

# RIVERSPRINGS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

CHEERLEADING HANDBOOK

2020-2021

## RMS Cheerleaders Handbook



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Each person chosen to be a cheerleader at Riversprings Middle School will be expected to uphold the policies outlined in the Cheerleader Handbook. Each cheerleader must be dedicated to the squad in order to produce a cheerleading squad that the school and community will be proud of to have as a representative of Riversprings Middle School.

### I. PURPOSE/PHILOSOPHY

The primary function of the cheerleading squad is to promote school spirit and to cheer at football games, basketball game or other events. This makes each cheerleader an important representative of the school. **Cheerleaders are expected to set an example for other students; therefore, they must behave at all times.** Each member's behavior and reputation will affect the image of the entire squad. A Riversprings Cheerleader should appear friendly, courteous, responsible, dependable, and cooperative. Cheerleading is a demanding extra-curricular activity, yet it is rewarding and will help develop mature values that will assist the participants throughout their lives.

### II. CRITERIA FOR TRYOUTS

- A. The selection process for any RMS cheerleading squad will be left up to the discretion of judges. Each Judge will award 90% of the total score the candidate has earned. Categories include: jumps, cheer, chant, and dance. The coach will also have a score sheet and award 10 % of the final score, making it a grand total of 100 points per candidate.
- B. Requirements:
  - i. Have a cumulative 2.0 GPA.
  - ii. Not more than one placement in ISS.
  - iii. Participation in the selection process will include dressing in approved attire, having a current physical form, and attending mandatory tryout sessions.
  - iv. Participants may not owe money to any Riversprings Middle school.

### III. RESIGNATION AND DISMISSAL

A. Resignation: If a cheerleader resigns from any RMS squad at any time after the selection process has been completed, she will not be eligible to tryout the following year. Refusing to cheer at a scheduled event is considered resignation.

B. Dismissal:

- i. Losing all merits.
- ii. Refusing to ride the bus to and from games. (See sections pertaining to games & transportation.
- iii. Refusal to stay with the group when traveling.
- iv. A second placement in ISS.
- v. Missing more than two cheer events (unexcused or excused). Cheer events are identified as practices, games, pep rallies, and fundraisers.
- vi. Through joint discussion of the Principal and Coach, a cheerleader may be dismissed at any time. This will only happen if the cheerleader's behavior warrants such action. **This may occur even if the cheerleader has not lost all merits.**

### IV. CAPTAIN(S)/COCAPTAIN(S)

Selection of captain(s) and/or co-captain(s) is at the discretion of the sponsor. The captain(s) and co-captain(s) will be assigned duties by their sponsor, specific to the cheerleading team. If they refuse or fail to fulfill any of their responsibilities, they will be removed from their position.

### V. UNIFORMS AND APPEARANCE

A. Cheerleaders will provide their own uniform.

- i. After tryouts, there will be a **non-refundable deposit** of \$400.00 due one week after tryouts. Failure to make this deposit will result in forfeiture of the cheerleader's position on the squad. This deposit is used to order uniforms and to pay for camp.
- ii. Cheerleaders will purchase their uniforms. Items may include, but are not limited to: skirt, bloomers, camp-wear, warm-ups, pom poms, shoes, socks, etc. Therefore, they will own these items.

- iii. Should members lose any part of their uniform, they will be responsible for replacing it. (Note, you would be required to sit with the sponsor until the item is replaced, which would result in demerits.)
- iv. Cheerleaders' accounts must be paid in full by June 1st. If an account is not paid in full the cheerleader will not be able receive their uniform or accessories. (bag, pom poms, jacket)
- v. *If any cheerleader is dismissed or quits from the squad at any time during the year, the cheerleader is responsible for their remaining balance.*

B. Uniforms, shoes, and shoelaces must be cleaned for every game.

C. Cheerleader appearance will be neat. No excessive make-up, **only neutral colored or clear nail polish**, and no jewelry or accessories unless specified as a part of the uniform, and approved by the sponsor. **Long nails are unacceptable, as they are a safety hazard.** Fingernails may not be longer than the **fingertip**. Also, no nail stones or nail piercings. **All body piercing must be removed for any cheerleading event. This includes all practices.** Hair must be cleaned, groomed, and off of the shoulders, and kept **and natural shade of hair color**. Tattoos that would be exposed while wearing a cheerleading uniform are not allowed. They (the tattoo) must be covered. **Failure to follow any of these rules will result in the cheerleader losing their privilege to cheer at that particular event and they will receive demerits. The cheerleader must, however, sit in full uniform, with the sponsor until the event is over and they are dismissed.**

## VI. Practice

A. **No more than 3 total practices can be missed. This includes excused practices due to illness, drs. appointments, or family emergencies.**

B. Every cheerleader is to be at practice on time, lined up, and ready to begin.

C. Girls are to be dressed in shorts and shirts – no bellies showing or booty shorts. Dress code appropriate.

D. Each squad member to be present at all practices. Doctor's appointments are only excused with a doctor's note. Cheerleaders should try to schedule appointment around practices and game dates.

