

SMSD: SHAWNEE MISSION EAST
CHEERLEADING CONSTITUTION
2023-2024

SMSD Philosophy Statement

Shawnee Mission East cheerleaders will serve as the primary support group to lead and direct spirit for athletics, special events, and activities. Members 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. Members will strive to project an image of high standards, morals, and goals for others to follow. As student athletes, the cheerleaders will abide by the same policies and procedures. Since the responsibilities of cheerleading span the seasons of all athletic programs, the selection process must include an indication of the willingness and commitment to participate over this extended period of time.

Candidate Eligibility

In order to try out, candidates must adhere to the following requirements:

1. Candidates and one parent/guardian must attend a mandatory pre-tryout meeting.
2. Candidates must present the written permission of a guardian to try out.
3. Candidates and their parents must sign a statement agreeing that, if elected, they will abide by all the rules and regulations governing cheerleaders and agree to pay for any expenses incurred.
4. All financial obligations related to cheer fees and the return of school issued uniforms/equipment from the year previous, must be cleared before tryouts.
5. Candidates along with their parent/guardian will sign the district Tobacco/Alcohol/Drug Contract.
6. Candidates must meet KSHSAA eligibility requirements by passing five subjects at tryout time.
7. Candidates must be present at tryouts to be eligible, unless explicit approval is granted by the head coach and building administration.

Selection Process

The scoring for cheerleading tryouts is completed by the coaches during tryouts and the following sections are scored:

- Jumps
- Tumbling
- Dance
- Chant
- Fight Song
- Coach/Teacher Score
- Stunting

Clinics will be organized and run by the coaches of the cheer program. There will also be 2 weeks of pre-tryout conditioning which is strongly recommended but not mandatory. A building administrator will be present at tryouts and may not judge the event. Cheerleaders will try out in groups of 3-4.

Tryouts for competition squads occur during an extra skills assessment performed inside the regular tryout. The SME Competition team will consist of 30 athletes which will come from all squads. There will additionally be alternates selected. Being selected as part of the competition team is a high honor in and of itself. As such it must be treated accordingly. This means the cheerleader is committed to the rigorous practice schedule, competition schedule, and devoted to the team. The athlete understands that extra practices, conditioning, meetings, and fundraising will be required. The athlete and their family understands the financial aspect of competition cheer which can include local competition fees, national competition fees, hotel fees, airplane or bus fees, etc. They are expected to take care of themselves and their other athletes and support each member no matter the age.

Cheer candidates will be ranked based on the grand total of points achieved in each performance category, though a natural break in the score rankings will be considered. The natural break is a campus decision with no minimum requirement. The total number of cheerleaders selected will be at the discretion of the cheerleading sponsor and the building administrator. **All tryout results are final.**

The results will be posted on the SME Cheer Website (www.lancercheer.com) by a specified time on the day after tryouts. The posting will show the names of the selected members. Coaches and administrators will not meet with anyone about the tryout results **until a minimum of seven days have passed following the announcement of results.**

Responsibilities, Duties, and Obligations of an SMSD Cheerleader

Grades

- Each cheerleader must be passing five classes to be eligible for any performance (game, assembly, etc.). It is highly suggested, especially for seniors, that you take at LEAST six graded classes. Eligibility is determined by letter grades in Skyward on the morning of any performance. For any class not passing the cheerleader must be able to show they have a plan set in place in order to improve the failing grade.
- If a cheerleader is ineligible for a game or event, s/he is still responsible for attending the event in full uniform and sitting on the sideline with the coach.

Attendance

A cheerleader's year begins the day s/he is elected and ends the last day of the following school year. This means that a current SME cheerleader who tries out for the following year and makes a squad is a cheerleader year-round, as cheerleaders are elected prior to the last day of the school year. **Attendance is required for 100% of the following performances, activities, and events:**

- | | |
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| 1. All Practices | 7. Cheer Class |
| 2. Summer Camps | 8. Competition performances |
| 3. Pep assemblies | 9. Cheer fundraisers |
| 4. Lancer Day Parade - Float Building | 10. Varsity: All home and away games |
| 5. Meet the Coach Night (Fall 2021) | 11. Junior Varsity: All home and in-district JV games |
| 6. Little Lancer Cheer Clinics (Fall/Spring) | 12. Freshmen: All home freshmen games |

