

# ***2023-2024 Bellville High School Cheerleader/Mascot Constitution***

This constitution is prepared to make students and parents fully aware of what is required of a Bellville High School Cheerleader. Any successful program must have the understanding and support of the parents and students involved. Please read this Constitution and retain this copy for your records. An acknowledgment of these guidelines will be signed by the student and parent and will be kept on file by the coach. The Coach, Principal, and/or Administration have the right to decide any matter not covered in the intent of this document.

## **Mission Statement:**

Bellville Independent School District cheerleaders will serve as the primary support group to lead and direct spirit for athletics, special events, and activities. Cheerleaders will encourage school pride, good sportsmanship and a positive image in school activities. Education is foremost in cheerleading and good personal conduct is not limited to the sidelines. Cheerleaders will project an image of high standards, morals, and goals for others to follow. Participation in the BISD Cheer Program is a privilege and not a right.

## **Objectives:**

- A. The primary function of the Bellville High School Cheerleading program is to support all interscholastic athletic programs and events by building school spirit and encouraging and directing crowd participation.
- B. Cheerleaders must be more than good athletes and performers; they must be leaders, role models, and ambassadors for the school and community.
- C. Participation in cheerleading strengthens and develops character, scholarship, leadership, and individual responsibility.
- D. Cheerleaders/Mascot will exhibit moral leadership among their peers, **both in and out of school**. Whether at school, school related activities, or in non-school settings where students may be observed and recognized by others in the community, Cheerleaders/Mascot are expected to exhibit good manners.
- E. Cheerleaders/Mascot are expected to maintain strict adherence to the BISD Student Code of Conduct and the Bellville High School Code of Conduct.

## **Tryout Requirements and procedures:**

- A. Tryouts will be held once a year in the spring.
- B. Students wishing to try out for cheerleader/mascot must meet the eligibility requirements. Eligibility will be based on the previous 9 weeks report card and immediately prior to the tryout date. Any cheerleader who fails to maintain a passing average in each subject will abide by the Extracurricular No Pass-No Play Rule.
- C. Student must not be a discipline problem. A candidate cannot have served more than 1 days of IBS/Saturday detention, no excessive office referrals, and no suspensions or DAEP placements in the current school year to be eligible to tryout.
- D. Cheerleaders/mascot will be selected by 70% judges (outside and impartial) , 15% teacher evaluation, and 15% school spirit resume. Tryouts will be held in a closed session. Incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade candidates are only eligible for the JV squad. Incoming 12<sup>th</sup> grade candidates are only eligible for Varsity. The natural break method will be used for tryouts. The natural break is defined as the obvious place in the scores where a numerical difference occurs. Scores will be ranked numerically with the first natural break identifying the Varsity squad followed by the 2nd natural break designating the JV Squad. The Varsity squad will consist of no more than 16 and JV Squad will consist of no more than 12. Students who are presently in 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th grade are eligible for mascot.
- E. An incoming senior who has had 3 consecutive years with the BHS Cheer program and has maintained good standing will be automatically placed on the Varsity squad.\*\* Although those wanting Captain must tryout for the judges score component.\*\*

- F. Professional cheer judges from either NCA or UCA, or collegiate level will be judging.
- G. A parent must attend the mandatory parent meeting for a candidate to be eligible to tryout.
- H. Candidates must attend all mandatory practice days the week of tryouts to be eligible to tryout.
- I. Candidates must sign, along with their parents, this constitution and return before tryouts
- J. Candidates must accept the responsibility of all that is involved with being a cheerleader.
- K. If a cheerleader/mascot chooses to drop, or is removed from being a cheerleader/mascot before the end of the academic school year, the sponsor reserves the right, **but is not required**, to fill the position with the person who had the next highest cumulative score from the original try out. If a vacancy arises after this time, the position will not be filled.
- L. Tryouts will take place Friday March 10th at 9:00 am in the auxiliary gym. They are closed to the public.
- M. Tryout paperwork and initial payment of \$200 is due Friday, March 3rd. (Checks will be returned to those who are not selected for the squad) Paperwork includes Cheerleader Application, Parent/Student Cheer Constitution Acknowledgement, Extracurricular Standards of Behavior Contract, Emergency Care and Permission for Treatment, and Concussion Acknowledgement.

