

O'DONNELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADER HANDBOOK



2016-2017

I. Educational Objectives

A. All objectives of the cheerleading program are geared to the welfare and educational development of the students of O'Donnell Junior High School.

B. To enhance a good healthy environment for the students to work and learn.

C. To help each student at O'Donnell Junior High School to develop a sense of belonging.

D. To enhance good habits, morals, citizenship, and sportsmanship in each student at O'Donnell through proper attitude and example.

E. To foster better social abilities and attitudes.

F. To promote and maintain a spirit of competitiveness and cooperation within the school society.

II. General Election Policies

A. Junior High Cheerleaders are chosen each year to lead the student body cheering section during pep rallies and football games.

B. Selection of cheerleaders will be in three parts:

1. Eighty percent (80%) of the total points for the election will be based on an outside judge(s) such as a college cheerleader(s) and/or cheerleading sponsors from another school chosen by the sponsor and the principal. The judge(s) will conduct a try-out.

2. Twenty percent (20%) of the total points for election will be by student vote after viewing a try-out by the candidates.

C. Eligibility: All candidates must:

- 1. Have been enrolled in the O'Donnell School system for a total of three (3) six weeks of the current school year or enrolled in another public school for a total of three (3) six weeks prior enrolling with O'Donnell School and must meet satisfactory requirements determined by the principal.**
- 2. Be passing all subjects, and have passed all subjects the preceding semester and/or adhere to U.I.L. scholarship requirements.**
- 3. Keep his/her conduct favorable. Unbecoming conduct may rule a student ineligible for this honor.**
- 4. Be a current sixth (6th) or seventh (7th) grade student in good academic standing to be eligible for the position of cheerleader.**

D. Try-outs:

- 1. Each contestant will present individually one cheer and one small group cheer in front of the judge(s).**
- 2. Each contestant will present individually one cheer and "Two Bits" as a whole group in front of the student body.**
- 3. Proper attire will be worn during try-outs as approved by the sponsor.**
- 4. The school and sponsor will assume no responsibility in regard to injuries during try-outs.**
- 5. No student will be allowed to try-out without parental permission.**

E. Number:

- 1. There will be six (6) elected cheerleaders and one (1) alternate. All six (6) cheerleaders will be chosen at large.**

III. Policies for Participants as a Cheerleader

A. Responsibility

- 1. The cheerleaders, as a group, will attend and participate in all practice sessions. These sessions must be cleared in advance with the cheerleading sponsor.**
- 2. The cheerleaders will have a duty to perform and take part in planning SOME pep rallies. There will be a captain of the week who plans the pep rally and assumes head cheerleader responsibilities. The pep rallies will be approved in advance by the cheerleading sponsor.**

B. Uniforms

- 1. Uniforms are bought by the school every two (2) years.**
- 2. Each cheerleader is responsible to purchase shoes, tights, warm-ups/jackets, megaphones, and any other equipment needed for the squad. The cheerleaders will be able to keep these things after the completed year.**
- 3. The parents will be responsible for purchasing items to personalize the uniforms, such as socks and body armor, and uniform cleaning and alteration fees.**
- 4. The sponsor is responsible for selection and arrangements for the purchase of all uniforms.**

C. Insurance

- 1. It is recommended that each cheerleader be covered by adequate accident insurance. O'Donnell I.S.D. will provide at-school insurance for all cheerleaders.**
- 2. The O'Donnell School system is not liable for any injury or expenses resulting from participation in the cheerleading program outside of the school year.**

D. Attendance at Practice and Games:

- 1. A regular practice schedule will be drawn up. No one shall miss more than two consecutive practices or any three practices without being replaced. This does not include illness or sponsor excused absences.**
- 2. Cheerleaders are expected to attend all football games. An unexcused absence from a pep-rally or game will result in replacement.**

E. Travel to Games

- 1. Cheerleaders are expected to travel together and to return together as a group. (Exception: If the parents are going to another destination, the student may go with them if arrangements are made in advance.)**
- 2. Cheerleaders should realize that all out-of-town trips are extensions of the school day; therefore, all rules and regulations as set forth by the student handbook are to be observed at all times.**

F. Alternates: The alternates, with approval of the principal and sponsor, will replace any cheerleader who is dismissed or who relinquishes his/her position. The timing and feasibility of this change shall be considered in this event.

IV. Responsibilities and Obligations

A. All cheerleaders must maintain a passing average in compliance with U.I.L. standards. If a cheerleader fails to maintain his/her grades, he/she will be placed on probation for the following six weeks period and not allowed to cheer. If after this probation period there is no improvement in grades, the cheerleader will relinquish his/her title as a Junior High Cheerleader.