The **only** excused absences from the above events will include: personal illness, death in the family, family emergency, or a school required absence; coaches should be notified of any school-required absences at least one week in advance if this is not done then the event is not considered excused and all other absences 24 hours in advance of the absence. **Personal or doctor's appointments should be scheduled at times that do not conflict with cheerleader activities or practices and are not counted as excused absences. Work is not considered an acceptable absence for events.**

Multiple absences (excused or unexcused) may result in being pulled from a performance due to stunt and choreography requirements. **No contact No show absences are considered a serious infraction and will be treated as defined below.**

A NO contact NO show absence is one in which the athlete does not notify the coach of the absence either at all or in a timely manner. The window for notifying a coach of an absence is 24 hours unless an emergency has occurred. If this is not done then the absence whether excused or unexcused is considered a NCNS and will receive the strike associated with this action.

Athlete Signature _____ Guardian Signature _____

Expenses

Cheerleaders should be prepared to meet the financial obligations of cheerleading. Uniform rental fees are non-refundable. Squad members may be responsible for paying for some personal items throughout the year.

Physical Exams

To participate in the cheerleading program, cheerleaders must have a completed physical **dated after May 1, 2022.**

Concussions and Injury

All cheerleaders will abide by the SMSD concussion policy. Should the coach suspect a health condition that could be injurious to the cheerleader if s/he continues to cheer, the coach has the right to ask him/her to submit to a doctor's examination at the cheerleader's expense and obtain a doctor's release before continuing to cheer. If a cheerleader is removed from a routine due to injury, it is at the coach's discretion whether or not s/he will be added back to the routine choreography, due to safety or time constraints.

Travel Information

Varsity Cheerleaders are expected to attend many away games throughout the school year, for which cheerleaders may be expected to provide their own transportation. Please let your coach know if this will be an issue. **ALL CHEERLEADERS will ride the bus both ways when transportation is provided.** The members will stay until the end of the event, unless determined otherwise by the coach. Students may ride home with a parent if it has been approved by the coach. No student will be allowed to leave with anyone other than his/her parent/s. Students must have a transportation form on file with SME.

Discipline and Conduct

Cheerleaders are expected to behave in a way that represents the program and school well. They are also expected to behave in a way that respects not only themselves, but also their teammates and their coaches. **Actions such as being late, not filling out items on time, talking out of turn, attitude issues, and other actions at the coaches discretion are considered minor infractions. Minor infractions incur disciplinary actions at the coaches discretion. These disciplinary actions will be extra conditioning at the coaches discretion.** Repeated minor infractions will be considered an act of extreme disrespect which will incur a serious infraction.

Serious Infraction

Serious infractions are actions which will result in serious discipline. Serious infractions are as follows:

- NO Contact NO Show to practices, events or games. (A NCNS is defined as missing a practice, event, or game without notifying the coach at least 24 hours in advance unless a medical or family emergency has occurred) Coaches discretion is used to help navigate these matters.
- Extreme acts of disrespect towards coaching staff or other cheerleaders. This includes any bullying of any type.
- Any more than 2 instances where the cheerleader is late to any cheer event, game, practice, etc.

There will be a 3 strike system for serious infractions with an increasing level of disciplinary action for each one.

- Strike 1 - Will result in benching from a game where the cheerleader will be required to attend in uniform and sit with the coach. (if the cheerleader does not attend that will count as a NC/NS as automatically count as another strike.)
- Strike 2 - Will result in Benching for the remainder of the Fall or Winter Season.
- Strike 3 - Will result in dismissal from the squad following a meeting with administrators and coaching staff

Cheerleaders may be removed from performance or games, placed on probation/ suspension, removed from leadership positions, or be dismissed from the squad due to behavioral or discipline issues, at the discretion of the coach and administration.

Uniform Expectations

The Shawnee Mission East Cheerleading team acts as ambassadors for Shawnee Mission East as well as Shawnee Mission School District. Members of the team are expected to display a positive personal image on the sidelines and in the general school atmosphere. As such the following guidelines will be enforced.