### **Captain Responsibilities:**

- A. Any candidate wishing to try out for captain/co-captain must be willing to accept all responsibilities that go along with captain/co-captain and have been on varsity/jv for one full year. In the event that there is not an eligible candidate any varsity/jv candidate can try out for captain. Captain/Co-Captain will be selected by 50% judges and 30% varsity/jv cheerleader vote and 20% cheer sponsor(s) vote.
  - 1. Must be at every game, every practice, every event!
  - 2. Must know every cheer, chant, dance, and cadence and be able to help teach them.
  - 3. Start all cheers
  - 4. Text girls every week for updates, questions, etc.
  - 5. Have extra accessories for girls if forgotten
  - 6. Paint signs for run thru, games, pep rallies or assign cheerleaders to help
  - 7. Help with choreography: formation, dances, etc.
  - 8. Be able to take control
  - 9. Help cheer coach lead all practices
  - 10. Help coach plan and execute pep rallies
  - 11. Organizing schedules of duties for the squad: hall signs, locker room signs, decoration, etc.
  - 12. Make sure all equipment is loaded on bus and put back when returned, and bus is clean
  - 13. Time spent on cheer outside of designated practice times.
- B. Any candidate wishing to tryout for JV Captain must have been on a Bellville High School Cheer Squad for one full year. In the event that there is not an eligible candidate, any JV candidate can try out for captain. JV Captain will be decided post-tryouts.

### **Financial Responsibilities:**

- A. Cheerleaders will receive an approximate cost list for uniforms, camp, camp clothes, and equipment at the parent meeting. Prices are an approximation before taxes and shipping. Expenses are the responsibility of the squad member.
- B. Camp fees are the responsibility of the squad member.
- C. The remaining expense for camp will be due April 14th.
- D. Uniform and camp clothes expenses will be paid directly to Varsity.
- E. Camp payment must be given directly to Mr. Jennings, and must be made on time. If there are circumstances where you need to discuss payment, Mr. Jennings can arrange a meeting with the principal. The HS principal is the only person who can arrange a payment plan.
- F. Two fundraisers will be scheduled and all cheerleaders and mascot will be required to participate.

## Summer Responsibilities and Camp:

- A. All Cheerleaders must attend a Mandatory Summer Camp. \*Extenuating circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the coaching staff. The Camp is June 26th-29th at Moody Gardens. The Mascot attends summer camp with the cheer squads. Summer jobs and vacations must be arranged so that everyone can attend summer camp. Parents are welcome to come and watch the competition part of camp and awards on the final day, June 29th at approximately 9am.
- B. During the summer months, Cheerleaders/Mascot will attend: summer practices (prior to camp and convocation), Convocation, Midnight Madness, Meet the Brahmas/Brahmanettes, and cheer pictures for football program, as well as any practice days designated prior to the start of the school year. These dates will be announced prior to camp.

## School year responsibilities:

- A. After school practices can be scheduled twice a week on Mondays from 5:45-7:45 and Wednesdays from 5:30-7:30pm during the fall season. (ending time is subject to change, prior notice will be given.) *An additional practice may be added to the week to prepare for an important game or event (this is usually the case during playoffs since there will be community pep rallies and schedules can not be predicted.)* Each squad member should arrive on time with the right attire on and ready to practice.
- B. Communication between the cheer coach and parents will be through email/text messages.
- C. Varsity Cheerleaders will cheer at all varsity football games, district home volleyball and basketball games, volleyball and **basketball playoff games**, pep rallies at high school and other campuses, and any other activities designated by the cheer coach.
- D. JV Cheerleaders will cheer at all home Freshman/JV football games, Playoff Football games, pep rallies at high school and playoff pep rallies, various district home volleyball and basketball games, and any other activities designated by the cheer coach.
- E. During basketball season, Varsity and JV Cheerleaders will cheer at district home games. The schedule for cheering at basketball games will be determined by Mr. Jennings and any changes to the schedule will need to go through him. Squads for games will consist of half the Varsity Squad and half the Junior Varsity squad.
- F. Cheerleaders/Mascot will travel on BISD transportation. Cheerleaders/Mascot must travel as a team to the event. All Cheerleaders will be responsible for securing, storing, and maintaining all equipment before, during, and after all performances and practices, and clean up after all activities.
- G. All activities must be approved by the coach when you are in uniform. This includes activities outside of school.
- H. Parents are not allowed on the field or track before or during games.
- I. UIL Competition will take place in January if we choose to participate. Practices over the Christmas break might be scheduled. Please make plans to attend.
- J. Practice attire will consist of camp wear to be determined by the coach.

