Taft High Cheerleading Squad  
2013-2014

Purpose:

The purpose of the cheerleading squad is to promote and uphold school spirit, to develop a sense of good sportsmanship and to better the relationship between our school and the schools with whom we compete. Cheerleaders are representatives of Taft ISD in and out of uniform.

Membership:

A. In the spring, one squad of twelve girls/boys will be selected as cheerleaders.
B. One girl/boy will be selected as mascot.
C. One girl/boy will be selected as manager.
D. Cheerleader try-outs will consist of one individual cheer, a chant, a group dance and three jumps by each candidate. Mascot candidates will perform one 2 minute individual routine.
E. The head cheerleader will be determined by highest tryout score. He/she must attend a minimum of 80% of practices and events in a given period of a month or will be demoted from head cheerleader. The role of a head cheerleader will be to ASSIST the cheerleader coach. He/she will have the responsibilities as designated by the coach. The coach however, is the person of authority.

Each Cheerleader Must:

A. Attend a summer camp, which will be selected by the coach.
B. Demonstrate a cheerleading personality at all times and at all sporting events.
C. Attend designated pep rallies and games in uniform and sit with the coach when benched from a game and/or pep rally.
D. Follow squad rules at all times.
E. Not be a manager for a boys’ team.
F. Not be allowed to be in color guard.
G. Must have a physical examination before attending summer camp.
H. Drug test prior to tryouts. (District Drug Policy)
Tryout Eligibility:

A. Meet UIL eligibility requirements.
B. Any previous cheerleader, who quits or is removed from school for reasons NOT associated with physical or medical disabilities, will not be eligible to tryout the following year.
C. Have attendance record printed out from the Attendance Clerk
D. MUST ATTEND SUMMER PRACTICES AND SUMMER CAMP
E. May not have more than three discipline referrals or one discipline Referral for safety violation, fighting, drugs, or alcohol

Uniforms:

A. Uniforms are purchased by each squad member. Each cheerleader/mascot will be responsible for purchasing ALL uniforms and equipment.
B. Uniform must be in excellent condition at all times.
C. Uniforms will be purchased from a catalog. Squad members and the coach will vote and UNANIMOUSLY AGREE on any uniform choice and camp wear. The principal will have the final approval of all uniforms.
D. **Uniforms are not to be altered once the representative has done measurements.** ALL ALTERATIONS must be APPROVED by Cheer Sponsor.

Out of Town Games:

A. Cheerleaders will travel to and from the games in school provided transportation.
B. Only under extenuating circumstances may a cheerleader ride home from an event with their parent(s). A note from the parent must be signed by the principal before the event.
C. Cheerleaders must be present 15 minutes prior to departure time. If a cheerleader/mascot shows up late, he/she will not be able to cheer at that game and will be required to sit with the coach for part of or the entire game.
D. Cheerleaders may NOT ride to and/or from games with a boyfriend or girlfriend.
Squad Duties:

A. Cheerleaders and the mascot will cheer at all boy and girls varsity sports and pep rallies, provided there are enough available cheerleaders. This includes all football games and district home games for basketball and all playoff games.

B. No food is permitted on the track/court during games

C. Halftime is the time for restroom needs, expressing concerns to the coach and taking care of other needed business

D. All concerns should be expressed to the coach before and after games and at cheer meetings or practices

E. All squad members are to be at their post at the start of the third quarter

F. All cheerleaders/mascot will participate in fundraising activities from start to finish

Squad Conduct:

A. All members of the squad will conduct themselves properly at all times.

B. They will not display undesirable emotions such as anger, loudness or rage, at any time.

C. Cheerleaders will display good sportsmanship at all times.

D. Cheerleaders will set good examples in the classroom, on school grounds and at all school functions.

E. Cheerleaders will not complain about the officials or criticize the players about their performance.

F. Cheerleaders will lead the crowd in cheers and get the crowd excited about the game.

G. Cheerleaders and the mascot will refrain from making derogatory comment to or about each other at any time.

H. Any member of the squad who is placed in In-School Suspension (ISS) or Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) will not participate in practices, pep rallies or games until he/she has been released and admitted into the regular classroom the following school day.

