



## NORTH ALLEGHENY SPORTS NETWORK

### CHEERLEADERS BOOKLET

Dear Parents,

Welcome to North Allegheny Cheerleading! It is important to you, as parents, that you are aware of certain information and costs so that both you and your child can have an enjoyable season. This book was compiled to provide information and promote discussion among the Boosters, the Athletic Office, the coaches, parents, and potential cheerleaders. It is by no means all-inclusive of everything a parent needs to know about high school cheerleading, but it gives an overview of some of the most frequently asked questions.

Please review the information in this booklet with your athlete. Keep it handy for future reference.

Sincerely,

*The North Allegheny Coaching Staff and The North Allegheny Cheerleading Boosters*

#### MISSION STATEMENT FROM THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

*Participation in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic athletics is an essential component of the educational experience. Our purpose is to provide a dynamic program of student activities whereby our students may fulfill their individual potential. The intent of the athletic program at North Allegheny is to meet the emotional, social, and mental needs of our students as well as improve our students' physical development. The opportunities provided by our students extracurricular program enables our district to challenge the physically as well as intellectually talented pupil in their pursuit of excellence.*

Student participants in activity programs should be served by the following principles. We believe students have the right to:

1. Participate in activities.
2. Have an opportunity to strive for success.
3. Participate at a level commensurate with each student's maturity and ability.
4. Have qualified and sufficient adult leadership.
5. Have proper and thorough preparation prior to participating in events.
6. Participate in safe and healthy conditions and facilities.
7. Share in the leadership and decision-making at their chosen activity.
8. Be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

#### **Eligibility Requirements**

- Middle School squads will consist of students entering 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> from their respective middle school.
- Freshmen squad will consist of students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade only.
- Junior Varsity will consist of students entering 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades.
  - Junior Varsity Competition team will include and 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders who are interested.
- Varsity will consist of students entering 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, or 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
  - Varsity competition team will include 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders selected by the coaching staff.

**\*\*All squad members MUST have a completed Physical by a physician 1 week prior to the official start of the season**

## Academic Eligibility

All candidates must meet the PIAA academic requirements as follows:

1. The student athletes must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the principal as a full-time curriculum.
2. The student athlete must be passing at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent thereof as of each Friday during a grading period. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the loss of a student's athletic eligibility for the following week beginning Sunday through the following Saturday.
3. The student athlete must have passed at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent thereof during the previous grading period. Eligibility for the first grading period is based on final grades for the preceding year. Failure to meet this requirement will result in a loss of athletic eligibility for the first fifteen school days period.

## How much time does cheerleading take?

Cheerleading is a big commitment, not only of time, but also of spirit. **Varsity cheerleading** has the biggest commitment of time at approximately 20+ hours per week between practice time and time spent at interscholastic contests. Cheerleading begins immediately after try-outs in May and ends in February / March, following basketball and cheer competitions. During the summer, all cheerleaders must make every effort to attend all practices. Cheerleaders must also attend a summer camp and a mini-camp. **The official season begins on August 16, 2021.** During the school year, the cheerleaders will practice, pending coach's schedule, at least twice a week (4+ hours) or more during the competition season (if on a competition team). The Varsity squad cheers for all football games and all boys' basketball games as well as some girls' basketball. This includes regular season games and ALL playoff games. Their attendance at the events is at the discretion of the cheerleading coaches and the Athletic Director in cases where the sports' schedules conflict. In addition, they will also perform upon request at pep rallies and charitable functions to represent the school. Other weekly responsibilities include sign making and locker room decorating prior to home game days. Some of the listed activities/games may have full squad or half-squad attendance requirements.

The **Junior Varsity squad** will attend all home J.V. football, boys basketball home section games and some girls' basketball games. The J.V. squad may be asked to fill in at Varsity events should a conflict arise in the Varsity schedule.

The **Freshmen squad** will attend all home Freshmen football, boys basketball home section games and some girls' basketball games.

**All scheduled appearances of the Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Freshmen cheerleaders are strictly up to the coach's discretion, not the Booster organization.**

## How much does cheerleading cost?

- **Booster Fees**
  - Parents are encouraged to become members of the Cheerleading Boosters. This cost and dues can vary year to year based on squad needs and are at the discretion of the Cheerleading Booster Board. Please see the "Boosters" section of the booklet for further descriptions of the goals of the Booster organization.
- **Competition Fees**
  - The Varsity and Junior Varsity competition squads will be expected to enter cheerleading competitions. Squads are projected to compete in several local competitions throughout their season. The Varsity squad should be expected to attend the WPIAL Championship, the PIAA

Championship, UCA regional competition, and UCA national competition. The JV competition team will compete at various local events as well. Although competitions can be expensive, parents can reduce their share by participating in fundraising activities. If you do not wish to participate in fundraising for competition expenses, you will be asked to pay directly for your competition fees. An estimated price of 21-22 competition fees for each squad will be distributed at a Booster organization meeting and a complete list of costs for choreography and competition fees will be provided once they are known.

