Walton High School Cheerleading

2023-2024

1. Philosophy

It shall be the purpose of the organization to promote and uphold team spirit for those we encounter, to develop good sportsmanship by example, to promote good relations in the community, and to support the high school athletic teams. The organizational goal is to work in harmony with the coaches, faculty, athletic programs, student body, and the community of Walton High School. The overarching goal is to provide valuable learning experiences, which will help the students become better citizens. Participants must understand the impact their behaviors can have on others based on their role as a student athlete; therefore, high levels of leadership and character must be exhibited at all times.

1. Requirements
	1. All participants must meet all eligibility requirements mandated by GHSA. Failure to uphold those requirements will result in immediate dismissal from the squad. These GHSA academic requirements are as follows:
		* 1. Must be enrolled in five classes for credit toward graduation.
			2. Must pass five classes each semester and be on track for graduation.
	2. Each cheerleader must be physically able to participate in long periods of vigorous activity with undue fatigue or pain.
	3. Each cheerleader must have on file a parental consent form, insurance information, and yearly physical.
	4. Every cheerleader must show a respectful and cooperative attitude towards faculty, peers, and coaches.
	5. Abide by the rules and guidelines presented in this document. Cheerleaders should understand the spirit behind the rules. Any situation not covered specifically will be handled by the coaches and administration in the best interest of Walton High School cheerleading.
	6. Booster club fundraisers (Camp Walton and Walton Cheer Classic) are used to offset the expenses associated with cheerleading. Participation in fundraisers is mandatory. Concerns regarding payment of fees or camp(s) should be directed to the head coach. If fees and/or fundraising funds are outstanding, the cheerleader will not be entitled to any items or events that are provided by the booster club including banquet/senior gifts.
2. Safety
	1. Jewelry cannot be worn during any cheerleading activities this includes all practices.
	2. Hair must be secured away from the face and off of the shoulders. No hard clips, etc… should be used.
	3. Fingernails must be short (can make a fist comfortably). No fake or long nails allowed. Your nails should not extend past your fingertips when looking at your palms.
	4. No stunting or tumbling unless under the direct supervision of the coach.
	5. Appropriate clothing and shoes (without holes) must be worn at all times.
	6. No chewing gum while engaging in cheer activities.
	7. Cheerleading involves serious inherent safety/health risks, mostly due to stunting and tumbling. All safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the utmost safety of all participants; therefore, a coach should approve any new stunt and/or tumbling skill before it is attempted.
	8. Cheerleaders must be attentive and focused while engaged in cheerleading activities. This is especially important during basketball games due to the proximity of the cheerleaders to the game.
	9. Cheerleaders must report any physical problems to their coach as soon as the problem arises. Failure to do so could cause further problems and jeopardize the safety of others.
	10. Cheerleaders must obtain a doctor’s release before resuming any cheerleading activity after an injury or illness requiring a doctor’s visit.

