

Forney Independent School District



FORWARD FOCUS

FORNEY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
"Inspiring students through innovative education"

High School Cheerleader Guidelines and Procedures

(Tryouts for Spring 2018)

2018-2019

Updated January 2018

Cheerleader Guidelines High School 2018-2019

Purpose

The purpose of high school varsity, junior varsity, and freshman cheerleaders is to promote school spirit and a positive school climate by participating at athletic events and extra-curricular activities as deemed appropriate by the campus administration and Cheerleader Coach. Cheerleaders are expected to be positive role models, serving as high school ambassadors at school, in the district, and community.

The information provided in this handbook explains qualifications and responsibilities of senior high school cheerleaders and mascot for non-competitive squads. A district committee whose membership included Cheerleader Coaches, campus and district administrators developed these guidelines. The guidelines are reviewed annually. Additional guidelines, as noted in this document, are created and published at the district's discretion with an updated month and year on the bottom right of page 1.

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The contents of this handbook are not contractual, and do not give rise to a claim of breach of contract against Forney Independent School District. Furthermore, the contents of this handbook apply to all students of the district, as the contents now appear in the handbook or may be amended in the future. Items that are not addressed in this handbook are at the Administrative discretion of Forney ISD.

Forney ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age in its programs and activities.

Required Qualifications to Tryout

Grade Level

- Varsity cheerleader tryouts are limited to students enrolled in the tenth (10) and eleventh (11) grades during the year of tryouts.
- Junior varsity cheerleader tryouts are open to students enrolled in the ninth (9) and tenth (10) grades during the year of tryouts.
- Freshman cheerleader tryouts are open to students enrolled in the eighth (8) grade during the year of tryouts.
- All students trying out must indicate their preference as to varsity or junior varsity on the tryout form.
- UIL maximum age requirements are in effect for cheerleaders.
- Please Note: With the approval of the Fine Arts Department, campus administration has the discretion of the number/type of squads and grade level requirements at their campus.

Academic Standing

Cheerleader candidates must:

- Be enrolled in FISD three weeks prior to tryout date.
- Be passing all classes at the end of the day on the Friday prior to tryouts.
- Earn enough academic credits to be classified at the next level (i.e. Junior, Senior) at the end of the year of tryouts in order to assume their cheerleader role, for the subsequent year.
- Have good attendance with no trancies in the current school year. (Must meet the 90% attendance rule without intervention of the attendance committee.)
- Eligibility to try out will be based on the student having been eligible all but one 9 week period leading up to the tryouts.

School Behavior

Candidates must have exhibited appropriate conduct in the classroom and other school and community settings. Therefore a student may not have:

- Committed disciplinary infractions (or a combination thereof) as listed in the Forney ISD Board-approved Extra-Curricular Code of Conduct and Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. A student who was assigned placement in a disciplinary alternative education program for any disciplinary infraction in the current school year will not be allowed to tryout. Any student with a combination of 2 or more office referrals resulting in Saturday school, in-school suspensions, and/or out-of-school suspensions will not be eligible to participate in tryouts.
- Students must be clear of all fines and fees.
- Applicants earning a cheerleader position for the next school year must continue to meet the above stated "School Behavior" criteria for the remainder of their present school year. Failure to do so will result in immediate forfeiture of their position on the team.

Physical Examination

Upon making a cheer team, a cheerleader must submit a statement from a physician prior to summer camp that is dated for the current school year, which indicates that the cheerleader is capable of performing all the essential functions of a cheerleader. The physician is to document the physical examination on the *Pre-participation Physical Evaluation – Medical History* and *Pre-participation Physical Evaluation – Physical Examination* forms. All documents mentioned above are located online in the FISD Athletic Rank One software at:

Forney High School – www.jackrabbitathletics.com

North Forney High School – www.gofalconathletics.com

Essential physical functions of a cheerleader are:

- Perform jumps and other physical moves that are part of cheerleader routines.
- Perform stunts that may involve climbing, balance, agility, and upper body strength.
- Exhibit rhythm and coordination in performing cheerleader routines.
- Demonstrate stamina in performing regular physical activities that involve physical endurance and fitness.
- Perform routines in both indoor and outdoor settings, in heat and cold weather.
- Demonstrate clear diction and strong vocal qualities.

Participation in Pre-Tryout Clinic (Mock Tryout)

Each campus schedules a pre-tryout clinic which acquaints candidates with the format of tryouts and which offers instruction in the routines/skills to be evaluated by judges during the cheerleader selection process. The length and format of the clinic is established at each campus.

