

Van Vleck High School Cheerleading 2019-2020 Constitution



“Cheerleading is a display of discipline, practice, dedication,
determination, skill, and athleticism”

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(1) Purpose and Objectives

The purpose and objective of cheerleading is:

1. To develop and promote good sportsmanship among students, fans, faculty, visitors, and fellow squad members.
2. To develop loyalty to your school and team regardless of the outcome.
3. To promote a cooperative spirit among the student body, the faculty, administration, and other spirit organizations.
4. To represent not only VVHS, but all of VVISD and our community.
5. To establish the high personal ideals and good character expected of a cheerleader in order to be a role model for peers and younger children in Van Vleck ISD.

(2) Tryout Requirements and Information

1. The candidate must have a good disciplinary record. Including no current or past, AEP placement or expulsions, and for the current school year no more than 1 day served in ISS and no suspensions.
2. Any student trying out for cheerleader or mascot must follow guidelines as issued by the UIL. No pass, no play. Also, to be eligible for tryouts, the candidate must not have failed more than 1 class during the current school year.
3. Candidates must have a good attendance record for the current school year not to exceed 10 days with no more than 2 unexcused absences.
4. All candidates must be in attendance for the entire school day on the scheduled day of tryouts in order to participate in tryouts.
5. All students must have a \$0.00 balance in all school accounts prior to tryouts. A current cheerleader must clear all financial obligations before she can try out for the next year. The candidate must check with the librarian and the secretary before they turn in their application and have them sign off that they are up to date on all payments.
6. All cheerleader candidates will receive a copy of the constitution of the Van Vleck High School Cheerleading squad.
7. All candidates must be approved by the principal. Information used to determine eligibility for incoming freshmen will be obtained from the OHHMS cheer sponsor and/or principal.
8. All candidates and their parents / guardians must sign consent forms and a statement agreeing that, if elected, they will abide by all rules and regulations concerning cheerleaders/mascots. This must be turned in on or before the date designated by sponsor or the candidate will not be eligible to tryout. If elected, this statement will be kept on file as your agreement to abide by this constitution.
9. All parents of candidates must sign a statement agreeing to pay for any expenses incurred by their student, including uniforms, camp clothes, accessories, cheerleading camp, etc. This must be turned in on or before the date designated by sponsor or the candidate will not be eligible to tryout.
10. Anyone who quits, resigns, or has been dismissed from the squad in the past for any reason may not tryout again for 1 full calendar year from the date of dismissal, or if dismissed for a 2nd time may not ever try out again.

11. Candidates that are trying out may not request assistance from any VVHS senior cheer instructor or sponsor outside of the designated practice dates, time, or place. If a girl receives any assistance outside of the designated practice dates, time, or place from a tryout cheer instructor, it will result in automatic disqualification of tryouts.
12. The sponsors will make the decision of who will instruct the VVHS cheer and dance for tryouts.
13. Upcoming freshmen will not be allowed to tryout for the Varsity squad. If they tryout and make the squad, they will automatically be placed on the JV squad.
14. Tryouts are closed to the public except for candidates, sponsors, judges, and campus administrators. Parents or videotaping will not be allowed in the area of the tryouts. Parents may stay in the holding room while their child tries out. The candidates and parents must leave when they are finished.
15. Individuals trying out will have to perform the following in front of the judges:
 - With Group: Cheer and Tryout Dance
 - Individual: Jumps and Cheer
16. Girls that are trying out need to wear the following:
 - Black Shorts, Solid White T-Shirt, White Socks, Tennis Shoes (no cheer shoes), No Jewelry, Hair Pulled Up and Out of Face (Bows may be worn, but they must be black)
17. All cheerleader/mascot candidates will be judged by an outside panel of UCA judges. Selection of the squad will be based on the judges' scores. Mascot candidates will be judged separately. Parents may request a copy of only their student's score sheet. Score sheets will be kept in accordance with district policy for keeping such records.
18. Tryout results will be posted on the VVUSD website and Facebook page.
19. All students who make the squad will be required to make the cheer camp payment **by the end of the school day the day after tryouts.**
20. The student making the squad must accept or refuse a position by the following day at noon.
21. If a squad member quits, resigns, or is dismissed **before** uniforms are ordered, the spot will be offered to the next candidate in line based off of the judges' scores. If a squad member quits, resigns, or is dismissed **after** uniforms are ordered, the spot will not be filled.