- Summer Camps
  - Each squad will participate in a summer camp to improve their cheerleading skills. Mandatory camp begins August 16, 2021 for all squads. You can expect to practice everyday (excluding weekends) until the start of school. A more detailed calendar will be provided at the Welcome Meeting.
- Clothing
  - Each cheerleader will incur clothing costs related to uniform requirement. Price TBD. We will try to purchase the minimum needed.

### **Cheerleading Boosters**

Without every parent contributing to the Booster organization, it would not be a success. The cheerleading Boosters in the past have provided money for choreography camp, mini-camp expenses, tumbling mats, school uniform expenses, UBO donations, post-prom party donations, and senior cheerleader scholarship(s), to name a few. Boosters pay for coaches' needs (sound system, etc.), the end-of-the-year banquet with gifts for all the cheerleaders and their coaches, and other expenses as they arise. It is expected that we all help to make this program a great one.

### **Fundraisers**

Fundraising activities fall into three categories. The first type of fundraising benefits the Booster organization – i.e., mini-camp. This money goes towards a pre-determined goal. The second type of fundraising benefits the operating costs of the organization and future needs of the program. The final and 3rd category is a team-fundraiser that would benefit the needs of a specific team (i.e. Cost of Nationals for the Varsity comp team). All fundraisers need maximum participation to appropriately support the growth of the program.

Costs are approximately; We will do our best to keep costs low!

- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen \$1000-\$1400
- Middle School \$800-\$1000
- JV Comp \$250-\$300
- Varsity Comp \$1600-\$1800

### **Uniforms**

The school provides the following uniform items that are free of charge to the cheerleaders for their use during the year. Wearing an NA Cheerleading uniform is a privilege and should be treated as such. Replacement charges will be charged to the individual cheerleaders for lost or damaged uniform items. A signed contract will be given to each athlete when uniforms are distributed. Damaged uniform items can include but are not limited to unauthorized alterations, permanent stains, burns, tears, foul odors, or theft.

The uniforms will be sized to the cheerleaders prior to the start of the season. 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. All uniforms should be machined-washed only and hung to dry. (Dry cleaning the uniform takes out the VISA treatment.) Only the wool jacket requires dry cleaning.

## **Attendance & Cheerleader Expectations**

All cheerleaders will begin their Mandatory Practice weeks on August 16, 2021 and will continue until the start of school. Families should prepare these dates in advance of the season so that all team members are present to begin the season.

Varsity cheerleaders are suggested to attend a weekly practice over the summer and a weekly tumbling class. Day/time TBD.

Other expectations include:

- Each cheerleader will be on time, dressed in designated outfit with bow, poms, cheer shoes and ready to begin at the appointed hour.
- Cheerleaders will participate fully in all practice activities. Tumbling is a scheduled weekly team practice and unexcused absences and weekly early dismissals will not be tolerated. Multiple unexcused absences will result in dismissal from the squad.
- Cheerleaders must be in school by approx. 10:30 a.m. to participate in practices or games (varies by school).
- Absences for medical reasons, summer vacations, family weddings, or death in the family will be communicated to the coach by the cheerleader or her parents as soon as they are known.
- Cheerleaders are permitted only one excused absence from either a practice or a game per athletic season. This "emergency day" is designed only for college visits and or/ family business. These are not "personal" days that you may miss for any reason. Seniors wishing to view colleges in the fall must obtain permission from the Athletic Office. No "emergency day" will be recognized for competitions - cheerleaders are required to be present at all competitions or they may be removed from the team.
- The following reasons will be considered as an excusable absence: a death in the family, family wedding, school related event, illness, and college visitations.
- Unexcused absences from practice and or games will not be tolerated. All cheerleaders must be prompt to all practices and games. Unexcused absences may lead to suspension from squad and or immediate dismissal. The cheerleader's "emergency day", per athletic season, will not be counted as an unexcused absence.