Candidates are required to attend each day of this pre-tryout clinic. Phones are prohibited during the pre-tryout clinic. Candidates that have a UIL or school event conflict must have clearance to miss from the campus cheer coach and Director of Fine Arts.

- Each campus schedules a pre-tryout clinic to acquaint candidates with skills/techniques on which they will be judged. Attendance at the clinic is required. Extenuating circumstances for missing any clinic days must have approval from the Director of Fine Arts (see “Attendance”).
- The clinic is planned and led by the campus Cheerleader Coach and eligible senior cheerleaders selected by the cheer coach.
- Spectators (including parents, coaches, friends, non-involved school personnel) are not permitted to watch or videotape clinic practice.
- Attire for practice is limited to solid black shorts and plain white tee shirts without design or lettering. Plain white socks are required. Candidates may wear shoes they find most comfortable for practice and tryouts (no hard sole); they must be white or mostly white. No NCA, All American, or outside cheer team logos or insignias are allowed on the shoes. Jewelry is not allowed. Hair ribbons are acceptable. Failure to dress properly will result in removal from tryouts.

Attendance

Students must be present before the judges in order to be eligible for selection. Video tryouts are not accepted. Students must be in attendance at school (all day - each day) the entire week preceding tryouts (with the exception of an excused UIL or school event – as stated in the previous section) or will not be eligible for tryouts. Doctor and/or dental appointments should be scheduled not to conflict.

Parent Meeting

Each candidate and his/her parent or guardian must attend a **mandatory** meeting at their campus to review the cheerleading selection process in order to tryout. There will be two (2) meetings offered to accommodate scheduling. The cheer coach will communicate the room location of the meeting at the designated High School.

Forney High School, 1800 College Ave., Forney, TX
North Forney High School, 6170 Falcon Way, Forney, TX

The Fine Arts Director and Communications Director will also post this information on the district websites and social media sites.

Documents

Students must submit specified documents by their published due date in order to be a cheerleader candidate. Documents include, but are not limited to,

- ***Student and Parent Agreement to Cheerleader Regulations and Guidelines***

The above document will be located on the district Fine Arts page www.forneyfinearts.com.

Selection Process

The selection of high school cheerleaders is done by knowledgeable, impartial judges observing the candidates in a series of activities performed on a single afternoon in March. In case of inclement weather, tryouts may be postponed until the closest available date. The results of the impartial judging determine which cheerleader candidates are selected. Score sheets will be handed out by the cheer coach after Spring Break.

No floral deliveries will be accepted by any cheer participant or cheer coach on any day during the week of tryouts. This also applies to candy, gifts, balloons, notes, etc. Please be sure you adhere to this policy.

Medical Exemption

If the candidate is seeking a medical exemption due to an injury, please contact the Fine Arts Office at 972-564-4055.

Tryout Format (Judging)

- Varsity, junior varsity, and freshman tryouts will be scheduled on the same date and location.
- The tryout process is organized and facilitated by the Fine Arts Office. Only the judges and one campus administrator will be present in the tryout room. Candidates are in the tryout center for the length of their performance only. The tryout room is closed to all spectators, including parents, coaches, friends, and non-involved school personnel.
- Cell phones are prohibited in the tryout room.
- A panel consisting of impartial judges will be secured by the Fine Arts Office for cheerleader tryouts.
 - Judges shall be knowledgeable cheerleading coaches, former college cheerleaders, and/or members of UCA/NCA staff.
 - Judges shall not be employees of Forney ISD.
 - Judges shall not be a relative of any candidate or a private coach of any candidate.
- Candidates perform before the judges individually and/or in assigned small groups. Each campus specifies the set of activities which a candidate performs before the judges and communicates this to candidates during the clinic.
- These activities include:

Entrance

Tumbling during run-in (10)
Spirit/Enthusiasm (10)

Jumps

Toe Touch (10)
Herkie (5)
Optional Jump (5)
Double Toe (Whip approach=5 max; with prep=4 max)

Cheer

Motion Technique (10)
Voice/Projection (10)
Incorporation (Jumps (3)) /Standing Tumble (5))

Chant

Motion Technique (10)
Timing (5)

Dance

Motion Technique (10)
Memory (5)

Each candidate must score at least the minimum number of points based on the average of the judges' scores combined in order to be placed on a cheerleading squad.

