

Florence City Schools Cheerleader/Mascot Constitution

I. Purpose

1. The purpose shall be to promote and uphold school spirit, to develop a sense of good sportsmanship among students, and to better relationships between schools during athletic events.

II. Membership

1. Middle school cheer will consist of grades 7 and 8. JV will be 9th – 10th graders. Varsity will be selected from grades 9-12.
2. The number of squad members for each squad will be determined by the FCS cheer coaches.
3. Captains must have been on a Florence Cheer squad the previous year.
4. Captains will be chosen by each squad's coach using a variety of qualifications including but not limited to judges' scores, leadership qualities, teacher evaluation, and squad input.

III. Eligibility

1. Candidate must currently be a 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, or 11th grader enrolled in Florence City Schools or registered for the upcoming school year
2. Have an overall 70 average with passing grades in all core areas
3. Have no more than 10 unexcused absences this school year
4. Have a zero balance for all school and cheer fees
5. A candidate must meet the Alabama High School Athletic Association eligibility requirements.
6. If at the end of the school year, a candidate does not meet the eligibility requirements set by the AHSAA, he/she will be removed from the squad. The person receiving the next highest score at tryouts may be placed on the squad. A candidate who fails to meet the requirements will not be allowed to tryout.
7. Two disciplinary forms on file in the office or an out of school suspension during the current year will disqualify any student from trying out for cheerleader.
8. Any candidate who has been involved with the Florence Police Department judicial system within the last twelve months will not be eligible to tryout.
9. Any cheerleader who has quit a Florence City School cheerleading squad or any cheerleader who has been dismissed from a Florence City School cheerleading squad for a minor infraction may or may not be eligible for tryouts the following year. The principal, athletic director and coach will determine eligibility.
10. A candidate is required to attend the cheerleader clinic held prior to tryouts. Absences must be pre-approved by the coach.
11. A candidate must have the following forms/funds checked and on file with the coach before tryouts.
 1. Candidate google form completed
 2. Tryout fee
 3. Handbook acknowledgement signed and returned
 4. All school fees and outstanding cheer balances must be paid
12. Cheerleader tryouts and selections will be held each spring.
 1. Selected cheerleaders are required to complete the AHSAA physical form before participating in any cheerleader activities.
 2. Selected cheerleaders are required to complete the NFHS Sportsmanship Program before participating in any cheerleading activities.
 3. Selected cheerleaders must complete all Dragonfly requirements before participating in any cheerleading activities.

IV. **Cheering Responsibilities of Each Squad**

1. Squads will be responsible for cheering basketball and football games. Squads could possibly be divided for some basketball games (coaches discretion)
2. Responsibilities:
 1. Varsity cheerleaders will cheer for all Varsity football home and away games as well as all Varsity girls' and boys' basketball home and away games. Freshman/ JV will cheer for B-team and Freshmen games and Middle School will cheer for 7th & 8th grade games.
 2. Cheerleaders will be required to compete in regional, state and national competitions should the team be awarded a bid. National competitions squad will be based on the skill level and work ethic of the squad. This decision will be made at the discretion of the current cheer coach and athletic director.
 3. Cheerleaders **are expected** to cheer at tournaments, including tournaments taking place during a school break.

V. **Game Travel**

1. Transportation to all away games will be provided by the school. The coach will have the final decision regarding travel back home.
2. Cheerleaders must travel to all away football and basketball games by bus unless stated by coach in advanced.
3. Emergency circumstances will need coach approval.

VI. **Requirements**

1. Cheerleaders must meet the AHSAA Eligibility requirements.
2. Cheerleaders must display maturity, sound judgment, leadership, emotional stability, and a pleasing personality.
3. Cheerleaders must have a yearly physical examination.
4. All cheerleaders must attend and participate in summer cheerleading camp and practices.
5. Cheerleaders will be required to pay all of camp expenses.
6. Cheerleaders must carry school insurance if their family does not provide coverage.
7. Cheerleaders must have cheerleading activities take priority over all other activities. Cheerleading must take priority over a job, and clubs.
8. A cheerleader must be present at school (for at least four periods) in order to cheer for a game that day or night unless he/she has received prior approval from coach or in the case of extenuating circumstances.
9. Cheerleaders will be required to attend school the full day following a school night game unless excused by the coach. Failure to do so will result in benching and/or demerits.
10. Each cheer squad will raise funds to cover expenses such as paint, paper, new uniforms, etc.
11. Cheerleaders must maintain their level of ability that they displayed at tryouts throughout the rest of the school year. Failure to do so will warrant dismissal from the squad. Another cheerleader may be selected.
12. If a selected cheerleader becomes unable to fulfill his/her cheerleading obligations due to moving from the area, he/she will be dismissed from the squad. Another cheerleader may be selected.
13. Cheerleaders must be in the cheer position ready to cheer at the start of each game and each quarter.