B. All cheerleaders are expected to maintain conduct beyond reproach. Each cheerleader will abide by the cheerleader code of conduct. If there is improper conduct, it will be to the discretion of the principal and sponsor as to the consequences.

Improper conduct may be grounds for immediate dismissal. Such things as smoking, drinking, improper conduct with the opposite/same sex and other unacceptable actions will not be tolerated. Junior high cheerleaders, as representatives of O'Donnell Junior High School, will behave like young ladies/gentlemen at all times.

C. All cheerleaders must realize that cheerleading requires a great deal of time. This includes time before and after school. Practice and/or sign making will be limited to four (4) hours per week during the school year.

V. General Policies

A. Cheerleading Sponsor

- 1. The cheerleader sponsor is appointed by the principal from members of the faculty.**
- 2. The cheerleader sponsor has full control and respect from the cheerleading unit at all times.**
- 3. The cheerleader sponsor shall secure travel arrangements for the cheerleading squad to out-of-town football games.**

B. Summer Camp & Other Activities

- 1. Each cheerleader will be responsible for attending cheerleading camp.**
- 2. The cheerleaders will be responsible for the cost of the camp and camp clothing.**
- 3. All cheerleaders must report to practice beginning the first day of two-a-day football practices to prepare for the upcoming season. All family summer activities must be scheduled before the first day of practice.**

CODE OF CONDUCT

Each cheerleader has duties to fulfill and an image to uphold while being a representative of O'Donnell Schools. Appropriate behavior and responsibility are expected from any person elected as an O'Donnell cheerleader. At the sponsor and/or principal's discretion, strikes may be issued against a cheerleader for failure to meet any requirements listed in the O'Donnell Junior High School Cheerleading Handbook or any situation listed below.

Strikes against you may be issued for the following reasons:

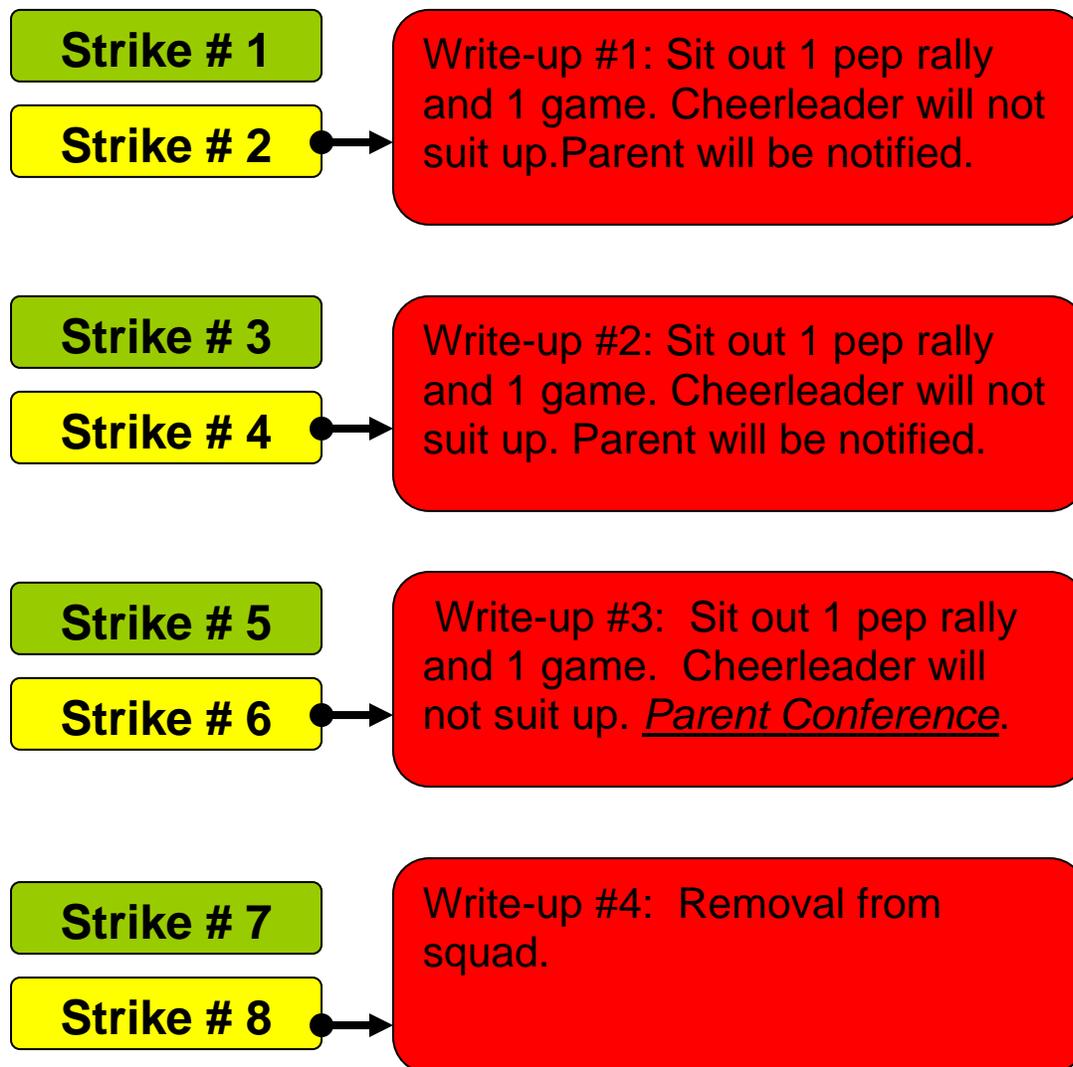
- Being late to practice, pep rallies, the bus, before games, fundraisers, or any scheduled event. There will be a 5 minute grace period.
- Unexcused absence from a game, practice, fundraiser, pep rally, or any other required activity.
- Not having pep rally planned at least one week before scheduled practice.
- Not having proper attire for practice. (i.e. shoes for lifting and performing stunts, clothes within dress code)
- **NO CELL PHONES** during scheduled event. (practice, pep rallies, fund raisers, games, etc.)
- Any disciplinary action that has to be taken and is brought to the sponsor's attention.
- Receiving a progress report because of grades. As a leader grades need to be taken care of and you should be going to your teacher for help. If more help is necessary, your sponsor will get you the help you need. **MAKE THE EFFORT!**
- Wearing any part of your uniform, including shoes, at any time other than related cheerleading activities. The cheerleading jacket or pullover **MAY** be worn at any time as the only exception!!

