

Round Rock Independent School District

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHEER PROGRAM HANDBOOK

for the

2026-2027

Season

March 2026 - May 2027



Round Rock ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disabilities in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title XI of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and Title II of the American with Disabilities Act. For information on compliance with these, contact Round Rock ISD Athletic Department, Round Rock Independent School District Administration, (512) 464-5480. Each parent and cheer/mascot candidate will be provided a current copy of the Round Rock ISD Cheer/Mascot Handbook. An electronic copy of the current handbook will be accessible on the Round Rock ISD Athletic Department web page under Cheer.

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PREAMBLE

The Cheerleader and Mascot Handbook guidelines have been developed to outline the expectations and accompanying procedures for each Round Rock ISD middle school cheerleading program. This handbook was designed and prepared as a basic operating instrument to define and explain the qualifications and responsibilities of the cheerleading programs.

All extracurricular activity participants will be subject to the provisions of the Round Rock ISD Student Code of Conduct, Round Rock ISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct, University Interscholastic League (UIL) regulations, and the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Side by Side guidelines for cheerleading. The TEA and UIL does permit a school to impose stricter standards than those in the TEA or UIL requirements, but the district shall not impose more lenient standards. Additional cheer program expectations may be established by each campus. Therefore, in case of a conflict between this handbook and a campus handbook, this handbook will prevail.

The Round Rock ISD Athletic Department will review and evaluate campus decisions for district-wide consistency and continuity in following the intent and spirit of this handbook. The handbook guidelines and procedures are reviewed annually and revised when warranted by the Athletic Department. The contents of this handbook are not contractual, and do not give rise to a claim of breach of contract against Round Rock Independent School District. Furthermore, the contents of this handbook apply to all students of the district as the contents now appear in the handbook or as they are amended in the future.

Disclaimer: Unfortunately, not all situations that arise can be anticipated or accounted for in the manual. Should events occur that are not covered in the Round Rock Independent School District Cheer Program Handbook, they will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Assistant Athletic Director, Campus Administration, and cheer coaches and will be dealt with according to what is fair and just. Furthermore, Round Rock ISD reserves the right to alter the rules according to the situation at any time.

PURPOSE

The purpose of cheerleading is to create, promote, and uphold school spirit and a positive school environment by participating at athletic events and extracurricular activities as deemed appropriate by the campus administration and coach. Participation in the regular curriculum is a right afforded to each student, while participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege that carries additional expectations for acceptable conduct.

MEMBERSHIP

- I. Squads
 - A. The cheer coach and campus administration will determine the number of squads appropriate for each campus.
 - B. Application process is required for squad selections. However, tryouts are prohibited.
- II. Organization
 - A. The cheerleading participants will be placed on a squad by the coach.
 - B. Squad membership will exist from the day the approved candidates are announced until the last of the subsequent school year.
 - C. Membership of a cheerleading program will be determined by academic record, behavior requirements, attendance at a mandatory parent meeting, current physical, required athletic participation forms, and a completed candidate application by the due date. (See *QUALIFICATIONS*)
 - D. Squads may or may not include the selection of a captain.
 - E. Squads may or may not include a school mascot(s).

REQUIREMENTS

- I. Participation
 - A. All program members must attend Summer Camp, practices and performances. Cheerleaders/Mascots absent from a practice for performance will be subject to discipline.
 - B. Summer Camp will be held July 14-16, 2026 from 9am-4pm at McNeil High School.
 - C. Cheer programs may be allowed to participate, as a representative of the school, in cheer competitions with campus administration approval.
- II. Academic
 - A. Cheerleaders/Mascots who receive a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period or who fail to meet the standards in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not participate in extracurricular activities for the allotted time set by the Round Rock ISD UIL Athletic Eligibility Schedule.

- B. Cheerleaders/Mascots who become ineligible will not be allowed to perform, travel with the squad, or wear his/her uniform.
- C. Cheerleaders/Mascots who have been ineligible for two or more grading periods during the current school year will be dismissed from the squad.

QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates are required to reside in the attendance area of the school or be entitled to an in-district transfer pursuant to Round Rock ISD policies and follow all procedures to be eligible.