VII. **Mandatory Tumbling and Stunting Class**

1. All cheerleaders will be required to attend a mandatory tumbling and stunting class.
2. The gym and coach chosen to teach the tumbling and stunting class will be decided by the cheer coaches and athletic director.
3. Cheerleaders may be required to pay all or a portion of the class fees.

VIII. **Conduct and Individual Behavior**

1. Cheerleaders must display good sportsmanship at all times.
2. Cheerleaders must conduct themselves properly during all cheerleading activities and at all school activities because they are official student representatives of Florence City Schools.
3. Cheerleaders must display exemplary classroom conduct.
4. Cheerleaders will not chew gum, drink, or eat while cheering except between quarters. Water jugs are permitted during hot weather. Use of a cell phone is prohibited during any cheer event of performance (this includes practices, games, performance, events, etc).
5. Cheerleaders will not wear earrings, jewelry, or colored nail polish while in uniform. Belly rings and/or body rings are not allowed at any cheerleading function including practice. Any tattoo or other body art must be completely covered while in uniform.
6. Cheerleaders must never use foul language while in practice wear or uniform.
7. Cheerleaders must have plain and simple hairstyles and plain and simple makeup while in uniform or during other cheerleader activities. Plain and simple means that no cheerleader will be excessive with hairstyles or makeup different from the other cheerleaders to the point that she draws attention to herself.
8. Cheerleaders must bring poms and megaphones to all football games unless told otherwise by a captain or coach. Cheerleaders should not bring megaphones to basketball games. Poms only should be brought to basketball games.
9. Cheerleaders must not leave their cheering responsibilities to talk with friends.
10. Cheerleaders should be friendly to other squads and never make fun of or laugh at other athletes.
11. Squad members will respect the decisions of the coach as well as the captains, and will give them complete cooperation.
12. A cheerleader must compromise for the good of the squad and remember the coach makes all final decisions.
13. Cheerleaders must not discuss squad business outside the squad.
14. Cheerleaders will refrain from public displays of affection at all school activities, while in uniform or not in uniform.
15. Cheerleaders must bring a change of clothes if attending other games. They may not remain in uniform to be a patron at other events. The cheerleaders' designated warm-ups are acceptable.
16. The coach reserves the right to counsel, reprimand, and/or dismiss a cheerleader at any time, with or without notice for violations of sections VI, VII, and VIII.
17. Cheerleaders may not wear acrylic nails during cheer season or at summer practices and camp.
18. Appropriate undergarments must be worn with uniforms. No undergarments, including sports bras should be showing while in uniform.
19. If a cheerleader is found in a picture, social media outlet, etc. participating in the use of drugs, consumption of alcohol, making obscene gestures or other activity unbecoming of a cheerleader, he/she may be dismissed from the squad.
20. If any cheerleader is assigned to alternative school they will be immediately removed from the squad.
21. Any cheerleader receiving three or more ISS assignments will be removed from the squad.

IX. **Demerits**

1. The following actions will result in one demerit given:
 1. More than five minutes late to practice (This includes 8th period for varsity- 2:40)
 2. Not having proper attire for practice (correct practice wear and shoes)
 3. Late for pre-game activities
 4. Failure to notify the coach of absence from practice, game, or related cheerleader activity
 5. No doctor's excuse given upon returning to cheer

6. Failure to provide assigned items or money at specific times
7. Chewing gum, eating, drinking, using cell phone during game
8. Excessive talking with crowd or squad members during game
9. Untidy uniform or appearance (dirty, holes, etc)

****Other consequences may be used for level 1 demerit such as additional workouts and other duties. All methods will be appropriate and benefit the cheerleading program.

2. The following actions result in two demerits given:
 1. Failure to report to a coach before leaving a game
 2. Profane or undesired language/gestures
 3. Insufficient knowledge of cheers, chants, etc.
 4. Equipment left during and after athletic events
 5. Uniform worn outside of cheerleading

3. The following actions result in three demerits given:
 1. Unexcused absence from any cheerleading activity other than a game (this includes summer practices)
 2. The coach will give demerits for a problem not corrected after counsel. Problems will include items found under section IV.
 3. Any infraction in the constitution that is not otherwise specified.
 4. Student assigned to LOP for any reason

