

# Melissa ISD Cheerleading Constitution

## **Positions:**

Varsity Cheerleaders  
Varsity Mascot  
Junior Varsity Cheerleaders  
Cheer Managers

## **Article I: Title**

These organizations shall be known as the Melissa High School Cheerleaders.

## **Article II: Purpose**

The purpose of the MHS Cheerleaders shall be to perform and entertain audiences through precision performance and to boost the morale and school spirit for the Cardinal community. The purpose shall also be for each member to promote physical fitness, character, leadership, individual abilities, and responsibility while maintaining high moral standards. It is the cheerleading squads' purpose to represent MISD in a manner that will reflect credit upon the school, and to refrain from detrimental personal or group conduct, in or out of school. Off the field, cheerleaders are to enthusiastically support all athletic teams through advertisement, personal attitude, and attendance at events chosen by the director/coaches and approved by the principal. Each member agrees to abide by the rules and regulations as set forth in this constitution.

## **Article III: Qualifications and Requirements of Membership**

Varsity Squad: membership is open to all students entering the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades who are already enrolled in the district.

Sub Varsity Squad(s): membership is open to all students entering the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades who are already enrolled in the district.

Mascot: membership is open to all students entering into or who are already enrolled in the district. Grade level requirements follow those of a cheerleader. It is not mandatory for each squad to possess a mascot and a minimum score must be met.

- A. If enrollment has not yet been finalized, proof of residency, or district employment, must be provided.
- B. Members may not have failed two or more nine weeks in the current school year.
- C. UIL guidelines will be followed in determining eligibility.
- D. Members must be willing to abide by the constitution and rules of the coaches at all times.
- E. Members must participate in all activities and fundraisers as determined by the coaches.
- F. Members must participate in community activities when called upon.
- G. Members must have a desire to cooperate, be "one of the group," and perform in unison.

- H. Members may participate and are encouraged to participate in other school activities during the year, but must work with all coaches to adhere to scheduled practices and performances during the school year.
- I. Each member must exhibit a positive attitude.
- J. Candidates who have previously been dismissed from the team, or quit the team, may be ineligible to be reinstated and may be ineligible to try out for the following year.

#### **Article IV: Tryout Procedures**

- A. If a student is academically ineligible for any two nine week grading periods during the current school year, that student is not eligible to try out. UIL eligibility requirements will be followed.
- B. Candidates must be UIL eligible at the most current progress report check prior to the tryout date.
- C. Students cannot have more than three office referrals for behavior related issues during the current school year prior to tryouts, or have been in In-School Suspension (ISS) for behavior more than three days, out of school suspension, or the District Alternative Education Program.
- D. Candidates must not have any outstanding balances pertaining to cheerleading.
- E. Candidates will be expected to perform a specific required cheer/chant, stunting skills, jumps and dance at tryouts. Judging will be based on (1) cheer/chant, (2) dance (3) stunting and (4) spirit, enthusiasm, tumbling, jumping, voice control, and overall performance.
- F. The performance of the candidate will be evaluated and scored by qualified judges. All tryouts will be closed to any outside audiences. Selection of members will be based on the scores of said judges during the closed tryout session and coaches evaluation.
- G. Candidates must have on file prior to tryouts:
  - Tryout application
  - Student-parent consent of constitution
  - Cheerleading Constitution Test
- H. Candidates must be dressed uniformly for tryouts including athletic shoes, white socks, black shorts and plain white t-shirt. Shirts must be tucked in and long hair must be worn pulled back away from the face. Female candidates may wear a plain white bow. Male candidates will wear black shorts and plain white t-shirts. All jewelry is prohibited.
- I. Candidates must attend school the day of tryouts. Absences approved by the principal will be excused.
- J. If selected, students must pay the deposit amount due for summer camp the Monday immediately following tryouts. Checks should be made payable to MISD with Cheerleading in the memo line and may be turned into coach directly or front office of the High School or Middle School.
- K. Candidates may review their own score sheets, by appointment, with the principal or designee, coach, and a parent or guardian present. Score sheets for the tryouts will be kept on file for two years according to the state records retention schedule.
- L. The judge's scores are final, and are not grounds for the formal grievance process.
- M. Students must be in good financial standing with MISD, owing no fines or charges.
- N. At the end of the previous year, if an athlete is not in good standing, it becomes the coach's discretion to accept said athlete into the tryout candidacy.
- O. Failure to comply with any of the above may result in forfeiture of the tryouts.