1. Appearance
	1. Uniforms and shoes should be well kept at all times. Shoes must be free of holes.
	2. Cheerleaders should refrain from primping in public (applying lotion, makeup, deodorant). Cheerleaders should only change clothes in the bathroom.
	3. Fake nails may NOT be worn during performances/appearances. Nails must not be longer than fingertip length. Nail polish is allowed if it is nude colored or school colors. No bright or distracting colors allowed.
	4. At all public functions, hair should pulled back neatly with the designated ribbon.
	5. Cheerleaders will be given a uniform schedule that will detail the appropriate uniform, bow, bloomers, and school attire to wear on game days. Game day attire is mandatory.
	6. Cheerleaders should exhibit mature and appropriate behavior at all public functions.
	7. Cheerleaders must change clothing in appropriate designated areas (restrooms/locker rooms – not in public areas).
2. Transportation
	1. Cheerleaders are required to ride the bus to and from away games/events/competitions.
	2. A cheerleader is not allowed to drive to an away function.
	3. If the county cannot provide transportation, parent volunteers will be used to transport participants. A CCPS form is required if you are willing to transport and/or give permission for your child to ride with another parent.
3. Attendance
	1. Cheerleaders are not allowed to attend practice or games if they have missed more than three periods of school (certain circumstances are approved by GHSA – example funerals; any exception must be approved by the administration and cheer coach). They must be present for four classes, and three of the four classes must be academic classes.
	2. If a cheerleader needs to miss any part of a cheerleading function, she must tell the coach in person (do not text or send an email unless you are absent from school due to illness, etc…). The information should never come from another cheerleader/student/parent. The coach must approve the absence. Any unapproved absences may result in dismissal from the squad.
	3. Punctuality is vital. Tardiness will not be tolerated. Early is on time; on time is late; and late has consequences.
	4. Any cheerleader who is unable to participate due to health reasons is considered part of the team and is expected to attend all functions. For games, injured cheerleaders should wear uniforms/warm-ups.
	5. Mandatory practices begin August 1st. Practice/event schedules will be sent home in advance so that conflicts may be avoided.
	6. When absent from school, or checking in/out on the day of an event, the coach should be notified ASAP.
	7. Participation in other activities or jobs should not interfere with your role as a WHS cheerleader. Cheerleaders who are participating in other WHS sports will be given special consideration and arrangements between the two head coaches and AD must be agreed upon in advance.
	8. Summer practices/camps cannot be mandated, but it is a necessity to the success of the program. Therefore, participants are expected to make their best effort to be present at summer functions and to communicate, in advance, with their coaches regarding absences.
4. Conflict Resolution

Communication between cheerleaders, parents, and coaches is a crucial factor in determining the success of the program. If a problem or concern arises, it is important that the appropriate chain of command is followed. Chain of command: 1st – Cheerleader to Coach, 2nd – Parent to Coach, 3rd – Parent to Head Coach, 4th – Parent/Head Coach to Athletic Director.

1. Uniforms

All cheerleaders purchase one blue uniform that belongs to them. All other uniforms are school property. If lost, damaged, or stolen the cheerleader is responsible for paying replacement costs. This is approximately $200.

* 1. Care of uniforms is expected at all times.
	2. Do not let anyone borrow your uniform or spirit wear (t-shirts, jackets, sweats, etc.).
	3. Uniforms must be washed prior to returning at the end of a season.

1. Game Suspension and Dismissal from Program
	1. Out of school suspension can result in dismissal from the program.
	2. Any suspension from school for vaping or any other illegal substances will result in dismissal from the program.
	3. Four unexcused absences from **any mandatory cheerleading function** (practices, games, competitions, fundraisers) will result in dismissal from the program.
		1. Unexcused absence #1: Cheerleader will sit one quarter of the game
		2. Unexcused absence #2: Cheerleader will sit out for half of the game
		3. Unexcused absence #3: Cheerleader will sit out one full game
		4. Unexcused absence #4: Cheerleader will be dismissed from the program
	4. Excused absences: sickness (with a doctor’s note), funerals, religious holidays, family weddings, etc. These must be approved with coach prior to absence.
	5. If a cheerleader is benched (suspended) for any portion of a game, she must sit alone with the coach and be in uniform. She is not allowed to be on her phone.
	6. Once a cheerleader quits a squad or is removed from the squad, she is no longer part of the WHS cheerleading program and will lose all banquet privileges, etc. She will not be allowed to try out the following year. Failure to complete spirit squad or competitive squad obligations will result in dismissal.
	7. Cheerleaders will be pulled from the line-up if they are acting inappropriately, performing below expectations, and/or they do not know material. Failure to correct will result in dismissal.
	8. In the opinion of the coaches and/or administration, any attitude or action by a cheerleader or her parent(s) at school or away from school, which may be detrimental to the squad or to Walton, will result in dismissal. This action also includes any derogatory information posted on social media by a cheerleader or her parent(s).
	9. Disrespectful or defiant behavior towards any coach or faculty member will not be tolerated and can result in dismissal from the program.
	10. If a problem arises during the season that has not been anticipated, the coaches reserve the right to establish a new rule to cover the problem. Cheerleaders and parents will be notified in writing of the new rule.