## Expectations

### Uniform:

- A. Uniforms or any parts of uniforms, including shoes, are to be worn only at cheerleading practices, pep rallies, games or designated functions unless approved by the sponsor.
- B. No jewelry of any kind is allowed while cheering or practicing.
- C. The sponsor must approve any article of clothing worn with the uniform. All cheerleaders must wear the additions. This includes socks, leggings, bows, jackets, etc.
- D. Nails must be of appropriate length and color. Long nails will not be allowed.
- E. The wearing of red lipstick is a requirement at all public events where cheerleaders are wearing their uniforms.

**Practice:**

- A. Practices are mandatory for all members.
- B. Soft drinks, jewelry, gum, cell phones or food are not allowed at practices.
- C. Team members may not leave practice without thoroughly cleaning up the practice area including mats, clothing, etc.
- D. Practices may not be held without the sponsor's knowledge or without the sponsor's supervision. Cheerleaders may not stunt or tumble without a sponsor present. (This does not limit cheerleaders to private lessons with an adult with a safety certification.)
- F. Monthly calendars will be provided to keep cheerleaders and parents informed of tentative scheduled events and practice ahead of time.
- G. Must be on time and in appropriate clothing. Cheerleading shoes are REQUIRED.
- H. Practices will be closed to the public.
- G. Cheerleaders can expect to have 1 practice a week that is focused on conditioning, skill progression, and technique evaluation.

**Games:**

- A. Those that can tumble, and feel up to it, may do so at any time other than while cheering. Everyone who can tumble must do so at least once while the band is playing if a cadence dance is not choreographed.
- B. After each cheer and chant, each member is expected to do at least one good jump.
- C. All members are to be in the line formation on the track when not doing a cheer/chant.
- D. Do not "clump" together and talk while on the track.
- E. Cheerleaders will not use cell phones during games, with the exception of half time.
- F. There will be no food or drink during the game. (water is allowed). Cheerleaders are required to eat before a game, halftime, or after games.
- G All cheerleaders are responsible for assigned duties before and after each game. These include transporting equipment, hanging signs, and other duties when asked. They will NOT be allowed to leave until these duties are completed.
- H. Each game cheerleaders will have duties assigned to them regarding the transportation of equipment. This includes away games, and duties must be completed regardless of alternate transportation home.
- I. Have a positive attitude and show respect to cheerleading sponsor and other members of the squad by listening with consideration and displaying a willingness to follow instructions.
- J. Letter Jackets may be ordered in the fall, but will not be distributed until the conclusion of basketball season. Cheerleaders must remain in good standing throughout the basketball season in order to receive their letter jacket.

**Safety:**

- A. All Cheerleaders must follow A.A.C.C.A. rules for safety
- B. No jewelry may be worn. This includes all body piercing
- C. Hair must be pulled out of face
- D. All squads will qualify builds, pyramids and tumbling by coach.

**Absences:**

- A. If a Cheerleader/Mascot is absent from school and will miss a game, practice or any activity, the coach needs to be notified.
- B. All absences must be given to the coach ahead of time, the earlier the better.
- C. Cheerleaders need to be responsible for knowing their own schedules and inform the coach of other BHS activities that they may be involved with .
- D. An absence for any reason is still an absence and will result in demerits that will need to be worked off. An

excused absence that will not result in demerits are for an illness, emergency, death.

- E. When the candidate decides to try out and signs the Cheer Constitution, they are making a commitment to this squad, and therefore must put this squad ahead of other non-school activities. Excessive absences will not be tolerated.

