you will be dismissed.
- ii. Your coach and teacher may be in contact; however, it is your responsibility to prove eligibility if there is an error. Teacher must email the Athletic Director, NOT the coach to advise eligibility.

##### **B. Disciplinary Eligibility –**

- i. Cheerleaders are expected to follow East's Activity Policy concerning drugs and alcohol. Failure to comply will result in demerits, Suspension, or Dismissal.
- ii. Repeat offenses may result in dismissal from the squad (at the discretion of the coach and/or athletic director, and administrators).

##### **C. Team Eligibility –**

- i. Any Cheerleader who makes the team, must commit for the full football and basketball season. ii. Any cheerleader who is on the team and decides to quit at any time after the season begins, MUST wait an entire school year after the current season is completed to try out again.
  - a. (ie. Cheerleader quits in July or Nov or Jan of 2019-20 school year cannot tryout again until 2021-2022 school year)

#### **V. Competitions**

- A. Decisions to compete will be made by the coach.
- B. Attendance at all competitions and competition practices are mandatory! If you cannot attend, you will not be on the competition team.
- C. Alternates WILL learn the entire routine and only compete if pulled up in the event of injury or dismissal of another teammate. They WILL attend all practices and competitions unless directed by coach.
- D. All competition team families, including alternates will be responsible for their entire financial obligations that were given at the beginning of the season. Parents may work out a payment plan for their child, but they must be paid in full by scheduled due dates. Contact boosters to work out payment plans. You cannot be on the competition team if you are not paying for the regular season and competition season obligations.
- E. Any cheerleader who brings, transports or consumes/smoke, alcohol or drugs at any nt/competition will be removed from the event immediately at the parent's expense.

#### **VI. Personal Conduct**

- A. No P.D.A. (Public Display of Affection) especially while in uniform
- B. No swearing or foul language (in or out of uniform)
- C. Cheerleaders must ride the bus to and home from all away games unless they are riding with their own parents/guardian. No one will be permitted to go home with anyone other than an adult and there must be written and verbal confirmation with the parents and coaches.
- D. No jewelry during practice, games, or performances
- E. Honest and responsible behavior is always expected! (This means in the classroom and hallways of East High School and while on any trips where you are participating or representing East High School)
- F. Anyone who is caught physically or verbally abusing another team member in person OR on the internet OR texting OR in any other way will receive disciplinary action from the coaches and/or administrators at East High School.
- G. No smoking, taking drugs of any kind, while in uniform.

#### **VII. Cheerleading Responsibilities**

- A. All cheerleaders must attend: (if scheduled) SEE WEBSITE WWW.WESTCHESTEREASTCHEER.COM
  - i. Pre-season practice & Summer Camp (cost for camp)
  - ii. All Homecoming Activities (Pep Rally, Decorating, Parade, Game, & all Dance responsibilities)
  - iii. Parades (unless religious beliefs do not allow participation)
  - iv. All squad activities and fundraisers
- B. Varsity Cheerleaders (Game Day) – All varsity football games, play-off games, and cheerleading competitions unless excused by the coach.

C. Junior Varsity Cheerleaders – All JV Football games, play-off games (girl's & boy's), and those games announced by the Head Coach in which both squads (JV & Varsity game day squad) are required to Cheer & Competitions (if any).

D. Basketball –Varsity/JV – all home boys and girl basketball games, unless otherwise noted by the head Coach.

### **VIII. Attendance**

A. All students who participate in school activities/practices must be in school by 8:30am the day the activity is scheduled.

B. If a member is ill and misses ANY activities, she /he must be HOME or SEEKING MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS (documented in writing by a parent or a doctor)

C. If a team member misses ANY practice time, she/he may be cut or replaced by an alternate for that performance or taken out of the performance completely.

D. All doctor's appointments, etc., should be scheduled so they do not interfere with cheerleading activities and a note should be presented to the coach prior to the absence. We recommend making appoints on days/times that we don't have scheduled practices, events and/or games.

E. All team members must attend each activity in its entirety unless excused by the coach.

F. Work, concerts, vacations during the season and family parties are not excusable absences and will result in consequences.

### **IX. Uniforms**

A. Each member will be expected to purchase all items as defined on the order form. For returning cheerleaders, if you already have ALL of the items on the order form, you do not need to reorder them.

