

# Edmond Public Schools

## **CHEER/POM EXPECTATIONS**

### *(Rules and Regulations)*

*All candidates who are interested in trying out for a spirit squad need to understand that there are specific responsibilities and obligations they must assume in order to qualify for and remain part of the squad. These obligations remain in effect for the entire school year. Members of the cheer and pom squads are among the most influential and visible student leaders in the school. For this reason, coaches, teachers, and school administrators alike hold the schools' spirit squads to exceptionally high standards and expectations. For this reason, families are encouraged to read the following information carefully to determine if participation in cheer or pom is appropriate. The following rules and regulations govern the extracurricular activities of cheerleading and pom.*

#### **Squad Breakdown & Responsibilities**

##### **1. FRESHMAN CHEER & POM - UP TO 12 MEMBERS EACH**

- A. The freshman cheer & pom squads will consist of ninth graders only.
- B. Freshman squad members are required to cheer at home freshman football games, basketball games, and some wrestling events. The freshman cheer and pom squads will also cover some JV football and basketball games with a schedule that accommodates the needs of the teams as well as the academic responsibilities of the cheer and pom members. Tournaments are not included (unless specified by the coach). Squads can be split at the discretion of the coach, especially with regard to covering JV events.\*\*Any game/match in the Edmond School District is considered a "home event." The squad will attend any other events, community service and practices deemed necessary by the school and the coaches.

##### **2. VARSITY CHEER & POM - UP TO 24 MEMBERS EACH**

- A. The varsity cheer & pom squads will consist of sophomores, juniors, and seniors.
- B. Varsity squad members are required to attend all home and away football and basketball games/events, as well as all home wrestling events. The varsity cheer and pom squads will also cover the JV football and basketball games with a schedule that accommodates the needs of the teams as well as the academic responsibilities of the cheer and pom members. With the exception of playoffs, and home tournaments, attending away tournaments will be at the coaches' discretion (varsity squad members are required to attend all district, regional and state playoff tournaments). Squads can be split at the discretion of the coach, especially with regard to covering JV events.\*\* The squad will attend any other events, tournaments, community service, and practices deemed necessary by the school and the coaches.

##### **3. COMPETITIVE CHEER & POM - AT COACH'S DISCRETION**

- A. The number of participants on a competition squad will be set at the coach's sole discretion and that decision is final.
- B. The coach may select competition squad members from the existing varsity and freshman squads and his or her decision is final. In case of injuries or other unforeseen circumstances, additional members may be brought up to the competitive squads at the discretion of the coach.
- C. Cheer is an OSSAA sanctioned sport; therefore, all members trying out for a spirit squad will also be trying out for a position on the competitive cheer squad as well.

\*\*Games/Events may be split between pom, cheer, varsity and freshman squads at the coaches' discretion.