- P. A natural break in performance scores will determine elections. National Cheerleading Association judges will be enlisted to judge tryouts .

#### **Article V: Captain and Co-Captain Election**

- A. Candidates for captain will be decided by squad vote, with the coach's approval.
- B. Only current team members will vote.
- C. It is possible to make captain for one year and go back to being a squad member in subsequent years.
- D. In the event of a tie, the tie breaker will be determined by a revote. In the event of an additional tie, the candidate's tryout score will serve as the tie breaker.
- E. Other leadership positions and assignments will be determined as needed by the coaches.

#### **Article VI: Managers**

- A. Managers will be chosen by the coaches.
- B. A manager is a non-performing member. Since s/he is a member, s/he must uphold all duties, rules, and regulations presented in the constitution. S/he is subject to all discipline procedures outlined.
- C. The manager(s) will attend all performances and will wear a uniform appointed by the coach.
- D. The manager(s) will participate in the various fundraising activities and other designated functions.

#### **Article VII: Parental permission and Responsibilities**

- A. Parents must give permission for their child to fulfill all the responsibilities of being a member of the cheerleading squad before s/he is allowed to try out.
- B. Parents must be willing to meet all financial obligations involved in having their child as a member of the cheer squad. The coaches will assign payment deadlines as needed. To avoid dismissal from the squad, all financial obligations must be met according to the timeline set. The coaches and the school are not responsible for finding financial assistance.

#### **Article VIII: Duties and responsibilities**

- A. Members must be willing to abide by the constitution and the rules of the coaches at all times.
- B. Members are required to participate in all home/away football games, pep rallies, home volleyball games, home basketball games, playoff games, clinics, practices, and other activities set by the coaches that may arise during the year.
- C. Members will be on time to all activities and practices.
- D. Members must not be late returning from breaks during any event. During cheering activities, the coach will determine the break time.
- E. Members are responsible for all financial obligations.
- F. Members are expected to help plan, execute, and clean-up after pep rallies, games, and other events.
- G. Members are expected to participate in any fundraiser(s) chosen by the coaches.

- H. Members are required to take pride in their uniforms and do everything possible to keep it in good condition.
- I. Members are required to attend one mandatory summer cheer camp chosen by the coach.
- J. Members must have a physical on file by the date set forth by the coach.

#### **Article IX: ATTENDANCE**

- A. Members are expected to be present and on time at all practices as scheduled by the coach and remain at practice until dismissed. Detentions are not an excuse to miss any part of practice.
- B. Absences can be excused by the coach or an administrator. Excuses must be given to the coach 24 hours prior to the missed practice in writing by a parent or guardian in order to be excused, except in the event of an emergency.
- C. Excused absences will include the following:
  - 1. Personal illness (Doctor's notes required after 3 days)
  - 2. Death or wedding in the immediate family (with proper documentation from parent)
  - 3. Required school activity – this does not include detentions
  - 4. Doctor's appointment (limited to 1 to 2 times due to emergency, see E)
- D. Unexcused absences include the following:
  - 1. Tardy more than 3 times to practice or performance
  - 2. Failure to attend required activity without prior notification and approval of a coach.
  - 3. Failure to remain for the entire activity, unless prior arrangements are made, or an emergency occurs.
- E. All appointments must be scheduled around practice times.
- F. Members may not have a called practice on school grounds without the presence of a coach.
- G. Work or non-school sponsored activities; classes and activities cannot interfere with scheduled practices (i.e. Gymnastics, voice, and dance). Members should arrive and leave at the set times for practices.
- H. Members are responsible for talking with coaches/staff for other extracurricular activities, if games and practices interfere.
- I. Practices are closed to visitors unless approved by the coach.
- J. All members of the Varsity and Junior Varsity squads are required to participate in the Melissa Christmas Parade, which will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in December. Times and date are TBA.
- K. UIL Competition traditionally falls the second weekend in January. Top 20 candidates from tryouts, along with 5 alternates will compose the competitive team.