- Athletes will wear uniform pieces in the manner that is discussed and approved by the program during athlete uniform fitting.
- Athletes will wear uniforms (including hair, nails, makeup) in the manner that is laid out by the staff at the time of event.
- Athletes will not alter uniforms in a manner that is beyond the guidelines set out during athlete uniform fitting.
- Athletes will only wear program-approved accessories and clothing when in uniform.
- Athletes will not wear body jewelry of any kind (ears, nose, bellybutton, etc.) with their uniforms or to cheer related events (This includes games, events, and practices).

Disciplinary Actions Related to Uniforms

- Disciplinary action for offenses related to these guidelines will begin as minor infractions. After 2 minor infractions a serious infraction will occur when concerning these guidelines. This will result in the benching from a game.
- Interpretation of athletes adherence to these guidelines is at the coaches discretion.

Additionally a cheerleader may be **automatically dismissed** for any of the following reasons:

- For any infraction which results in suspension
- For criminal activity or any act punishable by law
- When a cheerleader organizes or is involved in a hazing incident
- On the first day of the beginning of the 7th week of academic ineligibility
- If s/he violates the district's drug and alcohol policies as *referenced in the Student Code of Conduct*

Athlete Signature _____

Guardian Signature _____

SME Cheer Drug and Alcohol Policy

In addition to the aforementioned demerits list, any cheerleader who violates the SMSD Drug and Alcohol contract by receiving an MIP or equivalent will be subject to the following consequences:

1. Benching for a minimum of 10% of the season immediately following notice of infraction (district policy). If the offense occurs between seasons (football has ended, but basketball has not begun), the benching will begin at the start of the next season. It is at the discretion of the head coach and administration as to whether the minimum of 10% of the season will suffice for the offense.
2. Removal from choreography for stunts or routines that will be performed during the time the cheerleader is benched. If the stunt or routine will be performed again following the cheerleader's return, it is at the coach's discretion as to whether or not the cheerleader will be choreographed back in, due to safety and time constraints.
3. If a violation occurs during the months following tryouts and leading up to the start of football season (April, May, June, July), the cheerleader will be released from all events leading up to and including the home opener football games for all grade levels.

Booster Club Financial Policies related to Disciplinary Action:

The SME Cheer Booster Club functions, in part, as a means to handle funds on behalf of cheerleaders. Activities such as local competitions and national competitions require deposits and payments which may not be refundable, per the vendor.

As such, if a member does not participate in an event due to disciplinary action, parents/cheerleaders must understand the following:

1. No refunds will be provided to a cheerleader, parent, or business from business sponsorship funds that a cheerleader has received, should s/he be removed from an event due to disciplinary action.
2. The Booster Club cannot issue refunds of deposits for such items (but not limited to) airline flights and hotel costs. A parent can go directly to the vendor if s/he desires, but the Booster Club will not be involved.
3. If the entire fee has already been paid by a member when the disciplinary action removes him/her from an event, there will be no refund by the Booster Club of any or all of the entire fee. If a parent desires to seek a refund/credit from the airline, hotel, etc., the Booster Club will not be involved.
4. If a member still owes a portion of the cost of an item (including, but not limited to hotel, flight, competition fees) the Booster Club will not be responsible for covering her cost, should a disciplinary action remove her from that event. In the event that her fees cannot be dismissed by the vendor, the dancer will still owe those fees to the Booster Club.
5. If a member is removed from an event which results in an increase in cost for other team members (example - hotel room, local competition fees, etc.) that member will compensate the Booster Club an amount that will allow other team members to avoid an increase in cost of that item.

Parents/Guardians

Parents please understand that by signing this contract you agree to abide by the statements in this contract as well as the decisions made within this program.

Additionally the following rules need to be followed by parents:

- Do not walk up to cheerleader during game time (it distracts the athlete and can cause injury)
- The coaching staff should receive contact from a cheerleader about any issues they may have before we receive contact from parents. If this is not followed we will not respond.
- The SME Cheer Coaching Staff will be respectful in communication with parents/guardians as such parents/guardians are expected to reciprocate this behavior in all communication ventures with coaching staff.
- By signing this contract all guardians in this household agree to this contract.

Guardian Signature _____

By signing this contract you agree to abide by the policies stated above.

Athlete Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Changes to Policy

The coach has the ability to revise all policies as needed on a season basis. If this happens, there will be a new signature required.