

7-12
BUTLER GOLDEN
TORNADO CHEERLEADING
HANDBOOK
2025-2026



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Butler Cheerleading Rules & Policies

I. Purpose

- A. The primary purpose of a Butler Cheerleader is to be spirit ambassadors for their school. They play an instrumental role in raising, leading and maintaining school spirit in and around their communities.
- B. Each member of the squad has the responsibility to uphold, reflect and to project the goals and ideals of the school, Athletic Department, and the school district.

II. Teams

- A. Varsity Game Squad: Grades 11 & 12
 1. Attends home and away Varsity football and basketball games, home unified bocce games, and other required events
 2. Select underclassmen who make the Varsity Competition team may be eligible to cheer Varsity game squad at the coaches discretion
- B. Junior Varsity Game Squad: Grades 9 & 10
 1. Attends MANDATORY UCA Home Camp in addition to summer practices
 2. Attends home 9th Grade / JV boys football and basketball games, girls Varsity basketball playoff games, and other required events
- C. 8th Grade Game Squad: Grade 8
 1. Attends MANDATORY UCA Home Camp in addition to summer practices
 2. Attends home Junior High football games, home 8th grade basketball games, and other required events
 3. May combine with 7th grade team at coaches discretion
- D. 7th Grade Game Squad: Grade 7
 1. Attends MANDATORY UCA Home Camp in addition to summer practices
 2. Attends home Junior High football games, home 7th grade basketball games, and other required events
 3. May combine with 8th grade team at coaches discretion
- E. Varsity Competition: Grades 9-12
 1. Attends MANDATORY UCA Summer Camp, Proven Skills Camp, Traditional Choreography, and Game Day Choreography in addition to summer practices
 2. Attends MANDATORY choreography cleanup sessions in December/January
 3. Travels to UCA Regionals in Ohio in October, various in-state local competitions, WPIALS, the PIAA State Championships, and National High School Cheerleading Championships in Orlando, Fl.
- F. Junior High Competition: Grades 7-9
 1. Junior High Competition DOES NOT travel to the National Championships in Orlando, Florida but will have a full in-state competition schedule.

III. Tryouts

- A. Eligibility
 1. All Butler Area School District athlete eligibility rules apply. Please see the Student-Athlete Handbook for a complete breakdown.
 2. Athletes must have all required tryout documents signed by a parent/guardian in order to participate.

3. Athletes interested in trying out for the competition program must first try out and be selected for a game squad team in order to be eligible.
- B. Game Squad Evaluations
1. Athletes will be taught a tryout cheer and dance (females only) by the outgoing senior class during Tryout Practices.
 2. Tryouts are conducted on the basketball court. All NFHS regulations apply.
 3. Athletes will be evaluated on the following categories:
 - a) Cheer
 - (1) Motion technique, sharpness, voice projection, crowd engagement, and knowledge of material are evaluated
 - b) Dance - Females Only
 - (1) Motion technique, sharpness, knowledge of material, and performance are evaluated
 - c) Toe Touch - Females Only
 - (1) Approach, height, flexibility, technique, and landing are evaluated.
 - d) Tumbling
 - (1) Standing and running tumbling are evaluated.
 - (2) Athletes can max out their tumbling score by perfectly executing a toe touch tuck and roundoff backhandspring layout.
 - e) Stunting - All Males and Female JV/Varsity Athletes
 - (1) Males must perform a coed and full group stunt. Females must perform a full all-girl group stunt.
 - (2) Athletes select their own groups for stunt evaluations. Groups should be put together by grade level - 9th and 10th stunting together for JV game squad tryouts and 11th and 12th for Varsity game squad tryouts.
 - (3) Athletes may be permitted to perform in multiple stunt evaluations based on tryout numbers and at the discretion of the coaching staff. A set number will be determined once tryout numbers are established.
 - (4) Athletes will only be evaluated on one stunt evaluation (ex. an athlete may perform an elite skill such as a backhandspring-up for their evaluation but agree to perform an extension for another athlete's evaluation).
 - (5) Groups must be submitted to the coaches for approval prior to tryouts.
 - f) Overall Effect
 - (1) Game day ready appearance and overall impression are evaluated
 - (a) Game day ready means:
 - (a) Hair is neatly pulled back out of the athlete's face into a slicked back ponytail with no wisps. Female athletes are encouraged to wear a plain white ribbon/bow if they have one!
 - (b) Male athletes should have their facial hair neatly trimmed.

