

CARROLL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADER CONSTITUTION 2007-2008

THIS CONSTITUTION IS DESIGNED TO SERVE AS A SET OF GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTRATORS, SPONSORS, PARENTS, AND STUDENT CHEERLEADERS. THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSTITUTION IS TO COMMUNICATE THESE GUIDELINES IN ORDER TO HELP THE CARROLL ISD CHEERLEADING SQUADS BE THE BEST POSSIBLE REPRESENTATIVES FOR THEIR SCHOOL. GOOD JUDGMENT AND COMMON SENSE WILL BE USED WHEN EVENTS ARE NOT COVERED IN THE CONSTITUTION. THE INTERPRETATION OF ALL ARTICLES IN THIS CONSTITUTION IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SPONSOR AND PRINCIPAL. THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO ADD OR DELETE ITEMS THEY FEEL ARE NECESSARY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE ORGANIZATION. ANY CHANGES IN THIS CONSTITUTION WILL BE COMMUNICATED IN WRITING TO ALL CHEERLEADERS AND THEIR PARENTS PRIOR TO GOING INTO EFFECT.

ARTICLE I –PURPOSE

The purpose of the CSHS varsity cheerleading squad is to create, promote, and uphold school spirit in accordance with school rules. Cheerleaders should plan and initiate activities that will promote student body and community support and involvement in the promotion of athletic events and school activities.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

Prior to seeking membership on a cheerleading squad, students must understand that self-discipline, self-confidence and dedication are very necessary on and off the field. Cheerleaders will be expected to participate in every cheerleading activity. Employment, discretionary tutorials, and serving detention or other forms of student discipline are not acceptable excuses for missing a cheerleading activity. Students who are members of the CSHS cheerleading squad as well as a club squad must attend assigned Carroll ISD events if there is a scheduling conflict with club activities

All members of a cheerleading squad must enroll in the required cheerleading class. Cheerleaders are required to participate in cheers, chants, dances, stunts, pyramids, pep rallies, camp, and any fundraisers or activities the sponsor chooses to do. In the event that the cheer class must be dropped from the student's schedule, approval must be obtained by the sponsor and administration. The class must be changed by the set date on the school calendar for dropping or changing schedules.

To remain as an active member of a cheerleading squad, a cheerleader must maintain a passing grade in each class (as defined by no-pass/no-play guidelines outlined for UIL participation), maintain a level of cheerleading performance (specifically the ability exhibited at tryouts), and follow and uphold all guidelines established in the constitution as well as any verbal directives given by the sponsor. Members must exhibit and maintain a satisfactory conduct grade at all times during the school year.

To try out for or serve as a member of a cheerleading squad, a student must be a full-time student in the Carroll ISD.

ARTICLE III- GENERAL OPERATING PHILOSOPHY

A cheerleading team is only as good as its members.

Cheerleaders will set a good example for their fellow classmates.

Cheerleaders will display the following characteristics on and off the field:

- Work (and practice) hard
- Be honest and truthful
- Be good role models
- Display positive school spirit
- Show good sportsmanship
- Exhibit positive attitudes toward cheerleading

Standards for District Extracurricular/Co-Curricular Activities Carroll Independent School District

All students are expected to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct as it applies to school-related or school-sponsored activities. Students involved in extracurricular and co-curricular activities are expected to exhibit the highest standards of ethics and conduct. Carroll Senior High School students, staff, and parents view participation in these extracurricular and co-curricular activities as a privilege and not a right. Therefore, the teachers, sponsors, coaches, and directors of these activities may develop and enforce codes of conduct that will take into consideration conduct that occurs outside of the school's usual jurisdiction, regardless of time or location. This would include any misconduct that would reflect negatively upon Carroll Senior High School. Students involved in major disciplinary infractions (including, but not limited to, drugs, alcohol, violent behavior, and other illegal offenses) or who violate the Student Code of Conduct resulting in a DAEP assignment will be suspended from participation in all extracurricular and co-curricular activities for a specified length of time. Offenders may be suspended from participation by the Carroll Senior High School administrative panel after a review of the incident. Evidence must be presented to the administration in one of the following forms:

- A report from a law enforcement agency
- Personal confession by the participating student
- Observed behavior by a school employee