- **Wearing ANY jewelry while in uniform at any practice or cheerleading related event that may cause injury. Jewelry must be approved by sponsor.**
- **Hair must be neat your face must be visible while performing any cheerleading activities. Hair must be approved by the sponsor.**
- **Wearing the wrong uniform or missing a required part of the uniform.**
- **Inappropriate behavior in or out of uniform. NO display of affection - kissing, holding hands, or hugging while in uniform. There will be no tolerance for any other behaviors that are unbecoming of a cheerleader.**
- **Unnecessary conversation with the crowd or fellow cheerleaders, horseplay, or cutting up during the game.**
- **Leaving during the game or eating during the game. Eating at half time is okay.**
- **Talking back to the sponsor and/or direct disobedience to the sponsor or any adult. The sponsor has authority at all times.**
- **ATTITUDE! ATTITUDE! ATTITUDE! Direct or indirect disrespect to fellow squad members or the sponsor. (i.e. mouthing, rolling eyes, mocking, talking back, gossiping, complaining, talking about others, etc.) As well, lack of enthusiasm.**

NOTE: the responsibility of a cheerleader is to CHEER THE GAME, WORK THE CROWD, and BUILD THE SPIRIT. Cheerleaders will cheer during every time-out and between quarters. When the game is in a close situation, there should be constant cheering. When the fans do not participate and help you cheer, you do not have permission to have an attitude with the crowd. When the fans start cheers in the stands, cheerleaders will smile and cheer along with them. If a cheerleader refuses to perform up to cheerleader standards, he/she will be benched.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When a cheerleader violates the code of conduct, she will receive a strike against her. If a cheerleader receives 2 strikes, it will cause her to be written up. (Strikes will not be erased.) After a cheerleader is written up 4 times, they will be removed from the squad. Parents will be notified each time a cheerleader is written-up. The diagram below shows the sequence of events that lead up to removal from the cheerleading squad:



JH CHEERLEADER: PARENTAL PERMISSION AND AGREEMENT

I have read and fully understand the rules and regulations which will govern my daughter if she is chosen to represent O'Donnell Junior High School as a cheerleader. I further understand that this is an extracurricular activity and that attendance at all practices, games, special functions, and summer camp is a requirement of the elected cheerleader. I hereby give consent to my daughter, to tryout for cheerleader at and recognize her responsibilities and requirements as a leader of her school. Further, I will not hold the school or the sponsor liable for any injuries which could occur during try-outs.

A fee of \$100 for equipment needed for the squad will be turned in to the sponsor by April 21. No equipment will be ordered until all of the elected cheerleaders' deposits are turned in. If this deposit has not been turned in by the designated time, an alternate will have the opportunity to turn in the said deposit and replace the elected cheerleader. The remaining balance must be paid by the end of the current school year.

I give my permission for my child to receive medical attention in the event that I cannot be present or reached for any reason.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

I have read all the rules and regulations that govern the O'Donnell High School cheerleaders. As a representative of my school, I understand and agree to abide by them if selected as cheerleader for the 2016-2017 school year.

Student Signature

Date

This should be signed and returned to the sponsor by Friday, March 11.