- (c) No jewelry - this includes permanent jewelry!
 - (ii) Athletes should wear a plain white t-shirt or tank top tucked into navy or black shorts for evaluations. No crop tops!
 - (iii) Athletes should wear white cheer shoes if they have them. Otherwise lightweight athletic shoes are fine. Do not buy cheer shoes for tryouts!
 - 4. There are no minimum stunting or tumbling requirements but having more elite skills will provide athletes with the opportunity to earn more points on the scoresheet!
 - 5. Squads are determined by the largest break in scores. We do not have set numbers for each team.
- C. Competition Evaluations
- 1. Athletes must be selected to a game squad in order to try out for competition.
 - 2. Athletes going into 9th grade are eligible for either team. They should attend both evaluations unless they only wish to be considered for one team.
 - 3. Competition evaluations take place on dead mat. Twisting skills are permitted.
 - 4. Athletes will be evaluated on tumbling, stunting, and game day skills at competition tryouts.
 - 5. Athletes should expect to run at tryouts - half mile for Junior High tryouts, one mile for Varsity.
 - a) Athletes going into 9th grade who wish to be considered for either team will run one mile.
 - 6. Skill evaluations
 - a) Tumbling
 - (1) Recommended skills: standing tuck, roundoff tuck, and round off backhandspring tuck
 - (2) Elite tumbling through to a full is preferred!
 - b) Stunting
 - (1) It is recommended for athletes intending to try out for the competition teams to be versatile in their stunting positions. A routine may require you to perform multiple positions!
 - (2) Athletes trying out for Varsity Competition will be expected to be able to perform elite inversion, spinning, and release full group skills in a competition routine.
 - (3) Male athletes will be expected to perform unassisted coed skills in a competition routine.
 - 7. Team Selection
 - a) At tryouts, a competition squad consisting of an unspecified number of members will be selected. The total number of athletes selected is at the discretion of the coaches.
 - b) There is no set number of athletes that will be taken from season to season. The number of athletes selected for the team (both competing members and non-competing members) will be determined by the number of athletes at the appropriate skill level. These decisions will be made strictly by the coaches.

- c) The coach(es) reserve the right to choose the initial competition squad and make changes as they see fit. This includes holding tryouts or inviting additional athletes to join the team at any point throughout the season if the need arises (injuries, athletes quitting, athletes falling below the required skill level, athletes not reaching or maintaining a certain skill level). This also includes removing athletes from the squad if their skills are not consistently meeting the required level (stunting and/or tumbling).
- d) We do not give out tryout scores to anyone. If you are not selected for any of the teams and you would like to know what areas you need to improve on based on your tryout performance, you may request this after tryouts by emailing goldentornadocheer@gmail.com. This is the only form of communication that will be responded to with regards to tryout placement. Coaches will not be responding to phone calls or text messages regarding squad selection. A great deal of time and consideration goes into our decisions. Please allow at least 5 days after tryouts for a response.
- e) All athletes must re-tryout each year. No one is guaranteed a spot on the team regardless of grade or seniority.
- f) Being a Butler Cheerleader is a privilege. Your position on these squads is dependent on attendance, consistent effort, hard work, and a positive attitude toward cheerleading. Disrespecting your spot on the team, coaches or another individual may result in dismissal from the team. Team positions can change at any time.
- g) Athletes will be tested WEEKLY on the skills they exhibited at tryouts. Failure to maintain these skills can result in removal from the team at coaches discretion or movement to another team. This can happen at any time throughout the year.
- h) If an athlete is removed from the team or voluntarily quits their team, they will not be eligible to try out for the following season.

IV. Attendance Policy

- A. Athletes are expected to attend all events scheduled for their team. This includes, but is not limited to, team practices, competitions, games, fundraisers, and community service events. Being a Butler Cheerleader is very time consuming. It is the cheerleaders' responsibility to manage their time effectively in order to attend all team activities. Athletes will not be excused from games and or practices due to procrastination of school work and or personal endeavors. (ex. birthday outings, hair and or nail appointments, work, etc.).
- B. All athletes must be prompt to all practices and games and be fully dressed and ready by the start of their meet time. Not being ready to go for meet time may result in the athlete having to sit out for that event. Missing a uniform piece will also result in the athlete having to sit out.
- C. Practice and game schedules will be distributed by your team's coach. Keep in mind that all practices, games, and events are **mandatory** unless stated otherwise.
- D. Excessive absences will result in disciplinary action that may lead to game suspension or team removal.
- E. Coed Clause