***Mandatory practices start on August 16, 2021 and will run until school starts,  
Schedule TBD***

**UCA Home Camp for High School - 8/17 & 8/18 MS 8/19 & 8/20**

- Failure to attend the practice (unexcused absence) the week prior to a game/event will result in a one game suspension at which time you will attend but sit with the coaches. Repeated unexcused absences can result in dismissal from squad.
- 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.
- If a cheerleader is injured during the season, as long as medically able, they are expected to attend all scheduled practice, 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.
- When the cheerleader has recovered from the injury, the coaches must have a medical clearance note to return to active participation.
- Doctor, dentist and non-medical (hair, nail) appointments are not to be made during the cheerleading practices or games times and should they occur the above reasons will count as an unexcused absence. If they occur a note must be provided upon the day of return.
- If you are to miss practice or need to arrive late/leave early, for any reason other than an emergency, 24 hour notice must be given and it will be up to the discretion of the coach as to whether it is a valid absence.

- Cheerleaders will pay attention to and follow the directions of their coach/captains.
- Cheerleaders will work together as a team for the good of the squad.
- Every cheerleader represents North Allegheny and all communities that make up Tiger Country. Appearance and behavior should reflect positively on our school district when the cheerleader is in uniform. This pertains to the time that the cheerleader is their uniform.
- If the cheerleader receives an in school suspension they are permitted to practice but not participate in contests or in cheer competitions. If the cheerleader receives an out of school suspension then she 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.
- Use of alcohol, drugs, Juul and tobacco products are 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 policy will be strictly enforced.
- Must maintain a positive online presence that would not reflect poorly on the athlete, cheer program or North Allegheny School district. Social Media presence is closely monitored for all athletes and a negative presence can be cause for dismissal from the team.
- Harassment (physical, verbal, emotional, etc.) of another student or team member will not be tolerated.
- **COMPETITIVE TEAM MEMBERS 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.**
- Earning a position on the Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen & Middle School cheerleading squads is a **privilege**. Your position on these squads is dependent on attendance, consistent effort, hard work, and a positive attitude toward cheerleading.
- Varsity cheerleaders who fail to meet these criteria may be placed on the JV cheerleading squad or sit out of Varsity events until Varsity criteria have once again been met. Cheerleaders can move from one team to another based on ability or behavior at the coaches' discretion.
- If a cheerleader is removed from the team or voluntarily quits their team, they would not be eligible to tryout for the next year. *(For example, if a Freshmen cheerleader quits her team, she would not be eligible to tryout again until she is going into her Junior year.)*
- Varsity Cheerleaders are expected to learn game material (sidelines, dances) by **August 16, 2021** using the NA Cheer YouTube channel.
- Cheerleaders will wear proper attire to school on games days.
- Nails must be at an appropriate length and neutral in color. This will be monitored by coaches.
- Cheerleaders will be prohibited to wear jewelry of any kinds at practice or games.
- Cell phones are prohibited during practices & games & must ask coaches' permission to use.
- Cheerleaders are responsible for being on the field/court on time at the beginning of the game and at half-time intermission.
- Cheerleaders must demonstrate respectful attention during the National Anthem. They should be standing in a proper formation that the coach approves. No laughing or talking will be permitted during the National Anthem or school anthem.
- Chewing gum is prohibited at games and practices.
- Eating or drinking on the track during football or soccer games, or on the bench during basketball, is prohibited.
- Public display of affection while in uniform is strictly prohibited.
- Attendance and tardiness at games and at school will be monitored.

**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.**

### **Expectations of the Parents**

- Arrange to have your child to practice on time and picked up promptly at the end of practice.
- Arrange to have your child to games on time.
- All parents are strongly encouraged to be members of the Cheerleading Boosters organization, participate in fundraising activities, and pay all cheer expenses promptly.
- Safety of the girls is always our first consideration. Parents must understand that injuries are always a possibility in the sport or cheerleading.
- All parents are expected to follow the chain commands for complaints.
  1. Kaylee Kenz
  2. Dana Thomas
  3. The Athletic Office

### **Grievances**

- If you have a complaint about the squad, take it to the coach.
- If you have complaints with the Booster organization, take them to the Booster president.
- If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, you should contact the Head Coach, Cheerleading Coordinator, or the Athletic Office.
- Constructive criticism, expressed to the right people, makes the team better. Destructive criticism will not be tolerated.
- Please discuss problems or concerns with your coach before or after practice, not during practice sessions or a game.

### **Coach's Responsibilities**

- The squad expects that coaches will provide instruction and practice so that each girl can improve her cheerleading skills.
- The coaches will correct mistakes in a positive and productive manner.
- The coaches will monitor attendance and participation at practices and games.
- Coaches will be available to answer questions and discuss any concerns expressed by cheerleaders and/or parents at a scheduled time.

# North Allegheny Cheer Policy Agreement Form

By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the 2021 – 2022 North Allegheny Cheerleading booklet.

This signed paper must be turned in on the first day of tryouts. Athletes cannot tryout without a signed policy agreement form.

Athlete Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete Grade for the Upcoming Season: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Parent / Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Athlete: \_\_\_\_\_

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