E. **An absence at any cheerleading function will be not be excused unless there are circumstances that are approved by the sponsor.** (See section on excused/unexcused absences)

- F.** An unclear absence will be grounds for dismissal from the squad. **(Parents should be advised that restricting their child from cheerleading functions will not be excused.)**
- G. A cheerleader who attends school will be expected to attend the practice/game. If a cheerleader is not in attendance the day of a practice/game, they will not be allowed to participate in the practice/game. (Note, a field trip is not considered an absence)
- H. A cheerleader not in attendance the day before a game/cheer event will not be allowed to cheer at the game/event. The day before a game/event, we will be making sure all stunts, dance routines, etc. are perfected – not being at practice means that we will be restructuring in preparation for the game/event.
- I. A cheerleader will notify the sponsor, **not another squad member**, if they are signing out of school on the day that there is a scheduled cheerleading activity.
- J. Cheerleaders may participate in special events which occur during the year. This is at the sponsor's discretion and always with advance notification. (Wakulla High School homecoming game – always on a Friday night.)

## **VII. GAMES AND TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES.**

- A. Each cheerleader is to be present at all scheduled events, at the time specified by the sponsor. A cheerleader not on time for the transportation departure for an away event will be left. The cheerleader will receive demerits for being late.
- B. If illness, injury, disciplinary action, etc., keeps a cheerleader from participating in an event but allows them to attend the event, the cheerleader will be in full uniform and remain with the sponsor.
- C. Only cheerleaders will travel to and from games by the school bus which will be provided by the school. (In lieu of a bus, the sponsor may use a school approved vehicle.) No friends, relatives, etc. will be allowed to travel with the squad. (Unless there are circumstances approved by the administrator.)
- D. Cheerleaders will be allowed to ride home with a parent or guardian only – this is school board policy. They will sign out the cheerleader with the coach.**
- E. Cheerleaders are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from practices and home games. If you cannot provide or arrange transportation, you need to consider if you should participate in cheerleading. Parents cannot expect the sponsor to provide transportation. Failure to have timely transportation which causes the sponsor undue waiting will result in demerits.

## **VIII. CONDUCT**

- A.** Cheerleaders are to maintain dignity and poise at all times. They are official representatives of Riversprings Middle School. Each cheerleader should set an example of good conduct to all other students in the school. As an official representative of the school, each cheerleader will be expected and required to participate in a variety of cheerleading activities. The quality of the squad will depend on the individual's willingness to work together.
- B.** All Cheerleading trips, events and fundraisers are school sponsored activities. All school rules apply and will be enforced during these activities. Each cheerleader must remember they are an official representation of Riversprings Middle School, even if they do not use school transportation.
- C.** Cheerleaders are not to display bad habits such as: smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, skipping school, improper language, etc. The display of such bad behavior that violates school policy or the cheerleading handbook will result in demerits or dismissal from the squad.
- D.** Cheerleaders will not be rude or discourteous, at any time, to any school board employee, a member of another squad, a fellow cheerleader, or any member of the community, etc. Cheerleaders are to display good sportsmanship at all times. All of this also applies to all forms of social media. Actions involving poor sportsmanship from any cheerleader will be reported to the sponsor, or school administrator and will result in demerits or dismissal.
- E.** No gum, candy, or food etc, will be allowed while cheering. (half-time is an exception)
- F.** Cheerleaders will not engage in conversation while cheering. (this includes among the squad or with the crowd)

## **IX. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

- A.** The demerit system will be used to discipline cheerleaders. The system will go into effect when a new squad is chosen and will continue until tryouts the following year.

## **X. SUMMER PRACTICES AND CAMP**

- A.** It will be necessary for each cheerleader to attend practices during the summer and summer camp.

- B. Summer camp is an official school activity. Each cheerleader needs to remember they are representing Riversprings Middle School. Any conduct or misbehavior that violates school policy, school rules and/or the cheerleading handbook will result in demerits or dismissal from the squad.
- C. If a cheerleader does not attend camp and her absence is considered unexcused, she will be dismissed from the squad.
- D. The cost of camp will be paid for by the cheerleader.

