

# Wetumpka Middle School Cheerleader Manual 2020-2021



Wetumpka Middle School  
Cheer Manual  
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“It doesn’t matter what people think about cheerleading. If it’s something that you love to do that’s all that counts.”

#### Cheerleader Program Contract

The following guidelines outlined in this manual must be adhered to by all Wetumpka Middle School Cheerleaders. It must be understood that as a member of this organization, the student becomes a representative of Wetumpka Middle School and each member must maintain high moral and ethical standards. **Membership is from cheer tryout date of this year to the last day of tryouts the following school year.** Violations of these regulations will result in disciplinary action which may include suspension or termination from the squad.

The Cheerleader and Mascot Handbook guidelines have been developed to outline the standard expectations and accompanying procedures for the WMS cheerleading program. This handbook was designed and prepared as a basic operating instrument to define the program. The cheer coach is granted the authority to make daily decisions which are in the best interest of the cheer program. The handbook guidelines and procedures are reviewed annually and revised when warranted by the cheer coach, principal, or athletic director. This handbook is subject to change at any time due to ECPS or WMS rule changes.

#### Purpose:

- to promote and uphold school spirit
- to be a good example for others
- to develop and promote a sense of good sportsmanship among students, spectators, and the general public
- to strive to build better relationships between schools

# WELCOME TO WETUMPKA MIDDLE SCHOOL CHEER!!!!

Dear Cheerleader and Parents,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Wetumpka Middle School Cheerleading Program. We are all looking forward to a wonderful and exciting year for everyone involved. This handbook is designed to help you understand that cheerleading is more than just yelling out cheers and showing up for a game. It is an attitude. It is spirit, pride, hard work, dedication, a sense of who you are, and the beliefs of the school you represent. We hope this handbook will help you see clearly through all the "show" of cheerleading and focus on what really counts: pride in yourself, your classmates, and WMS. You will be expected to maintain an acceptable academic level in school and behave in a manner, which is considered respectful and mature. You will be an ambassador of Wetumpka Middle School and must always represent it honorably. You are not a football or basketball cheerleader. **YOU ARE A WETUMPKA MIDDLE SCHOOL CHEERLEADER** and will cheer and lead in that way. A good cheerleader maintains a healthy balance in life, combining schoolwork, activities, and a competitive spirit. We are here to help you find that balance and have fun doing it. Make no mistake, it is hard work and a big commitment. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it for your reference. Be prepared to bring it with you to practice if you are asked to do so. It is also important that your parents review this handbook and understand the guidelines for being a Wetumpka Middle Cheerleader. Both the cheerleader and a parent must sign the agreement before the candidate will be allowed to attend practice.

Have a great season!

-Coach L. M. Davis

## ABSENCES

**Illness or other extreme emergencies are the only valid reason for missing practices and games.** Vacations are not excused reasons for missing practices or games.

- Absences will be excused in the event of a personal illness with Dr. excuse, a school function planned ahead, family emergency, or death of a family member. **Family vacation will only be excused if planned and scheduled ahead with coaches prior to the start of the season.**
- Attendance at a game or practice without proper shoes, clothes or uniform will be considered an absence. Cheerleaders not in complete uniform will not practice/cheer.
- Cheerleaders need to schedule appointments around the cheer schedule.
- If you are going to be late or miss a practice/game you need to give notice two weeks in advance.
- Absences will be reviewed on an individual basis.
  - Football Practice Absences: failure to provide notice two weeks in advance will result in the cheerleader being benched one of the two following games.
  - Basketball Practice Absences: failure to provide notice two weeks in advance will result in the cheerleader being benched line up, school song, and first of the following games.
  - Excessive absences could lead to dismissal from the squad.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Cheerleaders will earn the right to cheer through excellence in academics and school conduct, hard work, attendance at practices and events, great attitudes, teamwork, moral conduct, knowledge of material, and the display of a sincere attitude to cheer and promote spirit. The coaches will decide if each cheerleader has earned that right on a continual basis throughout the year.

- Horseplay & excessive laughing/talking will not be tolerated while practicing or at an event. This is grounds for removal from the specific practice/event and should it continue, removal from the team.
- Each cheerleader will be required to learn all material used at WMS. All material needs to be performance-ready well in advance of its first performance. Failure to do so can result in the cheerleader being benched until they are performance-ready.
- Cheerleaders are not permitted to allow a non-cheerleader to wear their uniform, at any time, for any reason. Cheerleaders should not use cheer uniforms/camp wear as lounge wear.
- Cheerleaders are role models for students at WMS and are held to a higher standard. Cheerleaders are expected to be in full compliance with the ECBOE dress code at all times, on a daily basis and be leaders on campus.