- I. Mandatory Parent & Candidate Meeting
 - A. All candidates and their parent/guardian(s) must attend a cheer orientation meeting.
 - B. A sign-in sheet will be used for verification of attendance to this meeting.
 - C. If a parent/guardian is unable to attend the information meeting due to extenuating circumstances, they must name a proxy, in writing to the Head Cheer Coach. The parent/guardian must make arrangements to obtain all information from the meeting.
 - D. Failure to attend will result in ineligibility for squad selection.
- II. Administrative Approval - Cheerleader/Mascot candidates will be limited to those approved by the designated campus principal, using the following criteria:
 - A. Candidates may not be academically ineligible for two grading periods during the current school year.
 - B. Candidates must have exhibited appropriate conduct in the classroom and other school and community settings in accordance with the Round Rock ISD Student Code of Conduct and the Round Rock ISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct.
 - C. Citizenship and discipline records for each candidate will be considered for a measure of the conduct standards.
 - 1. Students who have received two or more referrals in the current school year will be ineligible to participate in the application process, per Campus Principal discretion.
 - 2. Students who have received a RROC placement in the current school year will be ineligible to participate in the application process.
 - D. Each candidate's attendance will be reviewed. Students with 8 or more unexcused days will be ineligible to participate in the application process. Every 3 tardies constitutes 1 unexcused absence.
 - E. Seventh grade cheerleaders/mascots who have resigned or have been removed must have the approval of the designated campus principal to be considered for their eighth grade year.
 - F. Eighth grade cheerleaders/mascots who have resigned from the program will be ineligible to tryout for their freshman year.

- III. Round Rock ISD High School Cheer Tryout Clinic
 - A. Occurs the week of tryouts
 - B. Athletic attire is required
 - C. Closed to the public
 - D. Candidates must have a current RRISD physical on file with the Head High School Cheer Coach in order to participate.
 - E. Day 1 and Day 2 (see below) are mandatory days
- IV. Tryout Schedule for the 2026-2027 Season
 - A. Tuesday, March 24, 2026
 - 1. Clinic Day 1 - Mandatory (Westwood HS)
 - 2. 5:00-8:00 PM
 - B. Wednesday, March 25, 2026
 - 1. Clinic Day 2 - Mandatory (Home Campus)
 - 2. 4:45-6:15 PM
 - C. Thursday, March 26, 2026
 - 1. Clinic Day 3 - Optional (Home Campus)
 - 2. 4:45-6:15 PM
 - D. Saturday, March 28, 2026 - **TRYOUT DAY** (Westwood HS)
- V. Tryout Schedule for the 2027-2028 Season
 - A. Tuesday, March 30, 2027
 - 1. Clinic Day 1 - Mandatory (McNeil HS)
 - 2. 5:00-8:00 PM
 - B. Wednesday, March 31, 2027
 - 1. Clinic Day 2 - Mandatory (Home Campus)
 - 2. 4:45-6:15 PM
 - C. Thursday, April 1, 2027
 - 1. Clinic Day 3 - Optional (Home Campus)
 - 2. 4:45-6:15 PM
 - D. Saturday, April 3, 2027 - **TRYOUT DAY** (McNeil HS)
- VI. Tryout Attire
 - A. Must provide a solid white shirt and solid black shorts
 - B. Must wear white cheer or athletic shoes
 - C. Hair must be worn in a ponytail away from the face
 - D. Natural makeup and nails
 - E. No jewelry, bows, or ribbons are permitted.
- VII. Required Forms
 - A. All required district athletic paperwork must be submitted in Rank One on-line system (<https://roundrockisd.rankonesport.com/>)
 - B. Current physicals must be submitted to the Head Coach.
 - C. Candidate Application

1. All applications for a cheerleading squad and mascot will be reviewed and approved for placement by the coach and the designated campus principal. The Cheerleader/Mascot Candidate Application Form will be available on each middle school campus and the district website listed under the Athletic Department.
 2. A candidate application must be completed and submitted to the coach in order to be eligible for consideration.
 3. Each campus will designate and announce a deadline for applications to be submitted. Late paperwork will not be accepted - **no exceptions**.
 4. Any student that has transferred into the district after the application deadline has passed may or may not be considered for placement on a squad by campus administration.
- D. Teacher Recommendations

EXPECTATIONS

Cheerleaders and mascots must promote and maintain relationships with faculty, administration, student body, and work cooperatively with all school organizations and communities.

- I. School Leadership
 - A. Cheerleaders and mascots are required to abide by rules and follow directions given by school authorities.
 - B. Cheerleaders and mascots will demonstrate determination, hard work, strength, dedication, and self-discipline.
 - C. Cheerleaders and mascots will strive to cooperate and be a part of a cohesive unit.
 - D. Cheerleaders and mascots will strive to improve themselves and others through positive interaction and accountability.
 - E. Cheerleaders and mascots will exhibit loyalty to the squad and demonstrate leadership, honor, and integrity.
 - F. Cheerleaders and mascots will demonstrate good sportsmanship and promote school spirit which will be defined by generosity and genuine concern for others.
- II. Physical functions include, but are not limited to:
 - A. Athletic conditioning
 - B. Jumps
 - C. Stunts
 - D. Tumbling
- III. High School Expectations
 - A. Cheerleaders and mascots that are currently in the eighth grade and have made the high school team for the following year must also meet all expectations set by the High School Cheerleader/Mascot Handbook.
 - B. Please refer to the High School Handbook for further details.