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1. If a coed competition team is selected, male athletes may be eligible to participate in a modified attendance policy at the discretion of the coaching staff.
- F. Multi-Sport Athletes / School-Sponsored Extracurriculars
1. Athletes are encouraged to participate in other school sports and activities, but Butler Cheer is expected to take priority.
 2. It is the athlete's responsibility to bring conflicts to their coach's attention. Every effort will be made to work with the other high school coach to coordinate schedules. This requires communication skills and compromise from both coaches. It is at the head coaches' discretion to make accommodations for other Butler High School sports' teams.
 3. Competition members should not participate in any school or club sports team that conflicts with our schedule. Butler Cheer must be the priority!
 4. It is impossible to work around every other competitive sport in the area and still conduct effective practices; therefore, missing for any other team/organization will require an excuse and follow the excuse policy outlined in this handbook.
 5. Competition athletes are not permitted to miss performing at a competition for any other sport or activity.
- G. Excused Absences
1. Each athlete will be given one week (seven consecutive calendar days) of excused **summer** vacation time. During these seven days, the cheerleader will be excused from all Butler Cheerleading obligations - practices, fundraisers, or events. In order for this to be excused, the cheerleader must submit their summer vacation form at least two weeks in advance.
 2. Athletes will be provided three excuses for each team they are selected for (ex. an athlete on a game squad and competition team will receive a total of 6 excuses).
 3. Examples of events requiring excuses: weddings, college clinics, and concerts.
 4. Athletes who are sick from school that day are not required to turn in an excuse but they must communicate about their illness to the coach! If they attend school but miss practice due to illness, an excuse is required.
 5. Family emergencies do not require an excuse but athletes must inform the coach ASAP of the impact to their attendance.
 6. If an athlete is found to have been untrue about an absence, then they are subject to disciplinary action, possible suspension, and/or dismissal from the team.
 7. Excuses will **NOT** be accepted from competition cheerleaders two weeks before a competition. An unexcused absence within two weeks of a competition may result in the athlete's role in the routine being changed.
- H. Unexcused Absences
1. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated. Unexcused absences may lead to suspension from the team and or immediate dismissal. An unexcused absence the week of a game or competition will result in the athlete being benched for the upcoming event.
 2. Doctor, dentist and non-medical appointments made during team practices or games times will count as unexcused absences. An unexcused absence the week of a game or competition may result in the athlete being benched for the upcoming event.

3. Work is not an excused absence! It is a privilege to be a student-athlete.
4. Repeated unexcused absences will result in dismissal from the team.

V. Game, Event and Practice Expectations

- A. Cheerleaders will wear proper attire to school on game days decided by the coaches.
- B. All practices are closed unless otherwise stated by the coaching staff.
- C. Nails should be an appropriate length and neutral color at all times. This is an NFHS rule!
- D. Hair should be pulled back neatly and performance ready for practices/games.
- E. Cheerleaders will be prohibited to wear jewelry of any kinds at practice or competitions due to safety reasons. This includes but is not limited to earrings, apple watches, necklaces, and other piercings. Athletes may wear stud earrings to games - all other jewelry is prohibited.
- F. Cell phones are prohibited during practices and games unless a coach approves use.
- G. Athletes are responsible for being on the field/court at their meet time designated by their coach, and back in the stands or field at least 1 minute before the end of half-time intermission, unless otherwise noted by their coach.
- H. Cheerleaders must demonstrate respect and good sportsmanship at all times.
- I. Chewing gum is prohibited at games and practices.
- J. Eating or drinking on the track or on the bench during games is prohibited except during halftime.
- K. It is each athlete's responsibility to be dressed completely in the expected attire and bring appropriate weather gear. Missing any piece of a uniform at a game (Bow, Top, Skirt, Socks, Shoes, Poms etc) may result in that athlete sitting the game.

VI. Behavior

- A. Athletes will work together as a team for the good of the squad and pay attention to the directions of coaches.
- B. If an athlete receives an in school suspension they are permitted to practice but not participate in contests or in cheer competitions. If an athlete receives an out of school suspension then they will not be allowed to practice or cheer at school events. In addition, if the out of school suspension falls on a practice day or event/game day this amounts to an unexcused absence and may lead to additional sanctions including dismissal.
- C. Use of alcohol, drugs, Juul, tobacco and other illegal products are strictly prohibited. If a cheerleader uses and or is determined by school or law authorities to have used alcohol or drugs that student may be suspended or dismissed from the squad. This includes being associated with drugs and alcohol in social media posts. This policy will be strictly enforced.
- D. Each athlete must maintain a positive online presence that would not reflect poorly on the athlete, cheer program or Butler Area School district. Social Media presence is closely monitored for all athletes and a negative presence can be cause for dismissal from the team. This includes all social media accounts and 'fake' accounts that belong to the athlete.
- E. Harassment (physical, verbal, emotional, etc.) of another student or team member will not be tolerated.
- F. Follow the chain of command to address any issues or concerns that may arise.
- G. Demonstrate respect to the authority in charge of a particular event adhering to all directions given by that person (coaches, seniors, parents, etc.)

- H. Refrain from posting, reposting, or sharing anything that is negative towards the team, program, or school district.
- I. Athletes must refrain from unsportsmanlike behavior - such as yelling at refs during games, speaking ill of other teams at competitions, cursing while in uniform or Butler apparel, or sharing inappropriate posts on social media.
- J. Disrespect of coaches and teammates will not be tolerated. If the behavior remains consistently disrespectful after being addressed, the cheerleader will be removed from their team.
- K. Athletes should not engage in public displays of affection while in uniform.
- L. Failure to follow these rules will result in disciplinary action being taken by the coaches or the Athletic Department. Other issues may arise during the school year that this booklet does not address, and rules may be added at the coaches' discretion.
- M. Represent Butler Cheerleading in a manner that is professional, respectful, and appropriate at all times - not just while in uniform!