When such evidence is presented to the administration, the student and parents(s) or guardian(s) will be notified of the offense. The student and/or parent(s) or guardian(s) will be afforded the opportunity of a meeting with the administrative panel to discuss the offense. After this meeting, the following penalties may be rendered:

1st Offense: Suspended from activities for 30 school days

2nd Offense: Suspended from activities for 60 school days

3rd Offense: Suspended from activities for 90 school days

Penalties are for “school days” and may continue into the next school year. For example, if a student is suspended for 30 days with 10 school days remaining in the school year, he/she will serve the other 20 days at the beginning of the following school year. These penalties are not subject to appeals or reviews by the district’s hearing officer.

These penalties are cumulative throughout the high school career of a student. For each violation beyond the 3rd, a suspension of one calendar year will be imposed. While under suspension from activities, a student may participate in any tryout, election, or process that would allow them to participate in an activity that begins after their suspension is lifted.

ARTICLE IV – PARENT COMMITMENT

Parent/guardian commitment and involvement are vital to the success of each cheerleader and the cheerleading team. It will be a parent’s/guardian’s responsibility to help in various activities when deemed necessary.

Prior to tryouts, each cheerleading squad member must submit an agreement of compliance from his/her parent/guardian permitting him/her to participate in all cheerleading activities. In addition to this agreement, prior to tryout clinics, a signed medical release form and a signed Standards for District Extracurricular/Co-Curricular Activities Discipline Policy Statement must be filled out and submitted to the sponsor. All dates for tryout clinics and tryouts will be communicated to the entire student body with sufficient notice to fulfill these requirements.

In addition, parents must be willing to make the monetary commitment necessary to fulfill obligations related to the duties and responsibilities associated with being a member of the cheerleading squad. Certain fees may be waived if a student or the student’s parent/guardian is unable to pay due to financial hardship.

ARTICLE V – MORAL AND ETHICAL EXPECTATIONS

Certain standards and expectations are necessary for the integrity and reputation of the cheerleaders in the CISD. Cheerleaders should be leaders within their school and set a good example at all times. Cheerleaders are expected to have and maintain a character above reproach and to exhibit personal appearance and habits that will reflect a positive image. Cheerleaders are constantly representing the school before the public; they are never to smoke, drink, use drugs, or show an inappropriate public display of affection. All infractions will be subject to Carroll's extra-curricular policy.

Cheerleaders must never put themselves in a compromising position. If others around the cheerleader are not acknowledging the proper social or moral standards and values outlined in these expectations, the cheerleader will be expected to remove herself/himself from the situation immediately.

ARTICLE VI – TRYOUT PROCEDURES

A candidate must meet the following qualifications in order to try out for the varsity squad:

- Must be a full-time student of Carroll ISD at the time of the tryout process.
- Must have turned in all of the required paperwork at a time designated by the coach/sponsor:
 - Agreement of compliance
 - Medical release
 - District discipline policy statement
- Must attend, with a parent, the tryout information meeting, where they will receive a copy of the CSHS Cheerleading Constitution, tryout packet, necessary signature forms, and other critical information. In the event that an emergency prevents attendance at this meeting, the candidate and/or the parent must contact the coach/sponsor within 24 hours of the parent meeting.
- Must pass the minimum tumbling skills tryout on the first day of the tryout clinic.
- Must pass an administrative discipline record examination. Candidates will be disqualified if they have been subject to any of the following during the current school year:
 - An OCS or DAEP assignment
 - Excessive office referrals for disciplinary offenses based on type and number of referrals.

All decisions regarding the discipline record are made by the administrative team and are final.

Minimum Skills Tryout

On the first day of the tryout clinic, all candidates must pass a minimum skills tryout before at least two qualified (certified by a widely recognized cheer association such as UCA or NCA) judges. The candidates will be judged on their ability to complete the following tumbling skills competently and safely:

- Standing back handspring and/or standing back tuck
- Round-off with 3 back handsprings

If needed, candidates will receive two opportunities to successfully complete the minimum tumbling skills unless the judges consider it unsafe to allow a candidate to repeat a skill. Candidates will be informed at the conclusion of the minimum skills tryout of the results. Only candidates who pass the minimum tumbling skills tryout will continue with the tryout process.