I. Cheerleaders will stand at the post assigned to them by the coach and will rotate position at the coach’s direction throughout the game.

J. Decorate school building signs, streamers, balloons etc.

K. No cell phone usage during practices or athletic events.

L. Follow the Student Code of Conduct

M. Follow the Demerit/Grading System.
Requirements for Holding Cheerleading/Mascot Position

A. Follow UIL eligibility rules
B. Failing any two six weeks will result in suspension from the squad the remainder of the year.
C. Failing any three six weeks will result in being ineligible to try out for cheerleader/mascot the following year.
D. Progress reports and report cards will be due to the sponsor for verification of grades as soon as they come out for each reporting period.

Letter Jacket Requirements

A. Must cheer in approximately 50% of the games (football, basketball, and playoffs) or have made a major contribution to the squad, as recommended by the Cheer Sponsor. (This may be subject to approval by the Principal.)
B. Must attend 50% of all practices, including summer (i.e. sign paintings, decorating, responsibilities, etc.).
C. Special consideration will be given to seniors competing on the varsity squad but not fulfilling the participation requirements.
D. Special considerations will be given to cheerleaders injured during the season(s) and unable to complete the remainder of the season to fulfill participation requirements.

Manager

A. The manager will be selected by use of cheer scores. The runner up ranked participant will be the first offered the position of manager. If the prospect declines, the next person in rank will be offered the position. Should the next in line decline, the next in rank will be offered the position and so on.
B. Should one of the original squad members not be able to fulfill his/her obligations and resign, the manager will be asked to step up and become a member of the squad. At that time, the next in rank will be offered the position of manager.
C. Duties are to assist coach/sponsor at all cheerleading events. He/she will help the coach/squad with things like set-up of an event, loading and unloading the bus, trip planning and preparation, pep rallies, fundraising, camp (optional) and other duties coach requests.
D. The manager will be required to purchase 2-3 shirts that say ‘manager’. Optional purchases are cheer shoes, bow, warm-ups, etc. that match the cheer squad’s apparel.
E. The manager is expected to follow the same rules as the cheerleaders. He/she must maintain passing grades and acceptable conduct.

Attendance:
A. Cheerleading squad members are to contact the cheer coach or head cheerleader if practice will be missed or if he/she must leave school.
B. School attendance is required for participation.
C. All members are expected to attend all classes and be prompt every day.
D. Attendance at summer practice is mandatory unless excused by coach previous to practice or for extenuating circumstances.
E. If a squad member misses two (2) practices during the week (excused or unexcused); they will not be allowed to participate in the pep rally or games that week. It is very important to attend every practice because if someone misses, it puts a strain on the entire squad. (Exceptions will be made if there are conflicting UIL activities.)

Inappropriate Personal Conduct Will Not Be Tolerated:
A. Public displays of affection (PDA)
B. Unacceptable behavior displayed towards anyone
C. Inappropriate dress on or off campus during any school function (he/she will follow the school dress code)
D. Hickeys

Consequences Will Be As Follows:

First Incident – Warning with Parent Contact
Second Incident – Suspension for One Week
Third Incident – Suspended from Performance at Games, Pep Rallies, and Community Functions when representing THS Cheer Squad for the remainder of the current semester. (This does not excuse him/her from cheer duties (i.e. meetings, posters, fundraising, goodie bags.)
Reasons for Removal from the Squad:

A. Smoking, drinking or using illegal drugs as outlined in student handbook
B. Breaking of any severe rule in the student handbook
C. After fair warning, any continued problem, poor attitude or behavior, which is not of good representation for the cheerleading squad, may result in removal.
D. Automatic removal from the squad is based on the severity of the incident and will be at the discretion of the principal.
E. Vulgar language used and reported by school personnel
F. Dishonesty, cheating, stealing, lying which is reported by any school personal
G. FIGHTING
H. Excessive unexcused absences/tardies to be reviewed by principal and coach. Before the removal of a squad member, the principal and the coach will review the situation. Parents and the student will be informed of necessary discipline action. If a cheer squad member is removed from the squad, he/she will remain suspended until the end of the current school year.

