

# Blanco Independent School District

## SPIRIT ORGANIZATION CONSTITUTION



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**The Blanco Independent School District Spirit Organization Constitution has been reviewed and administratively approved. All rules, requirements, and expectations stated in this constitution are in effect from the time the candidate is selected to be a cheerleader, mascot, or manager until the end of the next academic school year. This constitution is a living and fluid document. At any time the Coach and/or Administration may make any changes as deemed necessary for the current school year.**

**The Blanco ISD Spirit organization will follow ALL District, School, UIL and National Federation of State High School Associations Safety (NFHS) rules. NFHS Rule 2 section 1 Art. 1... A coach must not permit a team member to participate if in the judgment of the coach, the participant does not conform to NFHS rules. In the event of a conflict between any of the provisions of this Constitution and any of the other rules or regulations applicable to the activity, the more restrictive provision shall apply.**

Blanco ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or age in its programs, activities, or employment practices. For inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies, please contact the Blanco ISD Administrative office at (830) 833-4414; 814 11th Street, Blanco, Texas 78606.

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**PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY:**

The Blanco Independent School District Spirit Organization includes High School and Middle School Cheerleading and Mascots. All of our Spirit organization athletes are expected to be leaders and great role models on their campuses. The future of this organization is based on our goals to include more students, to give more young people a place to belong, to foster healthy competition and good sportsmanship, to model good citizenship, and promote school spirit. Participation in this organization is a privilege, not a right, members are expected to represent their team, school and family with honor.

The Spirit organization enthusiastically supports the Blanco High School athletic program and any school events as designated by the Coach including but not limited to regular-season games and playoff games for football, volleyball, basketball, cross country, track, softball, and baseball. In addition to these duties, the High School Cheerleaders will prepare and compete in the UIL State Spirit Championships and other designated cheerleading competitions.

**OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of the BISD Cheerleaders and Mascots shall be as follows:

- To represent and enthusiastically support BISD athletic and school functions through personal attitude, and attendance at events required by the Coach.
- To develop leadership, loyalty, and good sportsmanship.
- To encourage good conduct and support interest in all sports, fine arts, and other school activities.
- To successfully participate in the UIL State Spirit Championships and other competitions as designated.
- To be physically and mentally dedicated to exemplifying the sport of cheerleading at all times.

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS & COMMITMENT:**

Athletes of the Spirit organization are expected to make a commitment to the program from the time the new teams are selected through the following school year. Cheerleading is a year-round commitment. All members will:

- Be prepared to make a serious commitment in time and energy.
- Meet UIL academic requirements for eligibility for each grading period.
- Abide by all the rules in the Blanco high school Code of Conduct and Handbook, the Spirit program constitution, and others set forth by the cheerleading Coach.
- Attend all mandatory coach-scheduled events/practices.
- Learn all expected material.
- Understand that cheerleading is an obligation that must take precedence over outside of school activities such as work, private cheer squads, club teams, etc. Missed practices and events will not be excused due to these conflicts.
- Be self-motivated and willing to participate in activities with a positive attitude.
- Have self-respect and present an appropriate appearance.
- Be a good representative of our organization and set a good example for others.
- Set a good example in the classroom.

## **CHEER CLASS PERIOD/ATHLETIC PERIOD: High School Only\***

Athletes of the High School Spirit program will be required to enroll in the cheer class period. The cheer class period will provide preparation for events and competitions, year-round skill development, strength and conditioning training, and leadership development.

- Admittance to the cheer period is a privilege that must be earned by the athlete.