VII. Practice Gear & Game Day Accessories

- A. All cheerleaders will be required to buy some of the necessary uniform accessories for their game squad. Some of those expenses may include, but are not limited to: matching practice outfits, cheer shoes, game day shirt, warmups, etc.
- B. Competition cheerleaders will have additional practice outfits they will be responsible for, as well as competition cheer shoes.
- C. Optional items such as bags, sweatshirts, etc. will be available for purchase.
- D. During the month of October, the cheerleaders will wear pink in support of Breast Cancer Awareness month. All athletes will be expected to purchase a pink t-shirt that will be worn to school on game days. Female athletes will be expected to purchase a pink ribbon to wear to games.
- E. It is required that incoming members to the Butler Cheerleading program purchase a warm-up outfit (jacket and pants) to be worn to games and competitions.
- F. Any item that the cheerleader keeps will be an out-of-pocket expense. Therefore, no group fundraising will be done to cover the cost of these items.

VIII. Uniforms

- A. All uniformed pieces supplied by the Butler Area School District are property of the Butler Area School District. They are to be taken care of and respected.
- B. At no time should cheerleading uniforms (including matching outfits, warm ups, & poms) be lent to anyone other than Butler Cheerleaders.
- C. Wearing the Butler Cheerleading uniform is a privilege and should be treated as such. Appearance and behavior should reflect positively on our school district when the cheerleader is in uniform or team-related apparel.
- D. Public display of affection while in uniform is strictly prohibited.
- E. Replacement charges will be charged to the individual cheerleaders for lost or damaged uniform items. An obligation for these items will be turned in to the athletic office at the end of the season. Athletes with outstanding obligations may be ineligible to receive their diploma.
- F. Any alterations made to the uniform without the consent of the Coach & Athletic Director will result in the parent being required to reimburse the school for the full amount of the uniform.
- G. All uniforms should be machined-washed only and hung to dry.

IX. Travel Commitment

- A. Athletes are expected to wear their warmups over their uniforms with tennis shoes (no slides, croc, birckenstocks, or boots) during away game/competition commitments
- B. Cheerleaders must ride the bus to and from any game/event that a team bus is provided.
- C. Varsity game squad travels to select away football and boys Varsity basketball games.
- D. Junior Varsity game squad travels to away girls Varsity basketball playoff games.
- E. Junior High Competition travels to in-state competitions.
- F. Varsity Competition travels to in-state competitions, UCA Regionals in Ohio, and UCA Nationals in Orlando, Fl.

X. Time Commitment

- A. Cheerleading begins immediately after tryouts are held in April-May and ends in February- March, following the conclusion of basketball and competition season.
- B. Game squad teams typically practice at least one day per week following tryouts and leading up to the first football game of the season. Additional practices will be scheduled as needed to prepare for basketball season.
- C. Game squad teams may also perform upon request at pep rallies and charitable functions to represent the school. Other weekly responsibilities can include locker room decoration, volunteer events, etc.
- D. Junior High Competition practices at least two days per week after the team has been selected. During the school year, they practice at least two days per week.
- E. Varsity Competition practices two days per week starting immediately after the team has been announced. During the school year, this increases to three days per week.
- F. Attendance at events is at the discretion of the coaches and the Athletic Director.
- G. Some of the listed activities/games may have full squad or half-squad attendance requirements. All scheduled appearances of the Butler Cheerleaders are strictly up to the coach's discretion, not the Booster organization.

XI. Financial Commitment

- A. Please see the previous season's estimated cost sheet for a breakdown of costs associated with being a Butler Cheerleader. Costs are estimates and returning cheerleaders typically have lower costs. *Please do not let costs deter your participation – payment plans can be confidential and applied by cheer boosters!*

1. Competition Fees

- a) The Varsity Competition team is expected to enter cheerleading competitions. We are projected to compete in several local competitions throughout their season. The Varsity Competition team is expected to attend the WPIAL Championship, the PIAA Championship, UCA Regionals, and UCA Nationals in Orlando.
- b) The Junior High School Competition team will be expected to enter local cheerleading competitions in the fall and early winter. Costs associated with these teams are minimal compared to Varsity Competition squads.
- c) Although competitions can be expensive, parents can reduce their share by participating in individual fundraising activities. If you do not wish to participate in fundraising for competition expenses, you will be asked to pay directly for your fees.