(3) Squad Selection

1. The Van Vleck High School Cheerleader Squad will consist of the following:
 - Varsity - At least 10 members (10th, 11th, 12th grade students only)
 - JV - 6 members
 - Mascot - 1 member

2. The VVHS Varsity squad will have one captain and a co-captain. The Varsity captain must have at least 1 year VVHS Varsity experience and co-captain must have 1 year Varsity or JV experience. The Varsity captain and co-captain will be selected from the juniors and seniors on the varsity squad. The candidates will then be judged in the following areas:

-		Interview	(50%)
-	Judges	scores from tryouts	(30%)
-		Squad vote	(20%)

The information regarding this process will be handed out the day after tryouts.

JV will have one captain and they must have 1 year VVHSD cheer experience and will be selected by the sponsors.

3. Candidates will be informed of the results of the tryouts as soon as the tabulation of all of the scores is completed that evening. Results will be posted on the VVHSD website, the VVHSD Facebook account, and the VVHS Facebook account.

4. A position must be accepted or refused by noon the day after tryouts.

5. If a candidate declines a position by noon the day after tryouts, the first alternate will be called and offered the position that was declined. If the noon deadline the day after tryouts has passed, and a candidate is unable to fulfill the position for any reason and cheer fittings have not occurred the sponsor will offer the position to the alternate next in line. If the alternate accepts the position she will have to pay the cheer camp deposit by the end of the week that the position was offered to her.

6. Once cheer fittings have passed the sponsor will no longer call the alternate to offer any unfilled positions on the squad.

(4) Gear and Expenses

1. Uniforms:

- New Varsity - 2 skirts and 2 shells
- Returning Varsity - 1 skirt and 1 shell
- Mascot - (Will use camp clothes)
- JV - 1 skirt and 1 shell
- Varsity, JV, and Mascot - cheer shoes, warm-up jacket and pants, bag.
- Varsity, JV - leggings, body liners, 2 briefs

2. Camp Clothes:

- Varsity, JV, Mascot - 3 shirts, 1 jersey, 3 shorts or skirts

3. Accessories:

- Socks
- Bows
- Pom Poms
- Megaphone

4. Estimated Fees:

Summer Camp- \$392

Uniform / Camp Clothes / Accessories / Shipping / Tax - approx. \$1,500 (*This changes depending on previous cheer experience and squad placement.*)

All cheer fees must be paid in full by May 23rd, the last day of the 2018-2019 school year. All cheerleaders that make the squad will be required to pay \$392 for cheer camp the day after tryouts. Uniform payments may be made in 3 equal monthly installments for the cheerleader's remaining balance. Payment 1 in March, payment 2 in April, and payment 3 in May. Sponsors will hand out a payment plan after uniforms are ordered. If cheerleader fails to obtain a \$0 balance before May 23, 2019, then they will be dismissed from the squad.

5. Fundraising:

Cheerleaders will be required to participate in squad fundraisers including:

- Selling spirit items and programs at games and school during football and basketball seasons
- Recruiting a minimum of 3 sign-ups for mini cheer camp
- Other fundraisers as scheduled by the sponsor