Tryout Clinic and Tryouts

The tryout clinic will be held on four consecutive days with the tryout on the fifth day. The minimum skills tryout (mandatory) will be on the first day. On the second and third days, the tryout dance and cheer will be taught and practiced. The fourth day will be continued practice and a mock tryout. Attendance is optional on the second, third and fourth days. Attendance at the tryout is mandatory.

Use of a Video for Tryouts

A live tryout is preferable to any other format, but in the event of an illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstances that are approved by the CSHS administrative team, candidates may request to try out with a videotape. If they make such a request, they must provide a doctor's note and a VHS videotape showing cheerleader skills within the last six months. The videotape must be unedited and must be no longer than 2 ½ minutes. A request for a video tryout must be made to the CSHS principal no later than 10 school days before the tryout. All videotapes must be approved by the principal. It will be up to the judges' discretion to score the videotape as they deem appropriate based on what skills they are able to see. Candidates are required, if they are requesting to tryout via videotape, to present their doctor's note at the time of the video tryout and explain to the judges why they are unable to participate in a conventional tryout.

Formulation of the Varsity Squad

Candidates will try out before at least three qualified (certified by a widely recognized cheer association such as UCA or NCA) judges. The varsity squad will have a minimum of 20 members, unless fewer than 20 candidates try out. There is no maximum number. All candidates receiving an average of the three judges' scores of 85% (not rounded up) or better will be named to the varsity squad. In the event that fewer than 20 candidates

have the required average score, the next highest scoring candidates will be added until the squad reaches at least 20 members. In case of a tie for the 20th spot, the tied candidates will be added to the squad.

Current seniors are exempt from the tryouts and may remain on the varsity squad until the end of their senior year. Seniors may also choose to step down at the changing of the semester. All others besides seniors must try out for the squad.

Varsity Squad Selection Procedures

Judges will be certified by a widely recognized cheer association such as UCA or NCA. Current CISD staff members, coaches, and/or sponsors may not serve as judges.

Presence in the tryout room will be limited to the candidates, judges, sponsor/coach, and members of the CISD staff. At least one administrator will be present.

At the tryout, all candidates will be identified to the judges by number only and will wear their number on back and front at all times. The tryout dance and cheer will be choreographed and taught by CISD staff or other adult professionals. All candidates will perform a large group cheer and dance prior to the individual and small group tryouts. They will perform a required individual cheer, a tumbling pass, a dance, and three consecutive jumps before qualified judges. Mats will be used by all candidates. Judges' scores will count 100% of the total score. Candidates will be judged in the following areas:

- Cheer 20%
- Jumps 20%
- Tumbling Difficulty 10%
- Tumbling Execution 10%
- Dance 20%
- Spirit 20%

Each candidate will have an individual score sheet from each judge.

Viewing of the Scores

A candidate may elect to privately view his/her own individual judges' tryout score sheets. The score sheets may be reviewed in an administrators' office by appointment and may not be removed from the school. The statute of limitations concerning viewing scores is 10 school days following the tryout.

ARTICLE VII – HEAD CHEERLEADER

Each squad may select a head cheerleader. The selection will be based on a squad vote counting 40%, an interview with the sponsor counting 40% and written essays from the candidate rated by the sponsor counting 20%. Essays must be submitted by the deadline

designated by the sponsor/coach. The candidates for head cheerleader must have a GPA of “B” or better. Candidates must never have been put on probation from a cheerleading squad for the accumulation of demerits. A candidate trying out for varsity head cheerleader must be a current cheerleader. The cheerleader must be a senior during his/her year of service as varsity head cheerleader.

The head cheerleader is in a very responsible position. The sponsor and fellow squad members look to him/her for leadership, dedication, enthusiasm, and the ability to work with others and to “get the job done.” The head cheerleader may be placed on cheerleading probation for a length of time determined by the sponsor when he/she does not perform the head cheerleader duties satisfactorily. Any placement on cheerleading probation will also include a parent/sponsor/administrator conference where an improvement plan will be finalized. If the performance objectives detailed in the conference are not met, the student will be removed as head cheerleader and a new head cheerleader will be selected using the above mentioned selection procedure.