#### **Article X: UNIFORMS/APPEARANCE**

- A. Coaches will be responsible for selecting uniforms and other items for the squad.
- B. Cheerleaders are not allowed to wear their uniforms unless representing MISD at an event designated by the coach.
- C. Under no circumstances will cheerleaders loan out any uniforms or clothing representing MHS cheerleading (warm-ups, t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc.) to anyone not on the squad without permission from the coaches.
- D. Members must keep uniforms clean, neat, and repaired. Members will be held financially responsible for lost or damaged uniforms.

- E. No jewelry is to be worn during performances or practices. This includes spacers.
- F. For safety purposes, hair must be worn pulled back away from the face at all performances and practices. The coach will designate a specific style. Male members will have groomed facial hair and a hairstyle that does not interfere with vision for safety purposes. Fingernails must be kept short for safety purposes.
- G. Gum is unacceptable during practices and performances.
- H. Appropriate practice clothes (correct shoes, shirt, socks, and shorts) must be worn at all practices.
- I. Uniforms, as designated by the coach, will be worn at games, pep rallies and other performances. Failure to arrive with the correct uniform and accessories will result in a missed performance. Full uniform will include:
  - 1. Correct top
  - 2. Correct skirt or pants
  - 3. Correct spanx
  - 4. Correct socks
  - 5. Correct shoes
  - 6. Correct bow (female)
  - 7. Poms (female)
  - 8. Matching cold-weather gear
  - 9. NO ADDITIONAL CLOTHES OR JACKETS WILL BE ALLOWED

**Article XI: GAMES/PERFORMANCES/PRACTICES**

- A. A member not performing or practicing for medical or disciplinary reasons is required to attend all practices and performances/games in full uniform.
- B. Cheerleaders are responsible for a certain amount of their own safety and protection during games, practices, and performances. Ankle braces, wraps, or tape are to be worn when needed. A doctor's release will be required to participate after injury. The school trainer should be consulted regarding injuries.
- C. A member will refrain from "fencing". This term describes any form of talking to the members of the crowd. This will not be permitted.
- D. There will be no food permitted before or during a game, except for times allotted by a coach during half-time.
- E. No cell phones will be permitted during practices, games, or performances. A coach will have a phone at all times in case of emergency.
- F. Captains are responsible for calling cheers/chants/stunts. Outside input during games is unacceptable. Cheerleaders will remain in formation during games and performances and refrain from talking.
- G. Perform only stunts that have been approved by a coach and under coach observation.
- H. Tumbling, stunting, and jumping will be performed under direct coach supervision ONLY. Any tumbling, stunting, and jumping performed without direct coach supervision will result in a game suspension. (This includes cartwheels, handstands, etc.)
- I. Cheerleaders must be respectful and polite to all visiting cheerleaders, home and visiting fans, and game officials.

- J. Public displays of affection (excluding holding hands) are not allowed in school or at school activities.

### **Article XII: FUNDRAISERS**

- A. Participation in fundraisers is provided to pay for initial expenses and continued expenses throughout the year. Cheerleaders will be given dates of all cheerleading fundraisers in advance. Do not schedule work or vacations during these times.
- B. Failure to attend the fundraisers (unless severely ill or a family emergency) may result in a suspension. If you are aware of a scheduling conflict, you must notify the sponsor immediately (at least 1 week prior to the fundraising event). These conflicts will be handled on an individual basis by the coach.
- C. Money for each of these items must be paid to the coach at the deadline given. Failure to pay for these items will result in suspension until payment is made.

### **ACADEMICS, DISCIPLINE, CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **Article XIII: SPECIFIC GUIDELINES/RULES**

- A. A cheerleader not meeting academic requirements will be placed on probation for one grading period. Academic requirements and lengths of grading periods are set by UIL Side-By-Side standards.
- B. Members are expected to observe district attendance policies. Attendance issues can result in probation, suspension, or dismissal from the squad.
- C. Probation is a term where a member is on notification, written or verbal, for any form of violation. The member still participates in all facets of the organization.
- D. Suspension is a term where a member is required to attend all functions completely dressed out, and must sit with the sponsor, but is unable to perform. If the member is on UIL grade suspension then the member is not allowed to dress out for games or performances and will not be allowed to attend with the squad, per UIL regulations. This will be the second step in the discipline process.
- E. Dismissal is a term where a member is released from the organization completely. Once a member is dismissed from the program for discipline or academics they are not eligible for reinstatement for the current year. Members must return ALL items of school property (i.e. uniforms) or will be required to purchase lost/unreturned items. This will be the final step in the discipline process.
- F. Before a member's dismissal is final, a meeting will be held with the principal or designee, parents, coach, and member to discuss the reasons for dismissal.
- G. Failure to comply with the regulations as stated in the constitution may result in probation, suspension, and lead to dismissal.
- H. If a coach deems an offense severe enough, a student may be placed directly on a behavior contract or removed from the squad.
- I. Suspension, probation and/or dismissal from the squad may occur to members for the following:

### 1. Probation

- a. 1 unexcused absence
- b. Dismissal from practice or performance
- c. Grade average falls between 70-75
- d. Attitude/discipline problems

### 2. Suspension

- a. 2 unexcused absences
- b. 2 dismissals from practices or performances (total, not each)
- c. Grade average falls below 70 (Side-By-Side), per UIL regulations
- d. Insubordination towards sponsor, teammates, faculty, school personnel, and school property
- e. Inappropriate behavior or language, verbal, written or involving social media.
- f. Truancy
- g. Three (3) Chronic attitude/discipline problems

### 3. Dismissal

- a. Out of School Suspension
- b. District Alternative Education Program placement (DAEP)
- c. Three suspension occurrences during the school year
- d. Insubordination to coaches, verbal or written
- e. Engaging in lewd and/or inappropriate behavior, including on social media
- f. Photographs that show more than a standard swim-suit, with full bottom coverage
- g. Use of illegal drugs
- h. Use of alcohol

J. Members not performing at games and pep rallies due to probations, other than for grades, are required to dress in uniform and sit with the sponsor.

K. Members must abide by the Melissa ISD student and Melissa High School Student Handbook code of conduct at all times.

L. Administration may prohibit game or event participation in lieu of other discipline when deemed appropriate by the Administration.

### **Article XIV: LETTER AWARDS**

Only varsity squad members in good standing will be awarded a varsity letter for the season. Attendance policies will be enforced. If an athlete is injured during a season, they may still letter if they continue to participate in all practices and performances as much as physically possible. In the event the athlete is unable to physically participate, they must continue to attend games and cheer along with the squad if possible. They will also be expected to attend practices and participate in non-physical activities. A varsity letter is awarded at the discretion of the director.

**Article XV: TRANSPORTATION**

- A. The school district will provide transportation to out of town events. All cheerleaders are required to ride to and from activities and/or functions in the provided transportation. Emergency exceptions will be taken under consideration.
- B. Members will abide by all bus transportation regulations and any other rules and regulations set forth by the sponsor, bus driver, and MISD.
- C. Members must make sure that all equipment and trash are removed from the bus or mode of transportation upon returning home. Items left on the bus by any member will result in probation or disciplinary consequences.

**Article XVI: Duties and Responsibilities of the Coaching Staff**

The coaching staff is responsible for:

- A. Helping cheerleaders develop their skills, character and maintain their positive academic standing.
- B. The fair treatment and respect of all team members.
- C. Ensuring that team members are safe, as the top priority at all times, that first aid is available and emergency contact list is kept up to date and present at all times.
- D. Organizing and arranging training schedules, equipment, training facilities, travel, and events.
- E. Abiding by all discipline procedures as outlined in the constitution unless otherwise directed by administration.

**Article XVII: Treatment of the Coaches:**

Failure to respect the authority of a coach may result in immediate dismissal or suspension from the squad. Arguments with the coaches will not be tolerated.

**Article XIII: AMENDMENTS/CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES**

- A. The coaches may enforce other rules both verbal and written as they become necessary during the school year.
- B. The constitution is subject to change due to changes from TEA, MISD School Board, or as deemed necessary by the coaches or school administrators.
- C. The interpretation of this constitution is the sole right of the MISD administration and the coaches. Any amendments made to this constitution are done so with the best interest of the organization as a whole.



## Student-Parent Consent of Constitution

\*By signing this form, both the student and the parent agree to uphold all of the items outlined in the constitution. Any violation of these items may result in disciplinary action.\*

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian  
Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member  
Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member  
Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

We are very excited that you are interested in becoming a member of the MHS Cheerleading Program! We look forward to getting to know each of you and helping you grow as a young adult!

*MHS Cheer Staff*