## APPEARANCE

Appropriate clothing must be worn and information will be given as to what outfits (often including bow, socks, undergarments, etc.) will be worn for all events.

- Whenever dressed in "required attire," you are to remain that way until you are home & fully changed.
- Hair must be worn in a secure ponytail for all practices and performances.
- Please arrive to practice/games/events ready & plan for your hair to last throughout the entire event.
- Wearing jewelry is prohibited with the exception of religious or medical medals that are taped to the body under the uniform without a chain. Prohibited jewelry includes fishing line through any piercing to keep the hole from closing and woven friendship bracelets/anklets. This includes new piercings.
- SMALL CLEAR OR PEARL STUD EARRINGS are the only jewelry allowed for community events. (Only if purchased as a team)
- Cheerleaders' fingernails must be kept short. Only clear nail polish or traditional/plain French manicure is acceptable.
- No gum is allowed at events.
- Light neutral makeup & lipstick may be worn for events.

## ATTENDANCE

Excellent school attendance should be maintained throughout the school year. Absences, tardies, check-ins, and check-outs will be carefully monitored and must be restricted to reasons under school regulations.

- Tardiness to practice, games, meetings or events is unacceptable
  - Being prompt (5-15 minutes early) is expected at all cheerleading events.
  - All practices will have a sign-in sheet. If you arrive late to a sideline practice, you will be benched one quarter for every (up to) 15 minutes you are late.
  - Be aware that traffic may be a concern and is not a valid excuse for tardiness.
  - Coming back late from halftime break (2 minutes prior to halftime ending) will result in the entire team not receiving the halftime break at the next game.
  - Please notify a coach (not a fellow teammate) immediately if you even think you may be late. **Just because you "told the coach" does not mean the absence is excused.**
- A cheerleader who is absent from school or who checks in/out, must contact the cheer coach also. If this occurs on a game day, the cheerleader will not be allowed to cheer. The cheerleader may notify the cheer coach via, phone, text, note, email, etc.
- If you miss school, cheer practice, or cannot participate because of a doctor's orders or sickness during the week, weekend rest is a must. If you cannot come to school or to a cheerleading event, you should not be able to attend the movies, spend the night off, etc. either. A cheerleader missing an event because of an injury will be required to attend all practices/games, etc. in uniform. The cheerleader will be given duties he/she can perform.
- All doctor's appointments, family visits, etc., should be scheduled so that they do not interfere with team events.

- During football season and competition, attendance at all practices and events is essential. Work, hair appointments, doctor check-ups, dentist & orthodontist appointments are not excused.
- Missing practices WILL result in the cheerleader not participating in that week's events.
- Any cheerleader who leaves an event, function, or practice without notifying the cheer coach will forfeit their position.

#### **COMPETITION**

- The WMS Cheerleading squad may compete at local, regional, state, and national levels.
- Squad members will be required to pay a competition fee should we reach a competitive level.
- All cheerleaders will be required to attend.

#### **CONDITIONING-SUMMER**

Cheerleading is a SPORT. Not because of any physical definition – as you can see cheerleading meets ALL of the athletic specifications. But, because cheerleading's primary purpose is to support the school's athletic teams, competition comes second! In other words, cheerleading is more than a sport. Therefore, we will maintain a physical conditioning plan.

- This plan is a sport specific conditioning plan designed for the female competitive cheerleader. The purpose is to allow for proper training and fitness levels necessary to perform competitive cheerleading routines while aiding in the prevention of common injuries associated with cheerleading.
- The schedule will be Tuesdays thru Thursdays 9:00-10:30 AM and will include strength and cardio fitness. The goal is to get a minimum of two hours of cardio a day.

#### **CONDUCT**

- By being a part of the cheerleading squad, you are accepting the fact that your actions are more prominent than those not associated with such an activity. Exemplary behavior is mandatory at all times, anywhere in the community and at all school functions where you are recognized as a representative of WMS.
- Promoting good sportsmanship by way of example is required at all times. Members must not use foul language at activities, in school, at games, or camps, etc.
- Excessive public displays of affection are never considered appropriate but especially in uniform, at games, in school, around the community and on social media.
  - Due to social media your presence can be seen everywhere. If I do not have all social media handles, please submit them asap.
- Proper appearance is required at all times.
- Members must cooperate with all faculty members, squad members, game officials, and coaches.
- Cheerleaders must display proper behavior in class. This includes; being on time, not skipping and not cheating.
- NO DRAMA ZONE-PERIOD!!!!