4. The following actions will result in four demerits given
 1. Unexcused absence from a game
 2. Disrespect of/to a coach or captain (attitude, unnecessary comments, etc.)
 3. Disrespect to another adult (attitude, unnecessary comments, etc.)
 1. If confronted by teacher about unacceptable behavior, cheerleader will receive four demerits.
 4. Student assigned to ISS, OCS, or OSS

5. Not participating in a fundraising project will result in 5 demerits given; this includes not turning in fundraising money on time.
6. Grades, demerits and suspensions will be determined starting with the date of election. The cheerleader year will consist from tryout to tryout.
7. The demerit system will apply to a benched cheerleader.
8. Suspension from school results in benching for ballgames and related pep rally for every day of suspension and given four demerits for each day suspension (3 day suspension equals 3 ball games and pep rallies plus 12 demerits)
9. ***The coach will have the authority to give demerits for offenses not listed that would hinder smooth operation procedures or would harm the reputation of the squad.***
10. Each coach will keep a notebook of demerits. Parents and cheerleaders may request to see this **but it is the responsibility of the cheerleader to keep up with their demerits.**

X. Merits

1. The coach may design a merit system for additional responsibilities not covered in the constitution.
2. Any work assigned to earn merits must be in addition to the duties and responsibilities already assigned.
3. Opportunities to obtain merits will be offered to the entire squad and not on an individual basis.
4. Merits may not be used for offenses that warrant 4 demerits.

5. Merits will result in three points being added to a cheerleader's nine-weeks grade for athletics. However, the student's average cannot exceed 100 points.

XI. Personal Leave

1. Each Varsity cheerleader will be given one personal leave night during basketball season. The personal leave night may not be taken during area tournaments or state playoffs. The coach must approve personal leave prior to the event. If a cheerleader misses more than one game due to sickness, those absences will count as their personal leave. A doctor's note must be provided for any games missed due to sickness.
2. Only two cheerleaders will be approved for personal leave when the full squad is cheering. Only one cheerleader will be approved for personal leave when the squad is divided.
3. A cheerleader must request the use of personal leave IN WRITING at least 24 hours in advance. Exceptions will be made for emergency situations only.

XII. Game Suspension

1. If the overall average in subjects drops below 70, the cheerleader is benched until the next nine weeks grades are posted, or possibly the progress report.
2. If an "F" is made in any subject, the cheerleader will be benched for one game day and attend morning study hall (or Boost) until the next nine weeks grades are posted.
3. An accumulation of four demerits during the year, starting on the day of election, will warrant suspension from one game, and if applicable, the pep rally that accompanies that game.
4. A second accumulation of four demerits will warrant suspension from two games and any pep rallies that accompany those two games.
5. A third accumulation of four demerits will warrant dismissal from the squad.
6. If a uniform is not ready for use, the cheerleader is benched for that game.
7. Cheerleaders must maintain passing grades at all times, therefore if a cheerleader fails a course and requires summer school the cheerleader, parent, coach, and athletic director will meet and determine eligibility.

XIII. The Suspended or Benched Cheerleader

1. The demerit system will apply to the benched cheerleader.
2. If a cheerleader is benched, he/she will be required to attend games in warm ups.
3. The benched cheerleader will not participate in pep rallies.
4. The benched cheerleader will sit with his/her coach at the game.
5. The benched cheerleader will not be allowed to be on his/her cell phone while the game is taking place.

XIV. Dismissal

1. Use of tobacco at school or any school activity will warrant permanent dismissal.
2. Disrespect of/to the coach may warrant permanent dismissal.
3. If a school administrator or law enforcement official determines that a cheerleader is under the influence of, or in possession of alcohol and/or drugs on school property or at a school related activity, that cheerleader will be permanently dismissed.
4. The second school suspension will warrant permanent dismissal.
5. Expulsion from school will warrant permanent dismissal.
6. Failure to maintain skills required to participate.
7. If a cheerleader becomes involved with the Florence City Judicial System, it will result in permanent dismissal.
8. Multiple Occasions:

1. If the overall average in a subject drops below 70 for the third time, permanent dismissal is warranted
2. A third benching for demerits will result in permanent dismissal.
3. A total of twelve demerits during a year will result in permanent dismissal.
9. Failure to maintain tumbling ability as listed in section VI.
10. If a cheerleader fails a class and must attend summer school, they will be dismissed from the squad based on the fact that all cheerleaders are required to attend mandatory summer practices and mandatory summer cheer camp with UCA. (Section VI. E.)- pending coach and athletic director decision
11. Being dismissed or quitting a FCS squad discontinues eligibility in the program unless otherwise determined by the coach and athletic director

XV. Captain's Duties

1. The captains work closely with the coach and squad as mediators.
2. The captains are responsible for all communication to squad.
3. The captains will be at practice before starting time and have the practice start on time.
4. The captain and the coach will call meetings and additional practices as they feel them to be necessary. The coach's approval must be obtained in advance for all practices.
5. The captains are responsible for organizing the weekly favors for the football/basketball teams.
6. The captains are responsible for organizing uniform schedule.