B. Any financial problems need to be discussed with boosters.

C. Team uniforms or any clothing distributed (defined in III. B.) are provided by the East Cheerleading Program and are the property of East Cheer. Each member will be responsible for the cost to replace any article of their uniform if lost or damaged. Damage includes, holes, stains, color bleed, tears, zippers broken, etc. (price will include the cost of shipping & handling).

D. Each cheerleader will be required to maintain good condition and cleanliness of their uniform on a weekly basis.

E. Each member will be required to have the uniform cleaned and in good condition before it is turned in at the end of the season. Each uniform is numbered, so cheerleaders will be responsible for the number uniform they were issued.

### **X. Medical**

A. Each member must have a complete physical exam before the start of the season in Aug.

B. A copy of the Pre-Participation physical packet may be obtained from the Athletic Director's Office AND uploaded to the Family ID website.

C. After June 1st, but prior to cheer camp, each member must turn in a completed PIAA physical packet to the East

Athletic Department. It must be signed, dated, and stamped in the appropriate places by a physician. The cheerleader and the parent/guardian must also complete and sign the packet in the appropriate spaces.

D. Any cheerleader that becomes pregnant during the season will be dismissed from the team.

E. Any cheerleader that becomes injured throughout the season is still a member of the team and should attend all squad events including practices, games, and competitions if possible.

### **XI. Character**

A. A team member should be leaders within the school and always set a good example.

B. Team members should be above reproach maintaining good personal appearance and habits that cannot be criticized.

i. Smoking, drinking and/or drug use are grounds for dismissal by the coach/athletic director/principals.

ii. Each member must abide by those standards set by EHS which are found in the Student Handbook and the Student Activity Policy.

iii. Cheerleaders must always abide by the school dress code.

C. A member must be courteous and friendly to all other team members as well as the student body at EHS.

D. A member must be courteous, respectful, and friendly to other teams and visitors of EHS.

E. A member must be respectful to the Advisor/Coach and a credit to the school.

## **XII. Demerits**

- A. Demerits will be used as a disciplinary tool. This can result in dismissal from the team.
- B. They will be given by the coach.

## **XIII. Booster Club – Booster club is established to act as an aid to the coach and the squad, as well as assist with fund when the coach deems necessary. Refusal to work with the coach when assistance is needed can result in the booster club being dis-banned and all monies will be deposited in the school EHS cheer account.**

- A. When a student becomes a member of the East Cheerleading Team, their parents automatically become a member of the Cheerleading Booster Club.
- B. The Booster Club is governed by officers. There will be functioning committees with organization.
- C. Members of the organization could pay annual dues of \$80.00 per family. Late fees can be applied.
- D. Each member of the booster club is expected to volunteer their time to help with cheerleading related events.

## **XIV. Fund-Raising – It is a vital part of keeping our program running with proper equipment, transportation, and fees.**

- A. All members are required to participate in all fund-raising which is generated by the team, coaches, or the booster club. Some fundraisers are team based and other are individual based to help defer cheerleader costs.
- B. There may be set goals or sponsorships for each member to attain their fund-raising activities.
- C. Cheerleaders who do not participate in team fundraisers, will run the risk of not making the competition team.

## **XV. Transportation – All cheerleaders are expected to have transportation to and from all squad events.**

- A. Cheerleaders who are late due to transportation difficulties will receive demerits.
- B. All cheerleaders are expected to be picked up at the conclusion of all games, practices, or squad events per administration. Parents are messaged by the 3rd quarter/period of every game to allow time to be on time at the conclusion of the event. Failure to comply with this rule will result in consequences of benching or dismissal. Please respect everyone's time and **BE ON TIME OR MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CARPOOLING.**

## **XVI. Social Media Guidelines**

### **BEST PRACTICE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USE:**

These guidelines are intended to provide a framework for EAST Cheer to conduct themselves safely and responsibly in an online environment. As a cheerleader, you should:

- A. **Be Aware that Privacy Settings are NOT Foolproof.** Squad members are highly encouraged to use privacy settings on social media sites. However, be aware that privacy settings are not foolproof. Although social media sites provide their users with privacy improvement updates, the changes occur frequently and can get complicated. Even if you diligently monitor your privacy settings, it's best to assume that anything you post may potentially be seen by your school, your parents, your coach, your employer, your college of choice and strangers.
- B. **Avoid Posting Confidential Information.** Be aware of the kind of information you are posting on social media sites. Posting information such as your date of birth, address, phone number, class schedule, social security number, bank account number, etc. is **NOT** recommended. Once such information is posted, it becomes the property of the social media site.
- C. **Avoid Unprofessional Public Profiles.** Any information you put on social media sites is considered public information and may be viewed by members of the public. Be mindful of the image you create for yourself online. Potential, current and future employers as well as college admissions recruiters may access the information you put on social media sites.
- D. **Avoid Posting Illegal Activities.** Photos posted via social media become the property of the social media site. You may delete the photo from your profile, but the photo remains on the social media site's server. Internet search engines such as Google or Yahoo may still find that image long after you have deleted it from your profile. In addition, even if your profile is set to private, a friend can always download and save incriminating photos that third parties, such as the authorities, can use against you in the future. Squad members should avoid the following:

- Incriminating photos or statements depicting violence; hazing; sexual harassment; vandalism; stalking; underage drinking; selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; smoking or any other inappropriate behaviors. Members will post anything in WC EAST CHEER attire/logo that is deemed inappropriate or damaging of the individual/team culture and image.

E. **Avoid Bullying\Threats of Violence.** While people have a right to free speech, that right is NOT unlimited. Bullying is a serious problem and is not limited to student-to-student interactions. Vicious treatment and hateful words often lead to violence, suicide, depression, and discrimination. Squad members should avoid the following:

- Derogatory language or remarks about teammates, coaches, students, staff members, athletic administrators, or representatives of other schools.
- Demeaning statements about and/or threats to any third party; and
- Creating danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.

Squad members should be aware that if their conduct is deemed inappropriate, such conduct may be subject to removal from team and/or discipline, not only by school authorities, but also by law enforcement agencies.

### West Chester East Cheerleading Demerit Policy

1. Excused Absence from Practice = cheerleader was in school, had an excuse to get out of practice (i.e. PRIOR parent's note received, anything the coaches know about & deemed excused) = 1 Demerit

2. Unexcused Absence from Practice = cheerleader was in school, no valid excuse given to coaches or no contact with coach about absence PRIOR to practice is therefore deemed unexcused (teammates passing along a message is not considered your contact with the coach) = 3 Demerits

3. Ineligible (Academic /Disciplinary)

a. Each day missed = 1 Demerit

b. Over 15 days ineligible = Grounds for dismissal from team

c. Any teammate on a competition team that is ineligible more than one time during the season, is subject to dismissal.

4. Do Not Participate in GYM = cheerleader must come to practice, but will not be able to practice or participate in any event

= 1 Demerit

5. Asked to Leave Practice by a Coach = cheerleader is asked to leave practice, an event, or game because he/she is being disrespectful to coaches or teammates = 2 Demerits
6. Saturday School = 3 Demerits
7. After School Detention = 2 Demerits
8. Out of School Suspension = Grounds for dismissal from team. Meeting with coach.
9. Cannot Attend Competition = Cheerleader cannot attend a competition he/she may be removed from the routine.
10. Late to Practice (No communication prior to coach) = 1 Demerit each time (on time is mats out and stretched by start time)
11. Injured = cheerleaders should still come to practice if he/she is injured, UNLESS otherwise stated by the trainer or doctor.
12. Home Sick = cheerleader is home sick and DOES NOT attend school, they cannot come to practice/game. If cheerleader does not notify coach of absence PRIOR to practice/game = 1 Demerit
13. Excused Absence from Game = cheerleader was in school, had an excuse to get out of game (i.e. PRIOR to day of game - parent's note or the coaches know about & deemed excused) = 1 Demerit
14. Unexcused Absence from Game = cheerleader was in school, no valid excuse given to coaches PRIOR to game is therefore deemed unexcused = 5 Demerits
15. Uniform Infraction = cheerleader not in full uniform for games (including bloomers/bows) = 3 Demerits (cheerleader may be benched for that game)

DEMERITS =

10 Demerits = meeting with coaches, parent and cheerleader

15 Demerits = suspension from games/events/competitions

Over 15 Demerits = Grounds for dismissal from team

\*\*\* PRIOR is defined as notification hours/days before, NOT just prior to event or practice