#### **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline can be given by any WMS cheerleading coach or school administrator.

- School-based discipline can, and often does, result in cheerleading discipline.
- All issues will be dealt with on an individual basis as they may arise.
  - Benched means the cheerleader will sit out for a portion of the game.
  - Suspended means the cheerleader is not allowed to dress in uniform or participate in the event(s).
- Excessive, repetitive, and/or cumulative discipline can result in the cheerleader being ultimately dismissed from the team.
- All concerns should always be addressed with the coach first.

#### **DISMISSAL**

**If cheer team member quits or is dismissed from the team, you will not be allowed to try-out the following year. No exceptions!!!**

#### **EXPECTED EXPENSES**

The **estimated cost** for a middle school cheerleader is \$1,570. This amount does not include some clothes, camp food, tumbling, clinics, or competition costs. Estimated payment plan with school:

- March 31-\$500
- April 30-\$500
- May 30-\$570

#### **Financial Obligations and Payments**

- Payments will ONLY be taken by check or money order if the cheerleader's name is written on the front of the check.
- Payments will ONLY be taken by cash if it is placed in a sealed envelope with the cheerleader's name on the front of the envelope.
- In effort to support parents with the expenses of cheerleading, parents may make monthly payments as outlined by the cheer coach. All accounts must be paid in full before June 3, 2019. Any cheerleader who has not met this obligation will not be allowed to go to UCA Cheer CAMP.
- Itemized invoices will be sent home. Due dates are subject to change to accommodate fundraising efforts to defer parent costs.

# Estimated New Cheerleader Cost

<u>LINE ITEMS</u>	<u>PRICE</u>
<b>UNIFORM</b>	<b>\$331.69</b>
Shell Top/Skirt	
Lettering (Custom )	
Accessory Package-8 piece	
Bow (Black)	
Brief (Black)	
Sports Bra (Black)	
Poms (Black)	
Backpack w/Lettering	
VB20 Beat Cheer Shoe	
Midriff	
Socks	
 <b>GAMEDAY &amp; OUTERWEAR</b>	 <b>327.85</b>
Custom Jersey w/name	
Game Day Meals and Snacks	
Jacket	
Leggings	
<b>CAMPWEAR</b>	<b>\$239.95</b>
Camp T-Shirts/Tops (5 pack)	
Spirit Shorts (5 pack)	
<b>UCA SUMMER CAMP FEES</b>	<b>\$558</b>
Camp	
Transportation	
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	<b>\$100</b>
Tryout Judges	
Homecoming	
Transportation	
Christmas Uniform/Attire	
Shipping	
<b>MAX</b>	<b>\$1,557.49</b>

**Not Included**

- Clothes:        Raincoat, Special Event Uniforms
- Food:            Camps and Clinics
- Tumbling Classes
- Competition/Clinic Fees

**Merchandise must be paid for  
prior to receiving items.**

## GENERAL

- All safety rules of the AHSAA are enforced and followed at our practices and games.
- Cheerleaders are responsible for a certain amount of their own safety and protection during practices and games. Wraps, braces, or tapes are to be worn when needed.
- Season Awards – four to six awards are presented by the coach to each squad for each season. These generally vary each season.
- Football Banquet-Each Cheerleader is expected to attend this event-it is not optional. It is for the football players, but cheer is always invited and will be recognized.
- Cheer Banquet-Cheer will have a separate banquet in the Spring.
- Christmas Parade-We will participate in this parade along with the WMS Dance team.
- Spirit Days/Competitions-We will participate in these events-all cheerleaders will be expected to attend.

## GRADES

All squad members must maintain a cumulative 2.0 unweighted GPA to cheer.

- Weekly eligibilities will be checked by Guidance the day of the last practice prior to each sideline game.
  - An **F** grade is unacceptable and will result in the cheerleader being immediately suspended from cheering on the sideline until the grade comes up.
  - A **D** grade will be given a warning, and if it is still a D the following week, the cheerleader will be suspended until the grade comes up.
  - Cheerleaders have until the end of the school day on game day to bring a printout to the coach should the grade change on game day

## PRACTICES AND EVENTS

Team Practices are scheduled twice a week.