XVI. Practices

1. Summer cheerleading mandatory practices.
2. Monthly calendars will be given in advance to each cheerleader. Cheerleaders are expected to keep up with the calendar and attend all events. Electronic versions of the calendars may be emailed to parents, cheerleaders, or unloaded to a digital file storage.
3. Calendars are tentative a subject to change with short notice.
4. The coach is responsible for scheduling practice during the year.
5. Voluntary practice led by the coach will be offered at the coach's discretion.
6. Attention must be given to the coaches and captains during practices.
7. Late arrival to practice may warrant the entire squad receiving a consequence.
8. Cheerleader must notify the coach if an absence or tardy is going to occur.
9. Must be present at the last practice before game/performance in order to participate. (Coach may approve other arrangements-coach's decision is final)
10. Cheerleader must notify coach of an absence from any practice this includes during the school year for athletic PE.

XVII. Uniforms

1. The coach will make a list of uniforms issued.
2. All uniforms must be returned to the school at the end of cheerleading season. The uniforms must be cleaned and in good condition.
3. A dismissed cheerleader must turn in uniforms immediately.
4. Uniforms should be cleaned before each wear.
5. Uniforms will not be bought, made, remodeled, or planned without permission from the coach.
6. All uniform alterations will be made by the same seamstress (selected by the coach) to ensure quality work and to increase the lifetime of the garment.
7. Cheerleaders will be responsible for all alternations cost if not altered with the whole.
8. No alterations to a uniform either purchased by the cheerleader or school may be altered without coach's approval.

9. Uniforms and other cheer wear are not to be worn except for games, pep rallies, parades, etc. They may not be lent to anyone!
10. Any uniform that is damaged or lost will be repaired or replaced at the expense of the individual cheerleader.
11. Cheerleaders who fail to turn in any items will not be permitted to try out for cheerleader, or if a senior, will not be permitted to participate in graduation until all uniforms are replaced.
12. Personal accessories will be purchased by the individual cheerleader and will include, but are not limited, to the following items:
 1. Undergarments for uniforms
 2. Warm Up
 3. Spirit/Camp Clothes
 4. Shoes
 5. Megaphone
 6. Poms

XVIII. **Grades**

1. Each cheerleader begins a nine-week grading period with 100 points. Each demerit received during the nine-week grading period will result in a loss of three points.
2. Merits will result in three points being added to a cheerleader's nine-weeks grade for athletics. However, the student's average cannot exceed 100 points.
3. Each grading period will stand independently.
4. Cheerleaders in athletic PE will take a performance based benchmark.
5. Cheerleaders must remember that they are a student FIRST and academics must maintain high priority.
6. All cheerleaders must maintain an overall "C" average.
7. Grades will be monitored by the squad's head coach.
8. In the event of a failing grade in any subject at the time of a grade check:
 1. Parents will be notified by the coach
 2. Cheerleader will be put on Academic Probation until grade is remediated (Academic Probation-AP means suspension from all squad activities)
 3. When the grade is remediated, participation may resume.
 4. If a cheerleader is placed on AP the cheerleader may be removed from the squad
 5. Study hall may be held before practice as the coaching staff feels the needs.

XIX. **Mascot**

1. The mascot for Florence High School will be selected by the coach, principal, and athletic director and a tryout process.
2. The mascot should follow all requirements listed in sections III, VI, VII, X, and XVII of this constitution.
3. The mascot must be present for all home varsity football games and designated varsity boys' and home varsity girls' basketball games.
4. Any absence from a football game or basketball game must have prior approval from the coach.
5. The basketball schedule for the mascot will be determined by the mascot and coach.
6. The mascot must be available during the summer for pictures at the Little Girls' Clinic.
7. The mascot has the option of attending summer camp with the squad.
8. The mascot will participate in all activities and fundraisers.

This is a living document and can be amended based on the coaches' decisions.

Cheerleading Contract

I, _____(print name), have received and read the Florence High School Cheerleading Constitution and understand that failure to follow the handbook will result in demerits and/or suspension/expulsion from the cheerleading program. I also understand that situations may arise that would lead to additional policies and guidelines being added to this handbook by either the sponsor or administrators.

Signature of Cheerleader

Date

Parent Signature

Date