2. Summer Camps

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- a) The 7th Grade, 8th Grade, and Junior Varsity Game Squad will participate in a one day home UCA Camp to improve their skills and learn material for the upcoming football season.
 - b) The Varsity Competition team will participate in a one day stunt camp led by Proven to improve their stunt technique and potentially aid in college recruitment.
 - c) The Varsity Competition team will participate in an away UCA Masters Camp at Trails End to facilitate team bonding, provide the opportunity for seniors to try out for All-American, improve stunt technique, and fulfill the NFHS requirement to be eligible to attend UCA Nationals.
3. Competition Choreography
 - a) The Junior High Competition team may hold choreography camps over the summer to finalize their routine(s) for the competition season.
 - b) The Varsity Competition team will participate in a two day V!ROC Choreography Camp for their traditional routine and a one day choreography camp for their game day routine.
 4. Clothing
 - a) Each cheerleader will incur clothing costs related to uniform requirements. Price is estimated on the previous season's expense sheet. Please note many items are the same from year to year to try to keep the cost down. If your athlete has a required item that is in good shape, they **do not** need to purchase that item this season!
 5. Program Operating Expenses
 - a) Operational expenses for the program vary season to season. In the past, operation expenses have been used to purchase items such as new signs to use for crowd leading, velcro strips for the practice mats, training equipment, practice speaker, etc.
- B. All money must be turned in by the required due date. Please pay attention to the due dates.
 - C. All money must be submitted in the form of checks or Venmo. Cash will not be accepted.
 - D. All checks should be made payable to: BHS Cheer unless noted otherwise.
 - E. You are responsible for any fees that we are charged by our bank for checks that are returned.
 - F. Checks can be mailed to:
Butler Cheerleading
PO Box 1971
Butler, PA 16003
 - G. Questions regarding your financial obligations should be directed to the treasurers at butlervcheer@gmail.com.
 - H. When your child makes one of the teams, they will be assigned a number that will coordinate with all monies due. Please check the website frequently and pay your balances promptly.
 - I. If you need to post-date checks or divide payments, please speak to or send a note to the treasurers to make arrangements. Payments should be made in full by the due date. Any special arrangements will be kept private between the family and the treasurer and possibly the coach.

- J. If you have any money outstanding at the end of the season from anything (clothing orders, fundraising obligations, lost uniform pieces, etc.), the cheerleader will not receive a banquet gift until the balance is paid and an obligation will be placed on file for you at the Athletic Office. The athlete will also not be allowed to try out for the following cheer season until all balances are paid.
- K. If a cheerleader is removed from a team, or if they remove themselves for personal reasons, any outstanding money that they owe must still be paid. Also, any money that they have fundraised will remain the property of Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading, and they will not be entitled to any banquet gifts, etc.

XII. Fundraising

- A. Fundraising activities fall into two categories.
- B. The first type of fundraising benefits the operating costs and future needs of the program.
- C. The second is team fundraising that would benefit the needs of a specific team (ex. cost of Nationals for the Varsity comp team). All fundraisers need maximum participation to appropriately support the growth of the program. If you do not wish to participate in fundraising, you will be asked to pay directly for your fees.
- D. Money fundraised is the property of the Butler High School Cheer Parent Association and cannot be given to individuals or families regardless of the circumstances. The money is to be distributed according to the BHSCPA By-Laws.
- E. Operational Fundraisers will be held to fund various anticipated/unexpected program expenses (ex. replacement uniform pieces, signs for games, etc.)
 - 1. Parents may opt out of operational fundraisers but they will be expected to pay the fees outright.
- F. Team Fundraising will be held to fund the Varsity Competition team's trip to UCA Nationals in Orlando, Florida.
 - 1. Team fundraising typically covers:
 - a) Hotel rooms for Ohio Regional competition
 - b) Replacement Mickey Ears to use for picture if team receives bid
 - c) Send Off Party - held before PIAA States/Nationals
 - d) Flights to UCA Nationals
 - e) Mears transportation to and from the airport to the resort
 - f) Team Registration for UCA Nationals (includes resort stay, competition fees, park hopper, and entrance to competition venue)
 - g) Senior dinner - a longstanding tradition where the coaching staff takes the seniors out to dinner on night one of the trip
 - h) Team dinner - a longstanding tradition where the team and coaches attend a dinner to commemorate the season journey
 - (1) families are invited to attend team dinner but their fee is not fundraised for
 - i) Team lunch on day 2
 - j) Parking for the coaches at the airport
 - k) Coaches meals
 - 2. If goals are met, team fundraising may be used to cover various extras for the team, such as:
 - a) Game Day Choreography
 - b) Proven Stunt Clinic

- c) Refillable Disney Mugs
- 3. Varsity Competition Team Fundraisers include but are not limited to:
 - a) Graduation Concessions
 - b) Corporate Sponsorships
 - c) Car Washes
 - d) Youth Clinics
 - e) Home Competition
 - f) PA Fan Shirts

XIII. Injuries

- A. If an injury occurs during the season, a doctor's note must be presented to the coaching staff with specific directions as to what the cheerleader can and cannot do. Once a note has been provided to the coaching staff, the athlete must follow the guidelines set forth by the doctor until another note has been provided permitting them to resume activities fully.
- B. If a cheerleader is injured during the season, as long as medically able, they are expected to attend all scheduled practice, tumbling, games, competitions and events. Additionally, injured athletes must attend the teams' events in uniform / warm- up and sit with the coaches and continue to support the team.
- C. Athletes who are sitting out from tumbling or stunting for more than two consecutive practices are expected to provide a doctor's note excusing them from activity during those days.
- D. Athletes who do not provide a doctor's note are expected to participate fully in all scheduled activities/events.