## XI. DEMERIT SYSTEM

- A. The purpose of the demerit system is to provide disciplinary action for any cheerleader who does not behave in accordance with the rules of this handbook.
- B. Each cheerleader will begin the year with 15 merits, awarded when the squad is selected. The sponsor will issue reports when necessary. Cheerleaders will be notified when 5 merits remain.
- C. Misbehavior deserving merits are listed below:
  - 1. One demerit
    - a. Making a mistake during a cheer, chant, or a stunt and making no effort to recover.
    - b. Not dressing properly for practice.
    - c. Failure to make a scheduled payment on uniform or camp. (this is after the initial deposit)
    - d. Failure to return any required documentation to the sponsor on time.
  - 2. Two demerits
    - a. Arriving tardy to a game. (more than 10 minutes late for the designated time to be at the stadium or gym)
    - b. Arriving late or leaving early from practice. (after school tutoring is not considered late)
    - c. Lack of neatness or cleanliness in uniform or appearance.
    - d. Chewing gum or eating while cheering.
    - e. Wearing jewelry, inappropriate fingernails, or accessories not specified as a part of the uniform. (this includes practice)
    - f. “Huddling” or “primping” in front of the fans.
    - g. Unnecessary conversation with someone from the crowd or a squad member, while cheering. (this includes relatives and friends)
    - h. If the sponsor is required to wait because your ride did not pick you up in a timely manner.
    - i. Each “F” grade on report card.

**3. Three Demerits**

- a. Not participating or misbehaving during practice**
- b. “Disappearing” during practice or games**
- c. .c. Excused absence from a game or one day of camp.**

**4. Four Demerits**

- a. Forgetting or losing part of the uniform, therefore not dressed properly for a game or any cheerleading function.**
- b. Not participating in cheers, chants, or stunts, during a game or pep rally. (Note, this is grounds for dismissal)**
- c. “Disappearing” during a game or scheduled cheerleading activity.**
- d. Unexcused absence from a cheerleading event, including but not limited to practice, or a game (this would also include not making word count).**
- e. Not participating in fundraising projects.**

**5. Five Demerits**

- a. Displaying a lack of cooperation or hostility toward a squad member and/or the sponsor at any time.**
- b. Arguing on the field/gym in front of the fans.**
- c. c. Placement in the ISS program.**

**XII. EXCEPTIONS TO EXCUSED ABSENCES**

**A. The following absences will not receive a demerit:**

- i. Medical emergencies such as a hospitalization of the cheerleader, or of their immediate family. (This would include grandparents, guardians, step-parents, or siblings) This would also include a doctor’s note for an illness, injury, and/or for a doctor’s appointment. It is the cheerleader’s or the parent’s responsibility to notify the sponsor as soon as possible. Failure to do so, in a reasonable time-frame, may negate this as an excused absence.**
- ii. Funeral attendance. It is the cheerleader’s responsibility to provide adequate notification to the sponsor. Verification may be required. Failure to provide adequate notification will negate this as an excused absence.**
- iii. Summer School attendance. Verification from the school administration will be necessary.**
- iv. Summer vacation. Only **one** free absence will be allowed. The sponsor must receive prior written notification, signed by the parent, one week prior to the absence. Failure to do so will negate this as an excused absence.**
- v. Extenuating circumstances will be at the sponsor’s discretion. Adequate notification and verification will be required.**

**XIII. SUSPENSION**

- A. Suspension from games will be used as a way to keep cheerleaders concerned with their academic achievement. Any cheerleader who is suspended from a game will be required to attend the game in full uniform and sit with the sponsor.**

B. Academic reasons for suspension are listed below:

i. Suspension for one game

1. Failure to achieve word count – schedule will be provided
2. One “F” on report card.
3. Failure to show improvement from a previous “F” by progress report time.
4. Failure to have a 2.0 GPA for nine weeks.

ii. Suspension for two games

1. Two or more “F’s” on a report card.

**Volunteers: Due to COVID 19 we will be unable to have volunteers in our buildings. The safety of our students and community is our top priority.**

# Wakulla County Schools

COMMITTED TO SUCCESS

## NON DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The School Board of Wakulla County, Florida does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, genetic information for applicants and employees, or any other reason prohibited by Federal and State law regarding non-discrimination. See 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d); 34 C.F.R. 106.9; 34 C.F.R. 110.25.

In addition, the School Board provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. See 34 C.F.R. 108.9.

Disabled individuals needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services, programs, and activities of the School Board are required in advance to notify the administrator at the school/center at which the event or service is offered to request reasonable accommodation.

The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to any opportunity or event associated with Wakulla County Schools.

The designated Equity Coordinator, Title IX and Section 504 Compliance Coordinator as required by 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d) is Angie Walker, Executive Director of Human Resources, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327; 850.926.0065; [angela.walker@wcsb.us](mailto:angela.walker@wcsb.us).

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