PROCEDURES

- I. Campus
 - A. Cheer Coaches will manage daily decisions of the cheer program.
 - 1. They may develop and enforce standards in addition to or higher than the Round Rock ISD expectations.
 - 2. Round Rock ISD Expectations are defined as:
 - a) Student Code of Conduct
 - b) Extracurricular Code of Conduct
 - c) Campus Handbook
 - B. Cheerleader/Mascot issues and decisions will be determined by a final resolution made by the Campus Principal or his/her designee and the coach.
 - C. Any conflict between two or more school activities or events will be resolved between the campus program directors and a final resolution will be determined by the appropriate campus administrator.
- II. Medical
 - A. Round Rock ISD Concussion Protocol - Due to state law, any student athlete diagnosed with a concussion must obtain physician clearance before beginning Round Rock ISD Return-to-Play protocol.
 - B. Coaches must be apprised of any medical conditions, whether temporary, permanent, or recurring.
 - C. Withholding pertinent medical information could result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- III. Misconduct
 - A. Violations of all Round Rock ISD Code of Conduct will be addressed in accordance with UIL Rank One paperwork, district and campus handbooks, and administration.
 - B. RROC placement results in an automatic dismissal from the program.
 - C. Cheerleaders/Mascots are not permitted to use hazing with initiation activities related to any cheerleader organization (Round Rock ISD Policy FNCC).
 - D. Cheerleading squad membership may be terminated for unacceptable standards of conduct by the Head Coach and the Campus Principal or his/her designee.
 - E. Suspension or probation will eliminate the cheerleader/mascot from participation in performances and special events for a determined length of time.
 - F. Any member dismissed, removed, or resigned of his/her position in the cheer program must complete all financial obligations for non-returnable/non-refundable merchandise, and turn in all school-owned uniforms.
 - G. Cheerleaders/Mascots must display appropriate behavior both in and out of school. The following is a list of behaviors, although not limited to, that could lead to suspension and/or dismissal, whether the behavior occurs on or off campus:
 - 1. Involved in the possession or use of tobacco/vaping/e-cigarettes/JUUL

2. Involved in the use or possession of, or under the influence of, a controlled or illegal substance
3. Involved in the possession or use of alcohol
4. Public nudity
5. Stealing/Shoplifting
6. Chronic misconduct
7. Chronic absences
8. Truancy
9. Bullying/Cyberbullying
10. Harassment/Slander
11. Forgery
12. Assignment o JJAEP (Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program)
13. In-School Detention
14. Disciplinary action involving any law enforcement agency and/or security guards, on or off campus
15. Any offense deemed severe by the coaches and/or administration

IV. Responsibilities

- A. Being a member of the Round Rock ISD cheer program is an honor, a responsibility and a privilege. Due to the level of visibility of campus cheerleaders and mascots, it is imperative that squad members set a good example for peers.
- B. Student Safety
 1. Cheerleader/Mascot performances shall be in accordance with the National Federation Spirit Handbook.
 2. Cheerleaders/Mascots will remain under the supervision and follow the direction of the coach during all activities.

FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Parents must purchase the necessary uniform and provide money for other clothing and equipment costs of being a squad member. Cheerleaders/Mascots may be asked to participate in fundraising activities to compensate for the costs.

I. Uniform, Equipment, and Camp

- A. A maximum out-of-pocket expense of \$800 per cheerleader or mascot may be incurred for required clothing, camp, uniforms and equipment. Any applicable shipping and taxes are *in addition* to the out-of-pocket expense.
- B. Summer camps are mandatory to attend. If summer camp is missed, the cheerleader/mascot will be subject to dismissal.

II. Payments and Funds

- A. Payment plans may be cooperatively arranged with the coach and campus business administration to cover cheerleader/mascot costs. The payments must

not extend beyond the school year in which the student participates on the cheer squad.

- B. Cheerleader activity funds will be not used to purchase gifts of any type for athletes or other cheerleading squads. (UIL.480/2)

COMMUNICATION

If a concern should arise, the following chain of command must be followed at the appropriately scheduled time:

- A. Coaches
- B. Campus Principal
- C. Round Rock ISD Assistant Athletic Director