(5) General Information

1. Abidance: All cheerleaders/mascot must abide by all rules and regulations set by the UIL, school administrators, cheer constitution, and cheerleader sponsor(s).
2. Positive Image: Cheerleaders/mascot are expected to maintain a positive image and set a good example for others to follow during all cheerleading activities, school events, **in and out of school time and on social media**.
3. Commitment: Cheerleaders and mascot are expected to have **100% total commitment** once named as part of the squad. A cheerleader is considered a leader of the student body 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Certain expectations & responsibilities accompany any position of leadership. (See list of Expectations/Requirements and Responsibilities.)
4. Summer: All cheerleaders must attend summer practices and summer camp (**June 24-June 27 in College Station**). All camp fees, camp wear, and supplies must be paid in full on or before the due date.
5. Practices: Summer practice and regular season practice dates and times will be determined by the cheerleading sponsors. All practices are closed to the general public. No visitors allowed (including boyfriends, girlfriends, or any other students). Parents of the cheerleaders are always welcome to observe practice sessions quietly. Cheerleaders will have to arrange their own transportation to and from practices. **If a cheerleader does not attend practice prior to a scheduled event or game, they will not be allowed to cheer at the scheduled event or game, but will still be required to attend in uniform and sit with sponsors.**
6. Material Pass-offs: At the end of practice on Wednesdays we will hold pass-offs for all material that will be performed at pep rallies and/or games. If a cheerleader doesn't pass off the material, they will not perform it at the pep rally and/or game.
7. Travel: Cheerleaders and mascot will be required to travel to all games and events via school transportation. Cheerleaders/mascot may ride home with their parents or with a person 18 years or older and with prior written parent/guardian consent to the sponsor only. THE RESPONSIBLE ADULT MUST SIGN OUT WITH SPONSOR IN PERSON AT THE END OF THE GAME. If a cheerleader/mascot fails to sign out, then disciplinary action will be taken.
8. Grades: Each member must meet the requirements of No Pass/No Play, which means they must maintain an overall grade average of 70 in each class. In addition, any member failing for 2 grading periods will be dismissed from the squad (PAP/AP waiver may be used 1 time per district policy). Grades will be checked at progress report time and at the end of each grading cycle. A cheerleader failing a course will be ineligible to cheer until eligibility is regained under UIL rules. During that time the member must attend all practices, but may not participate in any pep rallies, games, or other scheduled events. Ineligible cheerleaders may be asked to attend and document their attendance in tutorials.
9. School Attendance: Cheerleaders are expected to have above average school attendance habit and are responsible to their fellow squad to attend and participate in all practices and all activities. If a cheerleader is absent from school more than ½ the school day she will not be allowed to participate in any cheerleading activities that day or night. In compliance with VVUSD and Texas State guidelines, excused absences are:
 - a. Personal illness or accident
 - b. A death in the family
 - c. Special school activities and UIL events with advanced approval from the coach.
10. Squad Attendance: Cheerleaders are expected to attend all practices, games, and other scheduled events.

- a. Each cheerleader/mascot is granted 2 unexcused absences per year, not to occur in the same week, and with prior notification. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to: job conflicts, family vacations, social events, driver's ed. classes, and other practices (ex: non-school related sports). A note must be turned in at least 24 hours in advance and sponsors will either approve or deny request. After 2 unexcused absences, the sponsors will still need prior notice, but demerits will be issued.
 - b. Excused absences are to be minimal and left to the discretion of the sponsor.
 - c. Any cheerleader with absences that prevent them from working out or that exceed 2 consecutive days must bring a doctor's note.
 - d. The cheerleader or her parent, must notify the sponsor directly if absent on a school day and will miss an event, she may not assume that they are excused. **Messages from other squad members will not be accepted.** Parents will have sponsor's cell phone number and cheerleaders may contact sponsors through the Remind app.
 - e. If the squad member fails to notify the sponsor in advance of an absence (excused or unexcused), then disciplinary action will be taken.
11. Jobs: Cheerleaders and mascot may not have a job that interferes with practice, pep rallies, games, or scheduled events. If a cheerleader or mascot works, he or she must supply a work schedule to the sponsor prior to first scheduled game/event and must negotiate with the employer so that he or she may attend all scheduled cheerleading and mascot activities.
 12. Conduct: Behavior of each cheerleader should set a standard of excellence for the student body to follow both in and out of the classroom. If a cheerleader falls short of exemplary conduct standards then disciplinary action will be taken.
 13. Lettering: A Varsity cheerleader will letter in cheerleading if they serve a full year on the squad, meaning football and basketball seasons.
 14. Additions or Changes: It is virtually impossible to include everything in this constitution, therefore, all rules, regulations, and requirements concerning cheerleaders or mascot are subject to be added to or changed at the sponsor's or administrator's discretion.

It is important to remember that the cheerleading sponsors are in charge of the cheerleading program.

15. Chain of Command: When a problem or concern arises that is not addressed in the constitution, the cheerleading sponsors will address the concern as quickly as a meeting can be set up with the sponsor, administration and other concerned parties. Furthermore, instead of approaching sponsors on their personal time and in informal settings, the chain of command will be followed:
 1. Scheduled meeting with concerned individuals & sponsor
 2. Scheduled meeting with sponsor & campus administrator

*A sponsor may ask an administrator to attend any meeting with parent.