XIV. Sick Policy

- A. Athletes must attend practice UNLESS you are vomiting, have diarrhea, or a contagious illness. A doctor's note with detailed information regarding your illness, treatment and length of recovery will be required. If you do not have the above symptoms or doctors' notes – please attend practice.
- B. Athletes who attend a full day of school are required to turn in an excuse if they are missing practice due to sickness.
- C. If an athlete is sick from school and will be missing a practice/game, a phone call from a parent is required for 7th and 8th graders. For JV and Varsity, a phone call is required by the athlete!

XV. Parent Roles and Responsibilities

- A. Arrange to have your child arrive at practices, games, and other events on time and picked up promptly at the end of practice.
- B. Safety of the athletes is always our first consideration. Parents must understand that injuries are always a possibility in the sport of cheerleading.
- C. All parents are strongly encouraged to be active members of the boosters by participating in fundraising activities and paying all cheer expenses promptly.
 - 1. Varsity Competition parents are required to attend a summer car wash, the Fall Clinic game, and the home competition.
- D. All parents are expected to follow the chain command (see below) for complaints or concerns.
- E. Team Parents
 - 1. Varsity Team Parent(s)

- a) Assist coaches with Football and Basketball senior nights; work with coaches, senior cheerleading parents, and football and basketball boosters (if necessary)
- b) Assist coaches with uniform distribution and collection
- c) Assist Game Squad Fundraising Coordinator with fundraiser pick-ups
2. Junior High School and JV Team Parent(s)
 - a) Assist coaches with any special activities
 - b) Work with football and basketball boosters if necessary
 - c) Assist coaches with uniform distribution and collection
 - d) Assist Game Squad Fundraising Coordinator with fundraiser pick-ups
 - e) Assist coaches with money collection and transfer to treasurer
- F. Banquet Committee (1-2 parents from each game squad team)
 1. Schedule banquet for end of March/beginning of April
 2. Must consult Cheer Board for budgetary decisions
 3. Must consult coaching staff for banquet date
 4. Committee is in charge of: decorations, reservations, finalizing gifts, etc.

XVI. Grievances

- A. Squad Grievances
 1. If you have a complaint about the squad, take it to the coach. Squad grievances must follow the following chain of command:
 1. Athlete to Coach
 2. Parent to Coach
 3. Parent meet with Coach & Athletic Director
 2. The idea behind this line of communication is so the athlete may attempt conflict resolution themselves. The athlete should not feel intimidated to reach out to their coach with an issue or concern. It is considered a non-issue if the chain of command is not met. The relationship between athlete and coach should be one of mutual respect and communication.
 3. The cheerleader and parents will respect and follow the chain of command.
 4. We ask that school officials such as the Principal or the Athletic Director should not be contacted regarding cheerleading matters without first discussing these issues with the coach(es). This will ensure that the chain of command works properly.
 5. Coaches will not discuss individual athletes, their skills, their placement in the routine, or their financial status with anyone except the individual cheerleader or their parents.
 6. At no time should anything other than fundraising, outfits, schedules, banquets, competitions, or anything other than general Butler Cheerleading business be discussed at a Parent's Club Meeting. At no time should a meeting be called without the knowledge and approval of the coach(es).
- B. If you have complaints with the Booster organization, take them to the Booster president.
- C. Constructive criticism, expressed to the right people in the right way, makes the team better. Destructive criticism will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the squad.

- D. Please discuss problems or concerns with your coach before or after practice by appointment only, not during practice sessions or a game. Please do not approach a coach directly after a practice or game if you do not have a scheduled appointment.
- E. Please respect your coach's time. Excessive messages will not be tolerated. Phone calls or in-person appointments must be scheduled if there is an issue.

XVII. Banquet Gifts

- A. Banquet gifts will be provided for all athletes who complete the current season. The gift each athlete receives will be based on their number of years in the program.
 - 1. First year members will receive a t-shirt and keychain.
 - 2. Second year members will receive a quarter-zip sweatshirt.
 - 3. Third year members will receive a makeup/toiletry bag.
 - 4. Fourth year members will receive a blanket.
 - 5. Fifth year members will receive a pajama set.
 - 6. Sixth year members will receive a large duffel or backpack.
- B. All seniors will get to take home their senior banner the night of the banquet - the banner is paid for by program funds.