## **TRYOUT ELIGIBILITY:**

A student is eligible to tryout for position on one of the Blanco ISD cheerleading and mascot teams if the following conditions are met:

- Candidates must be currently enrolled in Blanco ISD. Candidates that are not enrolled at Blanco ISD at the time of tryouts must submit a letter of explanation to the Coach, please see Transfer Policy below.
- Candidates must have passed all subjects during the Fall semester and have a passing grade in each subject enrolled in, for the six weeks preceding the tryout date.
- Candidates must properly complete all required tryout paperwork and return by the deadline.
- Candidates must undergo an athletic physical for the upcoming school year and be sure that it is on file with the Cheer Coach/Sponsor and BISD Athletic Trainer by June 1st. Candidates must be physically capable to participate in required activities.
- Blanco ISD requires all students involved in UIL activities to be included in random drug testing. You must sign the permission slip and agree to be drug tested. If you do not sign the form, you are not eligible to be apart of this program.
- Daily attendance must comply with the 90% Attendance Rule as stated in the Texas Education Code § 25.092. Any student exceeding the attendance policy (90%) will not be eligible to tryout. If you attended Saturday school, a makeup day, or stayed after school for excessive absences then you are not eligible to tryout. Any extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the campus attendance committee.
- Candidates must be in clear financial standing with the school district. Candidates who had or currently have an outstanding financial balance with Blanco ISD are not eligible.
- Candidates must not have been dismissed or quit the squad prior to fulfilling their duties and commitments from the previous year.
- Candidates must be in good standing with the office with discipline. Anyone who, during the current school year, has had disciplinary infractions that resulted in OSS, or an assignment to DAEP, is not eligible to try out.

- Athletes who have been selected to be part of the cheerleading team at Blanco ISD their 9th, 10th, and 11th grade years may remain on the team their senior year. The experience and insight these individuals can offer the squad is invaluable. The Coach has the right to revoke this privilege if standards of the program are not met by the individual.

**TRANSFER POLICY:**

The Coach and Administration hold the right to allow a late tryout for any transfer student. The late tryout and any additions to the team will be allowed at the discretion of the Coach and Administration. The transfer candidate must meet all UIL and Tryout Eligibility requirements listed.

- Candidates that are not enrolled at Blanco ISD at the time of tryouts must submit a letter of explanation to the Coach. This letter should fully explain the candidate's situation, including the anticipated date of enrollment and the reason for future enrollment at Blanco ISD. This letter will be considered by the Coach and the Administration. Candidates will be notified whether or not they will be granted a tryout before being enrolled.
- Transfer Candidates will be evaluated solely by the Coach.

## **TRYOUT PROCESS:**

- Trying out for the team does not guarantee placement on the team.
- All candidates and their parent/guardian will be required to attend a mandatory tryout meeting scheduled by the Coach. At the meeting, the candidate will receive a tryout packet outlining projected costs, tentative schedules, the Spirit Constitution, and tryout procedures.
- The candidate is expected to attend the entire tryout scheduled clinic dates. IF a candidate misses any portion of the tryout, he/she is automatically ineligible to continue, unless the candidate has approval for the absence from the Coach. All tryouts activities will be closed to spectators.
- Candidates will be evaluated throughout the entire tryout process by the Coach.
- Candidates will be evaluated by a panel of two outside cheerleading judges and the Coach on the final evaluation day. The Coach will have the final decision on team selection.
- BISD personnel will assist with the tryout process.
- There is no set number of cheerleaders or mascots. The number will be based on the number of candidates that are deemed qualified by the Coach.
- In the event a candidate is sick or injured, the following protocol will be followed:
  - A note from a Physician, Physician's Assistant, Nurse Practitioner, or the school's Athletic Trainer will be required, specifically listing the limitations of the candidate.
  - The candidate may submit a current video of COMPARABLE skills for consideration by the panel of judges and the Coach OR if the Coach has witnessed the skills the candidate is currently unable to perform, within the past academic year, that knowledge will be used to evaluate the athlete. The judges may use their professional discretion in scoring the candidate.



**CAPTAINS:**

Senior cheerleaders have the opportunity to hold a leadership position as head captain and/or co-captains. Juniors may apply for co-captain or other leadership positions available. Serving in a leadership position is a privilege and the Coach has the right to revoke these privileges at any time.