- We will practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays (3:00-5:30)
- Mondays at Bama Blaze (6:00-7:30)
  - The practices will concentrate on conditioning, tumbling, and stunting.
  - The cost is \$40 a month with a \$35 yearly registration fee
  - Make up classes are not permitted if absent–this includes being injured or sick.
  - The cost is \$65 for the months of June and July.
  - Cheerleaders are given 2 “vacation days” during the summer. However, these days can only be used at non-mandatory practices or events.
  - A calendar will be provided to help with planning vacations, church activities, etc.
- Mandatory SUMMER practices will be scheduled to prepare for the fall.
- During Basketball Season we will practice before the games.
- Practices will not be organized around meeting times and dates of other clubs and organizations.
- Cheerleaders are responsible for bringing their WMS cheer bag with raincoat and poms to ALL events.
- Cheerleaders who are improperly dressed or prepared will be benched during the event. (Cheerleaders will not be permitted to call home to have parents bring required items.)
- Cheerleaders are to promote good sportsmanship at all events. Showing respect for other cheerleaders, organizations, players, the student body, coaches, officials, and spectators is a must.
- At all events, the coach makes all decisions regarding whether a cheerleader participates as well as to the extent of their participation. If parents have concerns about any decisions the coach makes, please contact the coach the next school day following the event (e-mail is preferred method of communication unless there is a dire emergency).
- Cheerleaders are asked to watch & support the band or dance team’s halftime performance.
- Cheerleaders will sign up for a week to make/bring treats for the football & basketball teams while they are in season.

## SAFETY

Due to the increased athleticism of today’s cheerleaders and the complexity of some stunts performed, this is a risk, as in any athletic endeavor, of injury. Safety is our first priority.

- Tumbling and stunting MAY NOT be permitted unless the cheer coach or gym coach is present.
- ABSOLUTELY NO horseplay, laughing, or general socializing will be tolerated during stunting practice sessions.
- Stretching is required before any and all practices and performances.
- Absolutely no jewelry may be worn during practices or performances.
- Nails MAY NOT be longer than the tip of your finger. CLEAR POLISH ONLY.

## TUMBLING

- Participation of the squad at Bama Blaze Elite Cheer is required.
- This is a year-long commitment and depending on tryout dates from year to year can be altered.
- The WMS Cheerleading squad may also participate in stunt clinics. Squad members will be required to pay a fee should we participate, not to exceed \$50.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

After sporting events, cheerleaders may ride home **ONLY WITH A PARENT**. The parent must sign-out their child with the coach. Notes will not be excepted giving permission for your child to ride home with another parent (Elmore Co. Policy).

- Transportation to out-of-county away games and competitions will be arranged through the school (rental vans or busses). The coach will designate a place and time to meet.
- If you are late to that designated place, you may be left behind, resulting in an unexcused absence.
- If you choose not to ride home with the team, **YOUR PARENT** must sign you out with a coach before the end of the event.

## **UNIFORMS**

Uniforms must be cared for properly. **DO NOT DRY CLEAN. See all care instructions and follow those directives.**

Additional Information:

### **Contacting the Coach**

Please take into consideration that your coach(es) have families and their own lives too!

- When contacting a coach "after hours," please consider first if the issue is a dire emergency. If it is something that can wait - please wait!! Please e-mail for all non-emergency issues.
  - "After hours" refers to after practices/events and weekends that are not a competition weekend.
  - Needing a decision, uniform information, etc. is not a dire emergency.
  - Please always remember that a lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on ours.
- E-mail address:
  - Coach Davis: [latoya.davis@elmoreco.com](mailto:latoya.davis@elmoreco.com)
- I have also set up a Facebook page (WMS Cheerleaders 2020). It has proven to be a **WONDERFUL SOURCE** of communication! This is a **PRIVATE** page and I will **ONLY** approve this year's cheerleaders and parents. If they are not on the girl's application, they will be removed unless I have a reason not to.
- Remind: Please text @cheerWMS20 to 81010 and follow the instructions.

WMS Cheerleading Contract Agreement Form

Student Agreement

I have read the WMS Cheerleading Program Contract/Manual. My signature below verifies that I understand and agree to adhere to all of the rules, policies, and procedures outlined in it. I also understand that failure to adhere to these policies could result in my dismissal from the WMS Cheer squad.

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Parental Agreement

I have read the WMS Cheerleading Program Contract/Manual. My signature below verifies that I understand and agree to the Contract.

I also understand the financial obligations and agree to make the payments outlined on time and pay in full by May 30, 2020.

I understand if the financial obligations are not met, my child will forfeit her spot on the WMS Cheer Squad and she/he will not attend cheer camp.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date