XVIII. Enforcement of the Rules

- A. A cheerleader may be removed from a Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading Squad at any time if:
 - 1. Any of the rules stated in this contract are broken or abused.
 - 2. Any school rules/policies are broken or abused.
 - 3. Their attitude is negatively affecting the team and/or his/her performance.
 - 4. The athlete has engaged in underage drinking, smoking, or illegal drug activity.
- B. If a cheerleader engages in a physical fight with another person, there will be immediate disciplinary action taken, which could result in their removal from their team! This is not behavior becoming of a Butler Cheerleader!
- C. If continued violations occur, the cheerleader may sit out of events for an undetermined amount of time. If problems continue, the cheerleader may be subject to dismissal from the squad.
- D. The cheerleader will be given sufficient warnings regarding these discipline measures.
- E. As other rules or requirements are necessary, the coaches will make them known to the cheerleader. The cheerleader will in turn, follow these rules.
- F. If a cheerleader is removed from their team for any rule violation, they may be ineligible to try out to be a Butler Cheerleader the following season!

XIX. Website Communication

- A. Communication about schedules, financial obligations, and more is available at all times on a password protected section of our website - butlercheerleading.com.
- B. Athletes are expected to check the website one time per week. It will be updated by 8:00 pm each Sunday. Athletes are responsible for the information posted on the website. Weekly schedules, general information, fundraising information, etc. are posted on the website. Athletes will be given log-in information to the secure users' area once they are selected for the squad.
- C. Athletes are expected to keep the website log-in information, as well as all information posted on the website, confidential.

XX. School Policy Highlights

- A. All school district policies will be enforced throughout the season. These rules apply to infractions that occur 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.
- B. The Butler Area School District will not tolerate any form of hazing, harassment, bullying, racial or ethnic intimidation, or sexual harassment.
- C. Tobacco, alcohol, and drug violations will be handled according to school district policy.
- D. You must be passing at least 4 full-credit subjects as of each Friday. If you fail to meet this requirement, you will be ineligible the following Sunday through Saturday. You will remain ineligible until you are passing at least 4 full-credit subjects. Any games or practices that the cheerleader is unable to participate in during your ineligibility will require the use of an excuse. The cheerleader should still be in attendance for practices, games and events and should be dressed accordingly for that event. Additionally, any athletes that are ineligible for academic reasons should talk to their coach to discuss ways to improve their grades such as tutoring, additional help, etc.
- E. Each athlete will be required to get a physical dated June 1, 2025 or later. You must get a physical by your family doctor or any medexpress type facility and have the necessary paperwork completed and submitted to the Athletic Office by a date you will be given at the first parent meeting after your child makes a team. Coaches cannot accept this paperwork. It must be turned into the athletic office. If you do not have the proper paperwork completed by the deadline, you will be ineligible to participate in any practices/games/camps/etc. until this is done. All practices missed for this reason will be unexcused. The school district also charges a \$75 athletic fee to be paid when turning in physical paperwork. Anyone receiving free or reduced lunches will have this fee waived or reduced respectively. Once an athlete accumulates 20 days absent from school (regardless of reason) they will not be eligible to cheer until they accumulate 45 days present in school per school rules. This carries over from year to year. (ex. If you are absent 20 or more days in the spring semester, you are ineligible to cheer in the fall until you have accumulated 45 days present in the fall semester.)
- F. Athletes must be in school by 10:45 am in order to participate in games or practices that day. If you do not attend school for any reason, you are expected to inform your coach so they may appropriately plan for the game or practice.
- G. If you are suspended from school (in or out) you are not eligible to participate in anything throughout the duration of the suspension - weekends included. You must still attend the event and be dressed appropriately, but you may not participate. You will need to use an excuse for any events that you cannot participate in due to ineligibility caused by suspension or detention.

Butler Competition Squad Contract

I. Time Commitment

A. Junior High Competition

1. Junior High competition practices over the summer and through the end of their in-state competition schedule.
2. Competition Schedule - subject to change
 - a) Jagfest (Pittsburgh, PA)
 - b) South Hills Showdown (Bethel Park, PA) - November
 - c) Home Competition - November
 - d) Bishop McCort (Johnstown, PA) - December
 - e) Franklin Regional Cheer Classic (Pittsburgh, PA) - December

B. Varsity Competition

1. In addition to summer practices, Varsity Competition athletes are required to attend the following summer camps:
 - a) UCA Masters Camp
 - b) Proven Skills Camp
 - c) Traditional Choreography Camp
 - d) Game Day Choreography Camp
2. Varsity Competition members should expect to practice over holiday breaks.
3. Competition Schedule - subject to change
 - a) Jagfest (Pittsburgh, PA)
 - b) Miami Valley Regional Competition (Dayton, OH) - October
 - c) South Hills Showdown (Bethel Park, PA) - November
 - d) Home Competition - November
 - e) Allegheny Regional Competition (Johnstown, PA) - November
 - f) Bishop McCort (Johnstown, PA) - December
 - g) Franklin Regional Cheer Classic (Pittsburgh, PA) - December
 - h) WPIAL Championships - January
 - i) PIAA State Spirit Championships
 - j) National High School Cheerleading Championships (Orlando, FL) - February
 - (1) Our trip to Nationals is not a vacation; it is a time for us to accomplish our goals that we have worked for all season. Your #1 focus and priority during the entire trip will be cheerleading.
 - k) ***The squad does not automatically participate at States or Nationals. They must qualify for these events.***

II. Practice Policies

- A. All competition practices will be closed practices unless specified otherwise. If you need to discuss something with the coach, please email the coach to set up a meeting.
- B. Athletes should remain off their phones for the duration of practice. If parents/guardians need to get ahold of their athlete in the event of an emergency, please contact the coaching staff.