- The application process will be provided at the tryout meeting.
- These positions will require an additional time commitment.
- Captains/leaders do not have the authority to make any decisions without coach approval.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Cheerleading is a privilege. This privilege is earned daily through commitment to the team of time, energy, and effort. **Attendance is mandatory at ALL practices and events, including those that are scheduled on a school holiday and/or during the summer.**

Athletes should attend classes the day a game/event is scheduled unless they are attending a school-sponsored event or there are extenuating circumstances previously approved by the Coach. An athlete who is absent from school on the day of a game/event may be sidelined in full uniform for the event.

- The coach must be notified using the Google Absence form at a minimum of 24 hours before the anticipated absence, by the individual athlete, then parents are welcome to follow up via email. Coach's Email: Lindsey.deleon@blancoisd.org
- Absences without prior notification will be considered unexcused.
- Tardies in excess of 10 minutes to a practice or event will be considered an unexcused absence.
- The accumulation of 4 unexcused absences may result in removal from the Spirit program.

Excused absences: funeral/death of an immediate family member, illness with a doctor's note, or a school/UIL event. All other absences will be considered unexcused. Members with an injury should still attend practices/events with the team.

## **EVENTS AND PRACTICES:**

- High School: Athletes will cheer at football, volleyball, and basketball games as scheduled by the Coach.
- Athletes will perform/cheer at ANY events deemed necessary by the Coach or Administration.
- Athletes will be required to do their share of spirit work such as making signs, hanging signs, cleaning up after games/pep rallies, decorating the school, etc.
- The Coach will dismiss athletes from each event once all equipment, supplies, etc are cleaned up.
- Athletes will be dressed in complete uniform to perform and are expected to arrive at the time set by the Coach. Failure to dress in correct uniform or practice wear will result in the

athlete being benched.

- Cell phones and electronic devices are to be put away during all practices and events. They are only to be used in case of emergency or calling for a ride.

#### **MULTIPLE SPORT/EXTRACURRICULAR ATHLETES:**

- Coaches and Sponsors/Teachers will work together to develop a plan to share athletes when conflicting time constraints arise.
- Playing in more than one sport, participating in UIL activities and other school organized extracurricular activities does not excuse the athlete from any criteria the Coach deems as necessary, but it may modify the athlete's practice requirements.
- Games and events will take precedence over practice.

#### **DRESS CODE & UNIFORMS:**

- Per the NFHS Rule 2 Section 1 Art. 4... Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept short, near the end of the fingers. Members that fail to comply with this can & will lose participation time at practice and/or events. Continuous failure to comply will result in dismissal from the program.
- Per NFH) Rule 3 Section 1 Art. 1... Jewelry of any kind is prohibited except for the following: A religious medal without a chain is allowed and must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible.
- Athletes will travel dressed neatly and appropriately while representing the school.
- Athletes will be held accountable for dressing out daily in the assigned practice or event wear. If an athlete is not prepared, they will be benched.
- All uniforms belong to the school and will be issued and returned each season. Each athlete is responsible for a clean, neat appearance. If a uniform is lost or damaged beyond repair, the replacement cost will be the responsibility of the athlete.

**TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION:**

- All travel is arranged by the Coach and all cheerleaders will travel as a TEAM to and from games/events.
- The school vehicle will leave promptly and will not be held for late-arriving athletes. Those who miss the school transportation may lose the opportunity to perform.
- When riding in a school vehicle, all athletes are expected to conduct themselves properly and abide by all school rules governing the school vehicles.
- Each athlete is responsible for their own transportation to and from all home games. Each athlete is also responsible for their transportation to and from the school before and after away games/events.
- Any athlete wishing to leave an away event with their parent/guardian for an extenuating reason, must send an email to the Coach 24 hours prior to the event for approval. Athletes must complete all assigned duties, check out with the Coach before leaving, and be signed out by their parent/guardian.