### **Discipline and Eligibility:**

- A. A Cheerleader/Mascot represents BHS. They should not be a discipline problem at school. If a problem occurs, it will be left to the discretion of the Principal and Coach as to what action will be taken. They must not have excessive discipline problems including detention or office referrals. (Records of excessive discipline problems will be reviewed by the Principal and Coach.) Cheerleaders who serve more than 3 days of IBS will be removed from the squad.
- B. The cheerleading program follows UIL eligibility requirements regarding six weeks grades. No Pass, No Play.
- C. Violations of the Bellville High School Code of Conduct resulting in suspension/expulsion will result in dismissal from the squad.
- D. Cheerleaders/Mascot will follow a discipline plan from tryout to tryout.
- E. Disrespect to the coach or squad will not be tolerated at all.
- F. Cheerleaders/Mascot dismissed from the squad will not be eligible to tryout out the following year. If Cheerleader/Mascot is dismissed, they cannot wear any part of their Bellville cheer uniform to school or any school related activity.
- G. Cheerleaders who do not fulfill their cheerleading obligations throughout the entire school year (basketball season, spring sports season, etc.) shall be subject to disciplinary action through demerits that will carry over into the next cheerleading season or other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the Coach.

### **Social Media/Phones:**

- A. Cheerleaders and Mascots shall ensure that any posts, comments and videos on their social media accounts are appropriate. The Internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible form of communication. Any communication such as SnapChat, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or photo sharing, etc. appearing on the Internet is public domain even if it is marked private. Cheerleaders are responsible for their personal social media accounts and postings as well as postings on others' social media accounts.
- B. Five demerits will be issued for each inappropriate post, video, and comment more specifically defined in section C below. Cheerleaders may also be disciplined for the failure to timely remove from their account an inappropriate post by third parties of which they have knowledge.
- C. Cheerleaders and Mascots will be issued demerits for comments and behavior online which are disrespectful, threatening, harassing or intimidating to BISS students, BISS employees, and/or the school community. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - 1. Derogatory language or photos that harm, offend, or insult other cheerleaders or coaches; members of the Drill Team; BISS teachers; or representatives of others schools, including comments that may disrespect opponents.
  - 2. Cyberbullying, as that term is defined in the Student Code of Conduct and Board Policy (available online).
  - 3. Explicit, vulgar, or profane material/ language (abbreviated or alluding to) which is reasonably forecasted to cause a disruption or material interference with school activities.
- D. Although Cheerleaders/Mascot are strongly discouraged from clicking on any reaction (e.g., "like", "haha", a thumbs up or down, etc.) to an inappropriate post (as more fully defined in C above), Cheerleaders/Mascot will not be disciplined solely for clicking on such a reaction.
- E. Cheerleaders/Mascot are responsible for not only their page, but also all things in which they are "tagged." Inappropriate posts/comments by third parties to the social media account of any Cheerleaders shall be removed immediately upon their knowledge of same. Cheerleaders/Mascot are presumed to have

knowledge of such inappropriate post(s) if it is evident that they have accessed their account since the posting through either a new post or comment.

- F. Any question of appropriateness will be decided by the cheer coaches in consultation with the administration and athletic directors.
- G. Cheerleaders should not be on their phones while a game they are cheering at is being played. Phones should be stored away properly according to the venue (i.e. backpacks at Football games, behind them at basketball games, etc.)
- H. Phones should not be used in the locker room during practice or while getting ready for/cleaning up pep rallies.

**Merits and Demerits:**

- A. In order to maintain discipline, a merit/demerit system is set up for all Cheerleaders and Mascot to follow.
- B. Violations are *cumulative* from the time the cheerleader is elected to the following tryout. However, if a cheerleader is not trying out, demerits are cumulative to the end of the school year.
- C. This system sets high standards for its Cheerleaders/Mascot, striving for consistency and responsibility of each Cheerleader/Mascot.
- D. Cheerleaders/Mascot is expected to show appropriate behavior at all times to be a positive example for students and community.
- E. The coach is the authority regarding merits and demerits. The authority and decision to dismiss a cheerleader from the squad rests with the administration and cheer coaches.

**Merits:**

Merits are the only means of removing demerits. Cheerleaders will have the opportunity to earn merits at the discretion of the coach.