(6) Expectations/Requirements

Cheerleaders are expected to be physically and mentally skilled in learning and remembering cheers. They are also expected to be able to publicly demonstrate a skill level suitable for the team position and the timing necessary for group performance. Off the field, they are to enthusiastically support all athletic teams as well as other district groups through advertisement, personal attitude, and attendance at events chosen by the sponsors.

1. Cheerleaders will be held accountable for squad expectations and responsibilities, and disciplinary action will be taken for infractions.
2. All cheerleaders are expected to:
 - a. Promote school spirit and good sportsmanship at all times.
 - b. Follow the Van Vleck High School Student Code of Conduct.
 - c. Attend all scheduled events and practices. (See Scheduled Activities.)
 - d. Set a good example for classmates and other members of the student body.
 - e. Be cooperative with teachers, administrators, sponsors, and other cheerleaders.
 - f. Maintain high academic, attendance & disciplinary standards.
 - g. Be in good physical condition and have a current physical on file with the sponsor by May 23, 2019.
 - h. Treat every appearance as a performance.
 - i. Create 3 hallway posters for each sport assigned. Posters must be creative and clean and should promote positive school spirit.
 - j. Learn all cheers, chants, and dances in a timely manner.
 - k. Squad captain is expected to:
 - Be at all practices 10 minutes early to assist the sponsor.
 - Remind all squad members of upcoming practices & scheduled events.
 - Lead cheers, dances, chants, etc.
 - Maintain an organized and unified squad
 - Plan, get approval from sponsor, & implement all pep rallies.
3. All cheerleaders will be expected to be a part of a stunt group and will be required to build with that group.

(7) Equipment Responsibilities

1. A minimum of 2 cheerleaders will be required to ride home from away games with the sponsors to unload equipment. **No one will be allowed to sign out from away games until all of the equipment is loaded.**
2. All cheerleaders are required to carry out their designated responsibility for each pep rally. (For example: bring props, music, making signs, etc)
3. Mascot is responsible for maintaining the mascot suit and transporting the suit to and from games.

(8) Cheerleader Scheduled Activities & Participation

- All practices, workouts, and spirit work sessions
- Cheerleader camp
- All pep rallies
- All Varsity football games (Varsity, Mascot)
- All Varsity home games to sell programs and spirit items (JV)
- All JV games (JV)
- All Varsity boys and girls district basketball games
- All playoff games, regardless of the sport
- Parades (Rice Festival, Veteran and Christmas)
- All fundraisers and promotions
- Mini Cheer Camp
- Competitions as scheduled by the sponsor
- All other athletic events and activities as scheduled by the sponsor related to school spirit or support

(9) Uniforms and Squad Dress

1. Each cheerleader is required to purchase their own uniform. Uniform costs must be paid in full by May 23, 2019.
2. Each cheerleader is required to purchase their own practice clothes, camp clothes, and accessories.
3. Mascot costume will be provided by the school. Approved mascot uniform must be worn under costume.
4. Uniform is decided upon by the sponsors and the campus administration.
5. Uniform and shoes should be cleaned immediately following each game or activity.
6. Uniform leggings are required with the uniform during school hours (not including pep rallies) and at colder weather games.
7. Uniform is to be worn for football game days, all games, specified activities and all pep rallies. Uniforms may not be worn at any other time without sponsor approval.
8. No alterations may be made to the uniform without written permission from the sponsor. Cheerleaders will not be allowed to dress out and perform if uniforms fail to fit the dress code criteria.

(10) Discipline

Demerits will be given when deemed appropriate and will be documented on individual sheets for each cheerleader.