**COMPETITION: High School Only**

- Competition is mandatory for all athletes on the team.
- The Coach will select the athletes that will compete on the mat, and may designate alternates in case of injury, illness, or unforeseen situations.
- The team will attend the UIL State Spirit Competition that is held in January at the Fort Worth Convention Center.
- The team will also attend other competitions as scheduled by the Coach.

**LETTERING: High School Only**

An athlete will letter at the completion of one full year as an active Varsity member of the high school Spirit organization. The athlete must not have quit or been dismissed from the team. The athlete must be in good standing and all fees paid.

**DISCIPLINE:**

- Athletes will be held accountable for attitude, effort, citizenship, and loyalty to the team.
- Discipline shall be handled immediately and the consequences will be equivalent to the mistake. Examples include being benched, completing extra workouts or spirit duties, or could result in dismissal from the program.
- Repetitive discipline issues will not be tolerated, a plan for corrective action will be put into place.
  - Athlete, parent, and the Coach will set and agree to the plan.
  - Continued issues may result in dismissal from the program.

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY:**

Any social media or cell phone infraction may be cause for suspension or dismissal from the squad.

Athletes should refrain from posting on social media, any of the following:

- words or phrases that could be considered harassing and/or discriminatory including trash talk about opponents, teammates or coaches.
- words that could be considered demeaning or threatening.
- words that are sexually explicit, use of profanity, or that talk about drug or alcohol use.

Consequence Progression:

- Level 1: The Coach will conduct a conference with the athlete and parent to document and correct the issue.
- Level 2: Re-occurrence will result in a disciplinary contract and a suspension to be determined by the coach and the principal, not to exceed two calendar weeks.
- Level 3: Dismissal from the program.

**ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, DRUGS POLICY:**

Any use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs will be punished and may result in removal from the Spirit program. An athlete that is served an M.I.P. for possession, under the influence, selling or delivering alcohol, tobacco, or drugs OR who tests positive on a random school drug test follow the consequence progression:

- 1st Offense: Two week suspension and will need to meet with a representative from the Co-Apt grant two times with the two week suspension.
- Level 2: Dismissal from the program.

**CONFERENCE MEETING PROGRESSION:**

The athlete should initiate a conference with the Coach, however parents have the right to know and understand the expectation placed on them and their children. The Coach has the right to know if parents have a concern. All requests for a conference should be made via an email.

Please follow the steps outlined below:

- Step 1: The athlete will request to meet with the Coach.
- Step 2: The athlete and parent will meet with the Coach.
- Step 3: The athlete, parent, and Coach will meet with the Principal.
- Step 4: The parent and Superintendent will meet.

**FINANCIAL OBLIGATION:**

At the time of team selection an initial first payment will be due and applied to camp and/or other program fees, the exact date will be provided by the Coach at the tryout meeting. Failure to meet the financial obligations will result in performance penalties and/or removal from the program. Athletes and their parents understand and accept that all expenses must still be paid even if a student quits or is removed from the team.

**FUNDRAISING:**

Fundraising will occur under the supervision of the Coach. Each member will be expected to participate fully in fundraising activities. If athletes do not meet the fundraising goals, the athlete will be responsible for contributing the expected fundraiser profit to meet his/her financial obligation. Fundraisers are used to defer as much cost as possible and to support the Spirit Organization.

- There will be at least two fundraiser opportunities to help athletes defer many or even MOST of their costs. Details will be provided at the tryout meeting.
- Fundraising money is property of the school district and cannot be refunded.

**GENERAL COMMUNICATION:**

The Coach will use district-approved communication with cheerleaders, mascots, and parents/guardians. Communication may include but is not limited to Google Classroom, school email, school phone, Parent/Student Square, Band App, Remind App, Heja App, Sign-up Genius, and other methods as approved by BISD.