**Demerit System:**

The following scale of demerits will apply to all cheerleaders and mascots:

	<b>CONSEQUENCE</b>
Wearing jewelry (repeated offenses (3 demerits))	1 demerit
Failure to meet deadlines-Posters, signs, etc.	1 demerit
Failure to call coach if you will be late	1 demerit
Arriving late or leaving early from practice	1-3 demerit depending on amount of time missed
Failure to wear appropriate practice attire (practice clothes, shoes, athletic wear)	3 demerits
Voicing disagreement with coach/captains in a disrespectful manner	3 demerits
Failing to set up or put away assigned equipment before or after practices, games, events	3 demerits
Bringing food or drinks to practice (only water allowed)	3 demerits
Not bringing appropriate items to a pep rally, game or performance: megaphone, poms, uniform, shoes, bow, white socks, jacket, or any designated part of the uniform for that event	3 demerits
Absence at practice unless it is excused for illness, death, or emergency that has been approved by the cheer coach.	5 demerits
Disrespectful to other squad member	5 demerits
Arriving late or leaving early from game, pep rally, any event	5 demerits
Receiving Saturday School	5 demerits
Receiving IBS/OSS	5 demerits per day

Performing high risk activity, such as stunting, tumbling without coach present	5 demerits
Proof of inappropriate social media posts (defined more fully above)	5 demerits
Disrespectful to sponsor	10 demerits
Absence at game or performance unless it is excused for illness, death, or emergency that has been approved by the cheer coach. (2 <sup>nd</sup> absence <b>without</b> notification will result in removal from squad, therefore ineligible to tryout the following year.)	10 demerits
Profanity/cursing, bad language, etc. or confrontation with squad member	10 demerits
Profanity/cursing, bad language, etc. or confrontation to coach	20 demerits/ immediate dismissal
Assigned to alternative campus	20 demerits/ immediate dismissal
Violating the district's alcohol and drug policies <i>as referenced in the Student Code of Conduct.</i>	20 demerits/ immediate dismissal
When a cheerleader organizes or is involved in a hazing incident. The term hazing involves any knowing, intentional, or reckless act, occurring on or off campus, by one person alone or action with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purposes of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization.	20 demerits/ immediate dismissal

**Any cheerleader with 10 or more demerits will not participate in that week's performances. (Pep rally AND game). Each demerit can be worked off with: 1 lap around the track and 10 toe touches. Any Cheerleader/Mascot receiving 20 or more demerits (inclusive to those worked off) during the year will be dismissed from the cheer squad for the remainder of the year. A Cheerleader/Mascot that is dismissed is not allowed to try out for the following year.**

**The Coach is directly responsible to the Principal for the welfare of the cheerleading program; therefore, they shall have the authority to make any decisions necessary for the welfare of the organization. Any action that needs to be taken concerning a situation not addressed by this constitution or extreme cases of opposition to stated policies will be the responsibility of the coach/principal with the consultation of the administration. Any disciplinary action taken may be appealed pursuant to Board Policy FNG (Local).**

*Disclaimer: Unfortunately, not all situations that arise can be anticipated or accounted for in the Bellville High School Cheer Constitution. Should events occur that are not covered in the Bellville High School Cheer Constitution, they will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the principal and program directors and will be dealt with according to what is fair and just. Furthermore, Bellville ISD reserves the right to alter the rules according to the situation, at any time.*

#### Mascot Responsibilities:

The role of Bully the Brahma is to provide the student body and community of Bellville with the same amount of school spirit and energy that the Cheerleading Squad is expected to provide. Bully the Brahma is a symbol of school spirit and children in the Bellville Community enjoy the allure of Bully the Brahma being "real". Thus the following expectations should be followed by any candidate who is elected Mascot:

- A. Mascots will be subject to the same expectations and disciplinary actions listed above.
- B. Mascots will be required to attend all practices unless otherwise instructed by Mr. Jennings.
- C. Mascots will be required to be in costume for the majority of all athletic events they attend and should not be seen outside of costume by the public unless granted permission by Mr. Jennings.
- D. Mascots will be required to perform a skit/routine at EVERY pep rally.
- E. Mascots will be required to let Mr. Jennings know of any additional materials needed for skits/routines well in advance of needing them, so they arrive on time.

***2022-2023 Bellville High School  
Cheerleader/Mascot Constitution  
Acknowledgement Form***

**Candidate:**

I have read the Bellville High School Cheerleader/Mascot Constitution in its entirety and understand and agree to adhere to the rules under which I will be held accountable and the procedures I will be expected to follow if selected as a member of the BHS Cheer Organization.

Candidate Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:**

I have read the Bellville High School Cheerleader/Mascot Constitution in its entirety and understand the rules under which my child would be held accountable and the procedures he/she would be expected to follow if selected as a member of the BHS Cheer Organization and agree to abide by those rules.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*A copy of the constitution can be found on the Bellville High School webpage listed under clubs.*