Demerits can be given for but not limited to the following:

Tardiness to practice or event by 10 minutes (even with notification)	1 Demerit
Late return to field or gym after half-time	1 Demerit
Having colored nails during practice, scheduled events, or while performing. School colors and nude are allowed during football season, but not during competition.	1 Demerit
Wearing any jewelry during practice or while performing (UIL rule)	1 Demerit
Not having hair fixed appropriately while performing	1 Demerit
Failure to participate in spirit activities such as dress up days, selling spirit items, etc. This includes, but is not limited to, Homecoming week and Red Ribbon week.	1 Demerit
Other off task behavior during practice, scheduled events or while performing	1 Demerit
Leaving practice or scheduled event early (without prior approval from sponsor)	1 Demerit
Failure to meet deadlines scheduled by the sponsor	1 Demerit
1 day in ISS	2 Demerits
Unexcused absence (after 2) from pep rally, practice, game or performance	2 Demerits
Insubordination to sponsor or other school staff member at any time	2 Demerits
Inappropriate behavior such as cursing, display of temper, gossip, poor sportsmanship, in person or by texting/social media.	2 Demerits
Not cheering, jumping or showing enthusiasm	2 Demerits
Failure to sign out with sponsor for an out of town event	2 Demerits

Upon earning a demerit the cheerleader/mascot will receive written notification of demerits earned and the consequence for the demerit. Each demerit will incur a consequence. Consequences must be performed by date specified by sponsor to return into good standing. Performing the consequences DOES NOT remove demerit from record. Consequences are determined by the sponsors and will depend on what the demerit was issued for.

3 Demerits	Cheerleader/Mascot will need to meet with the cheer sponsors on the date that the 3 rd demerit was issued and consequences must be performed prior the next scheduled pep rally, game or scheduled event.
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5 Demerits	Cheerleader/Mascot will be placed on a 1 week spirit probation beginning on the date that the 5 th demerit was issued and consequences must be performed prior to the end of the probation period.
8 Demerits	Cheerleader/Mascot placed on a 1 week spirit probation beginning on the date that the 8 th demerit was issued and consequences must be performed prior to the end of the probation period.
10 Demerits	Cheerleader/Mascot dismissed from squad

(11) Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal

Failure to comply with any of the requirements for maintaining membership will result in probation, suspension, or dismissal from squad. The following procedures will be followed:

Scholastic Probation

1. Receiving a failing grade in any class during a grading cycle. Cheerleader/mascot must attend tutorials if offered.
2. Probation will follow UIL rules.
3. During probation the member must attend squad practices but will not be eligible to participate or perform.

Spirit Probations/Suspension ("Benching")

1. While on spirit probation or suspension the cheerleader will not be able to participate in pep rallies, games, or any scheduled events until the probation period is over, but will still be required to dress out and attend all practices and events and sit with sponsors.
2. If a cheerleader has to attend ISS (In School Suspension) on a scheduled event date the cheerleader will not be able to participate in the event for that day.
3. If a cheerleader does not attend the preceding practice (excused absences excluded), then they will not cheer at the scheduled event for which practice was set with the exception of UIL events.
4. If a cheerleader shows up to a scheduled event or game and is in violation of squad dress or campus student dress code, then they will receive appropriate demerits and be given the opportunity to immediately correct the violation or be placed on immediate spirit probation for that game or activity. (For example: If a cheerleader shows up with the wrong uniform or wearing fake nails, jewelry, wrong socks, etc., then she will not cheer for that game unless they can immediately change and/or comply with squad dress.)
5. If a cheerleader acquires 5 demerits they will dress out but not participate in 1 pep-rally and game.
6. If a cheerleader acquires 8 demerits they will dress out but not participate in 1 pep-rally and game.

Resignation

1. If a cheerleader so chooses, she may resign her spot on the cheer squad.
2. Resignation requires a conference with the cheerleader, sponsor, parent, and campus administrator and a letter of resignation must be submitted and signed by both student and parent citing effective date of resignation and preferably including reason(s) for such action.

Automatic Dismissal From Squad (Zero Tolerance)

1. Assignment to AEP, suspension from school, or expulsion.
2. Being in the possession of tobacco products or engaging in smoking in or out of school. (Including e-cigs, vapor cigarettes, Juuls.)
3. Being in the possession or under the influence of alcohol in or out of school.
4. Being in the possession or under the influence of illegal drugs in or out of school.
5. Any action that results in being charged by a law enforcement official with the exception of traffic violations.
6. Failure to attend summer camp.
7. Failure to meet financial obligations on dates specified by sponsor.
8. Hazing and/or harassment
9. Any action that could cause embarrassment to the school or cheer organization
10. Obtaining 10 demerits during the year.

