

Cheerleader Participation in Extracurricular Events

Rationale: According to the West Virginia Secondary Schools Athletics Commission guidelines, cheerleading is a sport and has its own interscholastic competition.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U. S. C. Section 1681 *et. seq.*, and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 106, are federal laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. According to these guidelines, cheerleading is a support service provided to athletic teams except when cheerleaders are engaged only in the development of routines which are performed strictly in front of interscholastic judges for the purposes of competition in cheerleading. Once cheerleaders appear at any other athletic event, they are a *support service* and must provide these services equitably regardless of team gender.

In order to both protect the integrity of the sport of cheerleading and provide support to athletic teams in a more traditional sense, the Monroe County Board of Education stipulates the following policy governing the activity of cheerleaders. It is the belief of the Board of Education that cheerleading provides an additional opportunity for students to participate in extracurricular activities; the cheer squad, however, cannot be expected to provide support to every other athletic event.

Fall Sports Season

Prior to the beginning of the fall season, the cheerleading sponsor shall confer with coaches of other fall sports and determine the schedule of events for the upcoming season. Following this conference, sponsors are to provide cheerleaders and their parents with a schedule of events for the fall which are to be guided by the following stipulations:

1. Cheerleaders may provide support services to no more than two regularly scheduled events per week. Whenever possible, one of these events must be for a male sport, the other for a female sport.
2. Should a regularly scheduled game be postponed and rescheduled, cheerleaders may follow this rescheduling except when the event is scheduled at the same time of an already scheduled event. In that case, the regularly scheduled event takes precedence.
3. Any team headed to the playoffs will be accompanied by cheerleaders as a support service.
4. Participation in competition for cheerleaders shall be undertaken at the discretion of the coach/es in consultation with the principal.

Winter Sports Season

Prior to the beginning of the winter season, the cheerleading sponsor shall confer with the coaches of the other winter sports and determine the schedule of events for the upcoming season. Following this conference, sponsors are to provide cheerleaders and their parents with a schedule of events for the winter which are to be guided by the following stipulations:

1. Cheerleaders must provide support services equally each week whenever possible, placing the greatest amount of emphasis on home events.
2. Should a regularly scheduled game be postponed, cheerleaders may cheer for the rescheduled event except when it conflicts with an already scheduled event.
3. Any team participating in the playoffs shall be accompanied by cheerleaders as a support service.

It is the intent of the Monroe County Board of Education that this policy provide for an equitable provision of cheerleading support services for fall and winter teams. Any departure from these guidelines must have the approval of the Title IX Coordinator for Monroe County Schools and whenever possible should be agreed upon prior to the week of the event.

Adopted by Board Action - July 6, 1999