ARTICLE VIII– CHEERLEADER CLASS

Cheerleading is a full-year course, and the cheerleader is expected to commit to activities and practices during both the fall and spring semesters. The cheerleader will receive ½ P.E. credit and ½ Fine Arts credit for the academic year. Each cheerleader will receive a numerical grade average and a conduct grade on all grade reports. The numerical grade will be based on overall participation at all required activities and demerits accumulated throughout the six weeks period. Each demerit deducts one point from the six weeks’ average, and totals for grades will start over each six weeks.

ARTICLE IX– ACTIVITY PROCEDURES

All cheerleaders will attend every assigned activity. Transportation will be provided to all activities except home games and activities. Anyone involved in away extracurricular activities at CSHS will ride to and from the activity with his/her team. Only the principal or designee can make exceptions to the transportation requirement.

Cheerleaders must never leave the group without permission when cheering at the activity. Cheerleaders must be ready for the game when they get off the bus. Cheerleaders must not eat on the field/court or use a cell phone or pager on the field/court. Cheerleaders must wait until halftime to eat or make a necessary phone call.

Cheerleaders must never cheer when any player is injured. Cheerleaders must always exhibit class and good sportsmanship.

The varsity squad will be expected to attend all playoff games. If a cheerleader misses a playoff game without permission from the sponsor, he/she will not be allowed to participate in further playoff games for the particular sport missed. If a cheerleader has an unexcused absence from a playoff game, he or she will receive demerits equivalent to missing one game.

Each cheerleader is responsible for knowing the departure schedule for each activity. Missing the bus is considered an unexcused absence (10 demerits) and will result in sitting out at the next game with the sponsor. Being tardy to the bus results in 5 demerits.

When using a bus for transportation, certain rules should be followed:

- Be courteous to the bus driver.
- Only headphones may be used for radios, CD players, tape recorders, etc.
- State law prohibits standing up on the bus.
- State law prohibits placing anything in the aisle of the bus.
- Do not hang out the windows, yell or communicate in any way with other motorists or pedestrians.
- Do not throw anything out of the bus.
- Do not eat on the bus unless permission has been given by the sponsor.
- Roll up the windows before leaving the bus.
- Clean up after yourself before leaving the bus.
- Do not leave the bus before permission has been given by the sponsor.

ARTICLE X – ATTENDANCE AND TARDY POLICY

1. A cheerleader who is absent (excused) for all or part of a performance day will perform at the discretion of the sponsor/coach.
2. Summer practice and camp are mandatory.
3. Failure to attend practice necessitates removal from a performance. This includes doctors' appointments, working, illness, and leaving early for any reason. Emergency situations will be left to the sponsor's discretion.
4. Failure to attend a performance (unexcused) will result in 10 demerits and sitting out the next game.
5. A person who skips cheerleading or any other class for any reason is subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the CISD and specific school Codes of Conduct as well as cheerleader demerits.
6. Work will not be an excusable reason for missing, being late, or leaving early from any cheerleading activity.
7. Cheerleaders may take one college visit as long as permission is given in advance by the sponsors and the visit is in accordance with school policy. Cheerleaders may not miss more than one cheerleading activity during this absence. The cheerleader must obtain the college visitation form from the counselors' office and show the completed form to the sponsor the following day.
8. Any person who is five minutes late to any cheerleading activity or bus departure will be considered tardy. Totals will start over each semester. The second tardy will result in completion of a work activity that will better serve the squad or the cheerleader as determined by the sponsor. The third and subsequent tardies will result in an unexcused absence for each tardy.
9. If a cheerleader is more than 15 minutes late to an activity, it will count as an unexcused absence (10 demerits). No excuses will be accepted.

10. A doctor's note will be required for a cheerleader who is unable to perform due to an injury. Where possible, the cheerleader should attend the event in uniform and sit with the sponsor.

ARTICLE XI – DRESSING ROOM AND DRESSING OUT

Cheerleaders must dress out every day according to the uniform schedule given by the sponsor or head cheerleader. A second offense of not dressing out properly will result in completion of a work activity that will better serve the squad or the cheerleader as determined by the sponsor.