If a squad member quits, resigns or is dismissed at anytime they will be ineligible to tryout for the squad again for 1 calendar year from the date of removal and will not be eligible for refunds on items that are personalized or used and cannot be returned. If squad member quits, resigns, or is dismissed a second time, then she will be permanently ineligible for future tryouts for cheerleader/mascot at VVHS.

(12) Cheerleading/Mascot Etiquette

When to Cheer:

1. As your team comes on the floor or field.
2. When your own team or player makes an exceptionally fine play.
3. As a tribute and encouragement to an injured player of either team.
4. As encouragement to your team in its drive for a score.
5. As encouragement to your team in defense of its goal.

When NOT to Cheer:

1. As team signals are being called.
2. When a player is injured. (Expression of pleasure over injury of an opponent is bad taste and will reflect poorly on you and your school.)
3. As announcements are being made of the public address system such as giving lineups, etc.

(13) Safety Guidelines

1. No sponsors means no stunting. Squad members may not stunt without the presence of a sponsor. Stunts will be practiced and performed in progressions (as the squad masters them and is able to perform them safely).
2. Warm-up/stretching should precede all practice sessions, pep rallies, games, etc. Warm-ups and stretching should NOT take up practice time.
3. Due to safety issues, no jewelry, including but not limited to necklaces, bracelets, finger and belly button rings, or other accessories will be permitted. (Artificial nails may be allowed upon sponsor approval for activities such as homecoming, Rice Festival, etc) No gum chewing or candy is allowed.
4. Eating and drinking during performances is prohibited. Squad members may only consume liquids provided by the squad (or beverages that are opened in front of the sponsor) before performances, during short breaks, or during times designated by the sponsor. **Only water or Gatorade is permitted at practices, games, and performances.**
5. Any cheerleader unable to perform because of an injury, illness or medical condition will appear at the event in full uniform and sit in designated area with sponsor. If an injury or illness hinders or limits a cheerleader's performance capabilities, then a cheerleader is required to present a doctor's note outlining performance limitations. A doctor's excuse is required if a cheerleader is not able to participate, and a doctor's note for clearance to cheer again is also necessary. The cheerleader's ability to participate will then be reevaluated. If a cheerleader cannot participate in athletics, then it carries over to cheerleading because cheer is an athletic UIL sport.
6. Students must wear safety belts in a school suburban or car and must follow all rules and guidelines for riding in school vehicles, including bus rules.
7. All squad members must have the following forms on file with the sponsor: current physical, medical information and release, and transportation permission form.
8. All medication, including Tylenol, asthma inhalers, etc., must be given to the sponsor to administer according to school district policy.
9. The sponsors shall have current CPR and First Aid training.
10. According to the TEC 22.051 professional employees, including cheer sponsors, are granted immunity from liability and not held personally liable in cases that involve the use of discretion.
11. Because of the very nature of the activity, cheerleading carries a risk of physical injury. All appropriate precautions will be taken, but the risk cannot be eliminated. Injury could include muscle pulls, dislocation, and broken bones. Catastrophic injuries could include permanent paralysis or even death from landing or falling on the back, neck, or head.

(14) Student and Parent Acknowledgements

I have read, understand, and accept all guidelines set forth in the 2019 - 2020 Cheerleading and Mascot Constitution and by signing am hereby agreeing to abide by all such items. I will work cooperatively to be a successful part of this program. I promise to cooperate and follow the instructions of the cheerleading sponsors, and should a problem arise I will contact the proper chain of command in order to resolve any issues in an orderly manner.

Student Name (Print) _____

Student Signature _____ **Date** _____

I have read, understand, and accept all guidelines set forth in the 2019 - 2020 Cheerleading and Mascot Constitution and by signing am hereby agreeing that my student must abide by all such items. I agree to help my student to be a successful part of this program. I promise to cooperate and follow the instructions of the cheerleading sponsors, and should a problem arise I will contact the proper chain of command in order to resolve any issues in an orderly manner.

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____

I understand the risks associated with cheerleading and will not hold Van Vleck High School School, Van Vleck I.S.D, current cheer sponsors, administrators, or any of its personnel responsible in the case of accident or injury at any time.

Student Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____