III. Competing Members vs. Non-Competing Members

- A. A competition team will be announced at tryouts. All competition squad members will attend all practices, camps, fundraisers, competitions, and all mandatory events of the competition squad whether they are a competing member or a non-competing member.
- B. Competing and non-competing athletes will not be identified at tryouts. The starting roster for the routines will be determined at choreography and is subject to change as athletes gain/lose skills throughout the season.
- C. Tumbling, stunting, and fundamentals will be considered when selecting athletes to represent the team on the mat at competitions.
- D. Coaches reserve the right to add or remove athletes from the competition team at any time.

IV. Varsity Competition Fundraising

- A. Fundraising is done as a group and participation is mandatory!
- B. If a fundraising event requires the participation of a parent (clinic, car wash, competition, etc.), athletes are required to use one of their excuses if a parent or adult is not present.
- C. Possible fundraisers include:
 - 1. Selling flowers/water at graduation
 - 2. Sponsor shirts
 - 3. Youth Clinics - Summer, Fall, and Winter
 - 4. Car Washes
 - 5. PA Pride t-shirts
 - 6. Home Competition
- D. Varsity Competition fundraising is focused on paying for the following items related to the team's trip to UCA Nationals in February:
 - 1. Hotel stay for Ohio Regional Competition
 - 2. Departing / Return Flight
 - 3. Team transportation to and from airport to resort (MEARS)
 - 4. Resort Stay and Competition Registration
 - 5. Senior Dinner - attended by senior class and coaching staff
 - 6. Team Lunch on Day 2 - delivered to resort
 - 7. Team Dinner - attended by entire team and coaching staff
 - a) family/friends may attend team dinner but their cost is not included in fundraising efforts
 - 8. Send Off Party - food, supplies, and gift for the team/coaches
- E. Any additional items covered year to year are considered extras and are not to be expected (ex. refillable Disney mugs, finalist shirts, etc)
- F. If our fundraising efforts throughout the season come up short of the amount that we need to send our athletes to Nationals, each athlete will be expected to pay the remaining balance out-of-pocket. If this occurs, we will decide on the amount needed per athlete and you will be given the option to participate in individual fundraisers and/or to pay this amount.
- G. If the cheerleader is removed from the competition squad due to rule violations, falling below the required skill level, or if they remove themselves for personal reasons (including injury), they will not be allowed to make the trip to any competitions, including Nationals. The fundraising money that they have helped to raise up to that point is the property of Butler Cheer and will remain property of the Butler Cheer. If

those individuals' parents have, at that point, paid money to the National's trip, then the responsibility of taking the trip, finding someone else to take their spot, or making cancellations, is theirs. Any money that the cheerleader owes for outstanding expenses must still be paid. The Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleaders will not be responsible for reimbursing any money that may have been lost due to disciplinary action and/ or a family's decision (for any reason) to not make the trip past deadline points where monies have been forfeited.

V. Varsity Competition Out-of-Pocket Expenses

- A. Below are the estimated out-of-pocket expenses for the entire season for the Varsity competition squad. Please note that these costs are in addition to the game squad expenses!
 - 1. Additional Practice Clothing: approx. \$200 (less for returning members)
 - 2. UCA Masters Camp: approx. \$700 (includes transportation, lodging, meals, and instruction - cost may be lower if we share bus to camp with another team)
 - 3. Proven Skills Camp / UWG Recruitment Opportunity : approx. \$140
 - 4. Local Competitions Fees: approx. \$150
 - 5. Choreography Camp/Music: approx. \$375
 - 6. Choreography Cleanup: approx. \$85

VI. Transportation

- A. For all local competitions, the cheerleader will be responsible for arranging their own transportation. Cheerleaders are not permitted to drive themselves to any competitions - unless their parents are in the car with them. All athletes must be driven by their own parent or another parent on the team. Athletes are not allowed to be driven to or from a competition by a significant other, no matter what their age may be.
- B. For each local competition, we will either select a local meeting place to meet before we depart for the competition or select a time to meet at the competition. All cheerleaders must meet at the named location at the appropriate time.
- C. The coaches and the Butler Area School District are not responsible for the cheerleaders while they are in transit to and from the competitions. Supervision will begin by the coaches once the cheerleaders arrive at the event and will end at the conclusion of the event.

VII. Enforcement of the Rules

- A. In addition to the rules outlined in the Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading Contract, a cheerleader may be removed from the Competition Squad for the additional reasons below:
 - 1. Their skills fall below the requirements for any of the given areas.
 - 2. They are not showing improvement and/ or maintaining skills already acquired.
 - 3. Their attitude is negatively affecting the team.