Freshman – 48 points
Junior Varsity – 53 points
Varsity – 63 points

- Candidates draw for a participant number prior to mock tryouts. During the judging and tabulation of scores, students are referred to by number only.
- Candidates must adhere to the required dress for tryouts, which is published in advance and specified by the campus. Dress code will be distributed at the mandatory meeting.
- All candidates and/or any person acting as a representative on their behalf are prohibited from having any form of communication or personal contact with any judges prior to, during, or after the tryout process. Violation of this guideline will result in the immediate removal of the candidate from the process and/or squad if candidate had been selected. Judges are instructed to report any incident of this activity to the campus administrator.
- Candidate's score is final once the candidate leaves the tryout room.

Tabulation of Results

- Candidate total scores are ranked in numerical order.
- In the event of a tie, a tie-breaking procedure will be implemented.
- The candidates eligible for varsity with the highest rankings will be named as the new varsity cheerleaders. The twelve candidates eligible for junior varsity with the highest rankings will be named as the new junior varsity cheerleaders. The twelve candidates eligible for freshman with the highest rankings will be named as the new freshman cheerleaders.
- Questions or appeals for any component of the cheerleading tryout process, including final results, must begin with the campus level Administration.
- Announcements of the Cheerleader Squads:
Tabulations of the cheerleader candidate's scores will be checked before posting. The official results will be posted online as soon as possible after candidates' dismissal from tryouts:

<http://www.forneyfinearts.com/cheer.html>

Size of Squad and Special Positions

Cheer Squad

- The minimum number of cheerleaders on a varsity cheerleading squad is 16 that meet the minimum score.
- The maximum number of cheerleaders on a junior varsity cheerleading squad is twelve that meet the minimum score.
- The maximum number of cheerleaders on a freshman squad is twelve that meet the minimum score. If the junior varsity squad is unable to meet the minimum of twelve, the highest scoring freshman candidates that meet the minimum score are allowed to fill the remaining spots on the junior varsity squad.

- As stated in the “Grade Level” section, campus administration has the discretion of the number/type of squads at their campus.

Special Positions

- **Mascot (Varsity Only)** – Candidates wishing to try out for varsity mascot will try out the same night as candidates trying out for varsity cheerleader. The same judges who judge cheer candidates will judge mascot candidates. If no one tries out for mascot, the coach may offer the mascot position to the cheerleader candidate with the highest score on the list of candidates not making varsity cheerleader. If no one on the varsity list wants the mascot positions, the coach has the option of moving to the JV list of candidates that did not make cheerleader. Only sophomores and juniors may try out for mascot. The qualifications described in this document will be used to govern the mascot.
- **Alternates** - Alternates are not named. If a vacancy in a cheerleading squad occurs two or more weeks prior to the first day of the school year, the vacancy will be filled by naming the student with the next highest composite score, assuming that student still meets the qualifications and desires to make the necessary commitments. At the time a vacancy is filled, uniform and accessories will be ordered at parents’ expense (except what is provided by the school). If a vacancy occurs less than two weeks before the first school day or after the school year begins, it is the campus’s discretion whether the position will be filled in the same manner as noted in above paragraph. .
- **Captain** - The captain(s) for each squad shall be chosen by vote by each squad member and its coach along with teacher recommendations. The captain(s) of the Varsity squad shall be a senior with previous FHS/NFHS cheer experience. In the event no senior has previous FHS/NFHS cheer experience, a Junior with such experience will be selected. The captain(s) of the JV squad must be a Sophomore or Junior with previous FHS/NFHS high school cheerleading experience. In the event no Sophomore or Junior has previous experience, a squad member without experience may be selected. The Freshman captain(s) must be a Freshman with middle school cheerleading experience.
- **Spotters/Bases** – Spotters/Bases are positions used for additional safety of the cheerleaders due to the physical demand. This position is available at the discretion of the campus cheer coach.

All candidates earning a position on the Cheerleading Squad for the next school year must continue to meet all of the above stated “Required Qualifications to Tryout” for the remainder of their present school year. Failure to meet these requirements will result in immediate forfeiture of their position on the Cheerleading Squad. Actual activities for the “new” Cheerleading Squad will be determined and defined by the campus Cheerleading Coach and principal. These activities may begin immediately upon announcement of cheerleading tryout results. All candidates earning a position on the Cheerleading Squad and their parent or guardian must attend an informative, mandatory meeting that will cover the responsibilities of cheerleading in Forney ISD. Candidates must bring their chromebook with them to the meeting.