

**Section:** J Students

**Policy Code:** JHFAA Cheerleading

**Policy:**

#### PHILOSOPHY

Cheerleaders play a vital role in developing and maintaining school spirit and support for the athletic teams in the school district. In addition, cheerleaders help develop a sense of good sportsmanship among students, encourage proper relationships between competing schools during athletic events, and strive for excellence at cheerleader camps, clinics, and competitions. Consistent with the above-stated philosophy, cheerleader squads should represent the best talent available at the time of selection.

#### SQUAD COMPOSITION

The Starkville High School varsity squad will have a minimum of (16) regular members.

The Starkville Jr High squad will have a total of 24 members and no alternates but no less than 18 members. The Partnership school will have a total of 10 cheerleaders for seventh grade. Seventh grade will cheer for seventh grade games only. Armstrong Junior High School squad will have a combination of 14 eighth and ninth grade members. The competition team will be a combination of seventh, eighth, and ninth grades totaling 24 members.

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATES

1. The candidate must be an enrolled student in the Starkville Oktibbeha Consolidated School District at the time tryouts are held.
2. The candidate must meet grade requirements of the no pass/no play provisions of the Mississippi High School Activities Association.
3. At least two weeks prior to preparation for tryouts, a meeting of parents of candidates will be held. At least one parent or guardian of each candidate must attend. In the event of a conflict, the coach may arrange for an alternate time to meet the parent(s).
4. All parental forms and registration forms must be properly completed.
5. Each candidate must present a physician's statement indicating he/she is physically able to participate. If a candidate has an injury that requires an orthopedic release statement, he/she must also provide the physician's statement in order to participate.

#### SELECTION PROCEDURES

Preparation for Starkville High varsity tryouts will be according to the following schedule. The same procedure should be followed in selecting the junior high school squad with the administration empowered to make reasonable exceptions as different grade level circumstances might dictate.

- a. At least two weeks prior to the parents' meeting, the sponsor/coach will have activities conducted designed to encourage students to try out.
- b. During the week prior to the tryouts, sessions will be conducted by the cheerleader coach and qualified instructors to provide more in-depth instruction on cheers to be used for tryouts. Tumbling will be introduced during these sessions. Tumbling is a part of the scoring sheet.
- c. Attendance at the cheerleader tryout clinic is required.

## Tryout Procedures

- a. A list of potential judges will be compiled by the cheerleader coach and submitted to the principal for approval. Judges must be a member of a national cheerleader organization, a cheerleader coach from another school district, or collegiate level active cheerleader.
- b. On the day of tryouts, cheerleaders will be judged by the approved panel of judges.
- c. The principal and cheerleader coach shall brief judges as a group in the presence of the contestants prior to the judging process.
- d. Communication among judges during the judging process is discouraged. Any communication necessary shall be aloud.
- e. Judges shall use score sheets provided by the school district and shall mark and sign the score sheets with a pen.
- f. Contestant tryout numbers shall be drawn by contestants on the first day of tryout clinic. The contestant shall affix his/her number on the front left leg of his/her clothing during tryouts. Contestants will perform the material that was taught during tryout clinic and compete on an individual basis. The tryout material must contain each of the components listed on the judges' score sheet. These components are:
  - i. Technical skills
  - ii. Jumps
  - iii. Crowd involvement
  - iv. Tumbling
  - v. Motion techniques
  - vi. Dance technique
  - vii. Teacher and/or clinic evaluation
- g. Judges shall draw numbers for the order of judge appearance and their score sheets shall identify the contestant by number only.
- h. Immediately after each contestant's tryout, judges will give the score sheets to the talliers.
- i. Score sheets shall be tallied in the selection area by a committee of school faculty. Talliers shall calculate each contestants score and sign score sheets with pen to verify the tabulation.
- j. No score sheet shall be returned to judges after being submitted to the committee for tabulation. All score sheets shall be retained in the athletic director's office.
- k. After judging is completed and tabulations made, the contestant numbers of the winning contestants will be posted at areas previously identified by the principal and coach. Contestants may return at their convenience to read the results as posted at the identified locations.
- l. After announcement of winners, contestants and his/her parents shall be allowed to examine his/her own score sheets and tally sheets by requesting an appointment with the Athletic Director.
- m. Tryouts shall be closed to all except authorized school personnel and judges. Contestants will be admitted only during his/her individual tryout.
- n. The decision of the judges is final.

- o. Score sheets and tally sheets shall be kept by the athletic department for a period of five years.

#### PERFORMANCE AT COMPETITIONS, CAMPS, ATHLETIC EVENTS, ETC.

All Starkville High varsity cheerleaders in good standing will perform at athletic events, pep rallies, parades and all other events which are non-competitive in nature. Any time the squad is to be judged such as at camp competitions and state or national competitions, the cheerleader coach shall designate the competition team. The coach shall select from the total squad the team which in the coach's judgment has the highest probability of winning the competition. The coach has the discretion of assigning some squad members to be spotters, assistants, alternates, or to fulfill other duties. It is the intent of this section to authorize the coach to assign squad members to positions on the competition squad in such a manner as to assemble the strongest competitive squad possible.

#### FUNDING

Cheerleading squads will be funded at a level comparable to other sports. There will be an assistant coach.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

Appropriate administrative rules and procedures for implementing this policy and for conducting the day-to-day operations of the cheerleading program shall be developed by the principals, athletic director and cheerleader coaches. Such rules shall be published and distributed to all candidates prior to tryouts.