Automatic Benching

A cheerleader or mascot will be benched for one pep rally or one game for failing to dress appropriately on the day of pep rally or game. Appropriate dress includes bloomers, hair combed up, socks, pompoms, shoes, megaphone and coach approved uniform for the pep rally or game.

A cheerleader/mascot who is benched for a pep rally or game must attend the function in uniform and sit with the coach or they will be suspended for a game and pep rally.

Cheerleading/Mascot Demerits

Members of the squad at Taft High School should uphold the image of a leader. A cheerleading squad is a group to be PROUD of! Members will receive demerits for rules that are broken.

Cheerleader demerits are given when a member fails to meet his/her obligations and responsibilities.
The coach will give the demerits and he/she will document the information. The cheerleader/mascot must sign the document. Cheerleaders/Mascot will have one week from the date he/she is informed to complete demerit consequences.

**Consequences:**

- 6-8 Demerits – benched for one pep rally
- 9-10 Demerits – benched for 1 pep rally and one game
- 30 Total Demerits in a year – removal from squad

**Demerits:**

1. Talking to or criticizing referees or players
2. Failure to take off jewelry, throw gum or candy away, or pull hair back
3. Unexcused tardiness (5 minutes or more)
4. Leaving an event for any reason (game, fundraising event, public appearances)
5. Use of cell phone, make-up, etc. during practice or event
6. Failure to bring equipment (pom-poms, megaphone, etc.)
7. Talking to friends, eating or sitting during a practice, pep rally or game
8. Excused absence from practice or event
9. Unexcused absence from practice or event
10. Failure to dress in proper uniform at event. (Socks, hair bow, shoes, etc.)
11. Failure to notify coach of absence before practice or event
12. Failure to turn in grade sheet on time
13. Late returning from halftime or break
14. Rudeness directed toward another squad member or another individual
15. Talking or laughing and interrupting coach/captain when instructing
16. Laughing or talking during stunts
17. Any referral during school
18. Poor conduct at any time (poor attitude, laziness, excessive talking, and unexcused absences)
19. Leaves game, pep rallies or practice without permission or being dismissed
20. Any misbehavior reported by teachers and/or principals/staff

A cheerleader/mascot may work off demerits weekly before they accumulate and lead to benching. While weekly demerits may be worked off for participation, a continuous count of ALL demerits will be collected throughout the year. After a total accumulation of 30 demerits (worked off or not) will result in dismissal from the squad. Demerits begin during the summer prior to the academic year and start over the following summer. The cheerleader/mascot has one week from the day a written demerit is given. If a demerit(s) is not worked off the consequence(s) will be
imposed. If the consequence is not completed within 2 days the cheerleader/mascot will be benched for the next pep rally or game. A cheer member must schedule time to work off demerits with the coach.

**Demerits will be worked off as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demerits</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 Demerit</td>
<td>50 cheer Jumps for each demerit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 Demerits</td>
<td>25 cheer Jumps for each demerit &amp; 1 mile *run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 Demerits</td>
<td>25 cheer Jumps for each demerit, 1 mile *run &amp; benched for pep rally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10 Demerits</td>
<td>25 cheer Jumps for each demerit, 1 mile *run &amp; benched for pep rally and game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11+ Demerits</td>
<td>Review by Principal and Coach for possible cheer suspension no less than 2 weeks</td>
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</tbody>
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*(Runs will be completed in one session)*

**SAFETY GUIDELINES**

A. Absolutely NO unsafe tumbling will be permitted at any time.
B. Appropriate shoes (cheering/running) must be worn at all times, during practice and performance.
C. Appropriate attire (sport/briefs/bras) worn at all times during practice and performance.
D. No one other than trained members of the squad, trained individuals and coaching staff will be allowed to stunt with the Taft High School Cheerleading Squad.
E. No stunting, building, or tumbling is allowed without direct supervision of the Cheerleading Coach. Violation of this rule will result in dismal from the squad of all parties involved.
2013-2014 Taft High School Cheer Squad Handbook Receipt

I have read and understand all the rules and regulations as stated by the Taft High School 2013-2014 Cheer Squad Handbook

Student Signature & Date____________________________________________________

Parent Signature & Date____________________________________________________