## Tryout Guidelines and Requirements

1. In order to try out for a position on any cheer/pom squad, each person wishing to try out must be academically eligible as that term is defined and used by the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (hereafter "OSSAA") as of date of the actual tryout. Whether a potential squad member is ineligible is determined exclusively on whether that student's name appears on the most recent ineligibility list officially prepared and maintained at each school site, available and in effect as of date of the actual tryout. A person, who is on "probation," as that term is defined and used by the OSSAA as of date of the actual tryout, may still try out for a squad. Whether a person is on probation is to be determined exclusively on a review of the most recent academic ineligible/probation report officially prepared and maintained at each school site that is available and in effect as date of the actual tryout.
2. Students who try out for cheer or pom must be currently registered at the school or feeder school they are trying out for, which implies that their residency has been verified and is within the school's boundaries. Any student new to a school, participating for the first time or entering the 9th grade, must complete an OSSAA Eligibility Record Form prior to being allowed to participate. School administrators may consult the district athletic director or OSSAA directly to inquire about eligibility requirements or rule interpretation upon completion of the New Student Form. Forms may be found and printed at <http://ossaa.com/Eligibility.aspx>. A breakdown is listed below for further clarification for all students new to the school.
  - A. New students from a K-8 school (St. Elizabeth's, St. Mary's, Oakdale, etc.) and 8th grade home-schoolers must prove residency and register prior to tryouts in order to tryout. They will be fully eligible because they are at K-8 schools or situations.
  - B. All current Edmond students grades 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> must prove residency and be registered for the school where they plan to tryout prior to the spring tryouts. Eighth grade Edmond students may tryout at the high school in their feeder vertical or a high school to which they have an approved enrollment exception for the following ninth grade year.\* Eighth grade students moving into Edmond from out-of-state or out-of district must prove residency and register for the following year prior to tryouts. (Students may be registered, but not enrolled in two schools simultaneously.)
  - C. All new students grades 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> moving into Edmond from out-of-state or out-of-district and homeschoolers seeking enrollment in grades 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> must prove residency and register for the school where they plan to tryout prior to spring tryouts.
  - D. New incoming 10th-12th grade students from a K-12 private school (OCS, OCA, Crossings etc.) must prove residency prior to tryouts in order to tryout, but they cannot be on a competitive OSSAA squad without a hardship waiver from OSSAA (cheer) or from the district athletics review board (pom). The exception to this situation is an 8<sup>th</sup> grader from private K-12 school. The eighth grader may register to attend an EPS high school for the following year prior to tryouts without loss of eligibility for a competitive squad in the freshman year.
  - E. In keeping with *Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children*, special tryout arrangements may be made for student(s) enrolling late in Edmond schools as a result of their parents' military orders.
3. No members will be allowed to tryout at a school if they quit the squad during the previous year.
4. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to tryout at more than one Edmond school in any school year.
5. Cheerleaders, as members of a sport sanctioned by OSSAA, will be required to sign a drug testing consent form and be subject to monthly random drug testing. (Refer to the EPS drug policy for detailed information.)
6. While pom is not sanctioned by OSSAA, we do maintain equally high standards and insist that our team members remain drug and alcohol-free.

7. Each squad member must have a complete physical **before** clinic begins. The high school medical release form must also be signed and turned in. New participants will need a physical for both the tryout clinic and another physical dated after May 1<sup>st</sup> to cover the next school year.
8. Each school will independently plan its tryouts. Tryout clinic, mock tryouts and tryouts will be held at each individual school. The tryout judges' panel will include outside judges and a team coach, with the scoring total derived from an average of the judging panel.
9. All candidates must attend every session of the clinic, mock tryouts, and tryouts. Those failing to attend all clinic days and mock tryouts may not be permitted to try out; however, if a participant has another school activity or emergency during clinic, a written excuse must be submitted and approved by the school coach. It is the student's responsibility to learn the material covered in clinic on their own time.
10. Clinic and tryouts are closed. Only coaches, judges, and administrators may attend. Current senior cheer & pom members will help run the clinic. Video cameras are not allowed.
11. If a current cheer/pom squad member resigns or moves from the district, the participant with the next highest tryout score may be placed on the squad solely at the discretion of the head coach of the squad in session. This is the only reason a squad member will be added to an existing squad with the exception of competition squads.

### Eligibility

1. Squad members are expected to stay eligible throughout the year and must comply with the most current rules on eligibility as published by the OSSAA except as otherwise modified by the school district. Becoming ineligible will result in that squad member being benched for all cheer/pom activities during the week of ineligibility. The week of ineligibility is that period of time defined by the OSSAA on ineligibility. A determination of who is ineligible is based exclusively on the most recent eligibility list maintained and prepared by each school site in accordance with the deadlines and time frames imposed by the OSSAA under its guidelines and rules to determine a player or participant eligibility. If a cheer/pom member is ineligible for 4 consecutive weeks, he/she will be dismissed from the squad.
2. Cheer & Pom is considered an elective class during the school day. Each squad member will receive an academic grade and an elective credit for completing a semester. Grades will be determined by participation in practices and games/events. The cheer/pom grade will be figured in with the student's overall GPA. Grading will be done by the coaches.

### **Attendance Policy**

1. Edmond Public Schools attendance policy will be followed.

### Camp

1. All members are expected to attend summer camp and clinics with their team. The purpose of the camps and clinics are to create unity and to learn material for the upcoming year.

### Practices

1. Practices are considered the "class" period the participant has cheer or pom and any additional practices the coach deems necessary outside of the school day throughout the year. The squad may have additional evening/weekend practices as necessary to prepare for camp, pep assemblies, performances, etc

### Competitions

1. If a squad qualifies to enter a competition at any level, the coach/sponsor, squad, and administrators are the **ONLY** people that will make the decision whether or not to participate. If the squad is approved to go, all designated squad members are required to compete.