Cheerleaders must lock everything in their lockers during practice. Cheerleaders must not assume that personal property will be safe in the dressing room. Cheerleaders must keep the dressing room neat and clean.

ARTICLE XII– SAFETY

Any members who are injured will receive medical attention immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, an ambulance will be called if necessary. A medical release form must be signed by the parent *prior to the tryout clinic* and taken to all cheerleading activities by the sponsor.

Camp is mandatory because safety instruction is an integral part of the camp day. Failure to attend summer camp may result in permanent dismissal from the squad. Safety guidelines will be enforced. Once a skill is mastered on safety mats, it may be performed on the gym floor or track.

Not following the safety rules outlined by the sponsor will result in dismissal from the cheerleading squad.

ARTICLE XIII– DEMERIT SYSTEM

The demerit system is designed to provide a management system for the sponsor/coach. Only the sponsor/coach may issue demerits. The system provides demerits and penalties for rule violations. Demerits begin as soon as the squad is announced and continue until the completion of the next cheerleading election. Each cheerleader receives a clean slate on the first day of the second semester (January). Written notice of demerits will be given by the sponsor and signed by the cheerleader receiving the demerit.

Demerit assignments include, but are not limited to, the following:

1 Demerit

- any item left behind at an activity/1 demerit per item

2 Demerits

- hair not pulled up for practice or games
- wearing jewelry at practice or games
- fingernail polish/nails too long
- not having poms/megaphone
- bandaid not covering bellybutton ring at practice or games
- not wearing correct shoes at practice or game
- wearing wrong practice shirt
- wearing wrong practice shorts
- not having hair ribbon or incorrect hair ribbon
- chewing gum/eating candy
- not following bus rules

3 Demerits

- tardy to practice (1 – 15 minutes)

5 Demerits

- inappropriate talking at practice or games
- uncooperative behavior at practice or game
- unexcused absence from any class
- missing any part of a pep rally practice
- use of cell phones and/or pagers during practice or game
- tardy to a game or bus departure (less than 15 minutes)
- failure to participate in fund raisers
- improper behavior on field/bus/court
- incorrect/incomplete uniform
- not participating in any decorating activity
- uncooperative behavior regarding head cheerleader

10 Demerits

- unexcused absence from a performance or more than 15 minutes tardy
- not dressing out
- disrespectful to sponsor, head cheerleader, teachers
- “N” in conduct in any class
- squad not cleaning up after painting or decorating activity
- D-hall assigned by any administrator (for Level I offense)

20 Demerits (also constitutes automatic probation; see Article XIII)

- inappropriate behavior anytime, anywhere as outlined in Article IV
- “U” in conduct in any class
- disciplinary procedures in school (Level II offense or greater)
- insubordination
- violation of safety rules
- receiving a second “N” in conduct

ARTICLE XIV – PROBATION

Any member who accumulates 20 demerits per semester will be placed on probation for 15 school days (the first semester is considered to run from the date of tryouts through the next semester up until the first day of the following semester). During this probationary period, the member will not perform, but will attend all practices, performances, and other activities. Both the cheerleader and the parent/guardian will be informed verbally and by a letter when he/she has received 15 demerits placing him/her in the “danger zone.” This letter will be signed by the cheerleader and his/her parent/guardian and returned to the sponsor the following day, or the cheerleader will immediately be put on probation. Any member receiving 30 demerits per semester receives an “F” in cheerleading and will be permanently dismissed from the squad.

Grounds for probation will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Accumulation of 20 demerits per semester
- An occurrence when 20 demerits are given. This may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - Using profane or obscene language or gestures
 - Public display of affection
 - Hazing
 - An offense where OCS is rendered
 - Cheating for which an administrator has received documentation
 - Cutting any class
 - Truancy
 - Vandalism
 - Insubordination to any school personnel or head cheerleader
 - Violation of safety rules
- Failure of a course. (UIL/TEA guidelines will be followed in the event of a failed academic course.)

Permanent dismissal from the team will be determined by the sponsor and the principal. Reasons for dismissal will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Making an “F” in cheerleading
- Receiving 20 demerits per semester
- Failing two six weeks’ grading periods during the cheerleading term, which consists of the time period from election to election
- A second probation level offense where probation has already been used