## Conduct And Appearance

1. Acceptable school conduct as defined by the policies of the school district must be demonstrated at all school activities (including summer camp and away games). Just as with all other school sports, poor judgment that results in school disciplinary consequences may impact the level of participation of a cheer or pom member. Repeated squad violations and/or school violations of a serious nature will result in a period of extended benching from the squad as noted in the demerit system employed by each site. In some cases, suspension from the squad may be found to be appropriate.
2. Members must maintain good appearance at all times. The following are required of squad members:
  - A. **AT SCHOOL:** Members are to abide by school dress code. On uniform days only the coach specified uniform pieces are to be worn. NO EXCEPTIONS.
  - B. **AT GAMES:** Members wearing anything other than the required uniform will be subject to benching at the game or subsequent games as determined by the coach. Hair is to be secured back at all games and performances. Absolutely no jewelry is permitted.
3. Hazing will not be tolerated at any time, including summer camp. This will be handled according to school policy and the police will be called. In addition to or in lieu of any action taken by the police or the school district, appropriate disciplinary action as it relates to cheer/pom activities will also be taken by the coach.
4. We strive to maintain dignity and integrity in and out of practice. Social network such as Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram and Facebook are viewed by parents, young children, and often times other squad members and students from across the country. It is important that you represent yourself as a positive leader on such sites. The following should not be used or seen on social networking accounts (the list includes, but is not limited to):
  - A. Use of inappropriate content, profanity, alcohol, tobacco, public display of affection, inappropriate clothing or negative comments toward any Edmond Public School, any cheer or pom program (including your own), other teammates, coaches or administration. This includes reposting (retweeting etc) any inappropriate content (as listed above).

## Uniforms

1. School-issued uniforms are school property but will be the responsibility of the squad member to see they are properly cared for. Any damage to uniforms will result in the responsible member paying for a replacement. School issued uniforms include shell tops, warm-ups (if applicable) skirts for girls and comparable items for boys. Additional accessory items may be purchased and worn ONLY with the coaches' approval. Alterations to uniforms without coaches' permission are considered damage and will result in replacement at members' expense (no material is to be cut when doing alterations). Cost for alterations will be at the member's expense.
2. All uniforms must be returned at the end of the year undamaged or a hold will be placed on semester grades. Rules for student holds in the student handbook will apply. Damaged or lost items will be paid by the individual member.

## Funds

1. Only building administrators have the authority to approve purchase orders relating to the squad or use of funds from the squad account (with the exception of booster club fundraisers).
2. Fundraisers will benefit only those who participate. The degree in which one participates in a fundraiser will determine the percentage the participant earns from that fundraiser.
3. Only district-approved fundraisers will be permitted.
4. Fundraisers may be used to purchase favors for teams, senior gifts, choreography, commercial gym coaching, etc. at the coach's discretion.
5. Any parent or booster club account must be **sanctioned** through Edmond Public Schools each year.
6. Money raised from any fundraiser must be deposited into a sanctioned account (i.e. school activity account or parent sanctioned account)

# EDMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHEER/POM AGREEMENT

Remember, each squad member receives a grade and an elective credit for completing a semester. Being a member of a cheer or pom squad for the Edmond Public Schools is a major responsibility. This commitment is for the entire year and involves a number of events, games, competitions, and practices.

Please carefully consider the **time** you will be required to devote before signing this contract.

Please check one:

- I am currently enrolled and attending the school (or feeder school) I am trying out for.
- I will be a new student at Edmond Public Schools and have registered and proven residency.
- My family is moving within Edmond, and I will be attending a different EPS high school next year. I have provided documentation of the change in residency to the new school, registered there, and will be occupying the new residence not later than July 1. I understand that failure to comply with the July 1 date or any other element of this point will result in immediate removal from the squad.

I hereby authorize my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to try out for cheer or pom for Edmond Public Schools. I have read the information regarding the rules and time to be expended. I understand that each school will have additional membership guidelines that my child will have to uphold throughout the school year. I have discussed these with my child, and **we will abide by these regulations if chosen for a squad.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**\*\*This signature page is to be returned to the team coach. Please retain a copy of the contract for your records.**