

Fort Calhoun High School

**Varsity**  
**Cheerleading**  
**2023-2024**  
**Handbook**



## **Eligibility**

8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students

Must have written permission slip from parent(s) or guardian(s) in order to be eligible for tryout

## **A Cheerleader**

Is a member of a group and must be dedicated, cooperative, respectful, and open minded to all members of the squad.

has a responsibility to the school to promote and uphold school spirit.

represents the school and the community at all times, so must maintain high personal standards.

must be a leader and promote student body participation and good sportsmanship.

## **Selection**

selection will occur during the spring semester of the previous school year.

Tryouts will be scored by competent judges. The panel will consist of judges from outside the school.

Candidates must turn in five teacher evaluation forms, sing the school song, and turn in their permission forms before trying out.

### **Tryout scores will be based on the following:**

Teacher evaluations 20%

Tryout 80%

## **Squad size and leadership**

The number of cheerleaders selected every year may vary. This number will depend on the number of candidates and the ranges of scores after tryouts.

A captain and a co-captain will be chosen using a variety of criteria. Each candidate will complete an essay. They will also have an interview with Mrs. Johnson.

The sports we cheer for are as follows:

- Varsity Football
- Varsity Volleyball
- Varsity Boys Basketball
- Varsity Girls Basketball
- Varsity Wrestling (TBD)

a. All cheerleaders will work together for varsity football

b. A Schedule will be created for fall sports. All cheerleaders will be assigned football games. The squad will be divided into two/three cheer groups for varsity volleyball. The groups will be determined according to fall sports being played by the squad members. The cheer groups will also be encouraged and awarded points if they attend home softball games or cross-country meet.

c. A schedule will be created for winter sports. All cheerleaders will be assigned cheer responsibilities. All cheerleaders are responsible for their own schedules. Each cheerleader must find her own replacement and report the change to the captain or sponsor.

d. Due to the possible conflicts in schedules all cheerleaders should be willing to help out whenever needed and are encouraged to cheer for extra activities. If a cheerleader is going to miss an activity for any reason, including illness, they need to contact the squad captain. The squads will always cheer when at least 3 cheerleaders are present. In the event of a rescheduled contest they will not be required to cheer if we cannot get enough members to attend.

e. Cheerleaders will be required to attend all tournaments that are for varsity athletics. This includes conference tournament, sub-districts, districts, and state. Attendance for these events is required, even though there may be no notice given.

f. The squad **may** compete at cheer competitions throughout the school year. All squad members will be required to attend practices and compete in the performance.

g. Cheerleaders who are participating in a sport will not be required to cheer the same evening as their own event. They are required to find their own replacement and report it to the squad captain and sponsor. Cheerleaders

who participate in a Varsity girl's basketball game for four quarters will not be required to cheer for Varsity Boy's basketball in the same evening. Letter points will not be taken, but none will be received either. Lettering may be more difficult for cheerleaders in many sports.

h. Cheerleaders will follow the attendance policy in accordance with the school handbook.

i. Cheerleaders will ride **school provided transportation** to and from all activities.

j. Cheerleading is a time consuming activity with many weeks having activities nearly every night. Therefore students who have a job as well as other school activities may find the task of keeping up with the schedule overwhelming. While we cannot refuse a cheerleader who has a job, it is important to note that **WORK IS NOT AN EXCUSED ABSENCE**. It is the responsibility of the cheerleader to notify the employer of the commitments that might interfere with the work schedule.

k. We recognize that we have many candidates who are involved in other activities within the school. The squad will always try to substitute for one another in order to cover for absent team members who are participating in a game, contest, or other school activity. Therefore no cheerleader should ever feel that they must miss a school activity due to cheerleading conflicts. **If a cheerleader is so busy that conflicts are a continuing problem, that individual may want to consider not trying out next year.**

l. Fundraising will be done throughout the year in order to support cheerleading activities, school spirit needs pay for cheerleaders to be admitted to all conference and district level tournaments and the many other needs that might come up throughout the year. Participation in group fundraisers is required.

### **Captain/Co-captain**

Two cheerleaders will be selected as captain and co-captain to represent the squad. The advisor reserves the right to determine how they are selected. Considerations include but are not limited too: years as a cheerleader, letters earned, total points from tryouts, total points from the previous year, essay and leadership qualities. The captains are responsible for the communication among the cheerleaders and between the advisors and cheerleaders. They are the chief organizers for the group and the bookkeepers for the squad's points. As a result of their responsibilities captains will be

held at a higher standard than other cheerleaders. They will always have advisor support and assistance. If at any time they are not fulfilling their duties it is the advisor's discretion whether they will remain in their leadership position.

### **Captain Selection**

The squad will utilize a captain and a co-captain to help with organization and decision-making. The 2023-2024 captain selection will consist of each candidate completing an essay and being interviewed, this will happen the week after tryouts. Captain selection will be announced after the interview process is complete.

### **Physicals**

All cheerleaders are required to have a physical participating in any activity

### **Uniforms and Appearance**

1. Uniforms are to be purchased by the individual cheerleaders. They are ordered and paid for by the end of the previous school year. **Cheerleaders must pay for their uniforms before they take them home.**
2. Uniforms should always be clean.
3. Length and style should be decided upon by squad members, parents, and advisors. Advisors have the right to determine the length of skirts and tightness of all fits on tops.
4. Uniforms are to be worn through out the day of the event.
5. Jewelry that does not go with the uniform should not be worn. Excessive jewelry such as necklaces and long dangle earrings or hoops should not be worn. Only one ring and studded earrings permitted.
6. Uniforms worn by the squad should match.

### **Camp**

1. Cheerleading camp is required for all members if the squad chooses to attend a camp.
2. Cheerleaders must find their own source of funding.
3. The squad will provide fundraisers to help defray the costs of uniforms and camp. The squad will vote on the fundraiser to be used to help individuals.

## **Conduct and Responsibilities**

1. A cheerleader shall not chew gum or eat while on the field or court.
2. A cheerleader shall not sit in the stands or leave the squad until halftime of the end of the game. They should be ready to cheer immediately after half time.
3. A cheerleader should promote good sportsmanship at all times.
4. Cheerleaders should be present at least fifteen minutes before an events: wearing uniforms.
5. When cheerleaders are allowed to ride the team bus they must follow the rules of the coach in charge.
7. All pep rally activities must be approved by the principal, athletic director, and the sponsor.
8. Cheerleaders will be present for all required activities and scheduled practices. The attendance policy will be strictly adhered to through the school year.

## **Attendance Policy**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| *tardy- practice                              | -2  |
| *tardy- game or bus                           | -3  |
| *3 accumulative tardies=one unexcused absence | -5  |
| *unexcused absence- practice                  | -5  |
| *unexcused absence-cheering                   | -10 |
| 2nd unexcused absence                         | -20 |
| 3rd unexcused absence                         | -35 |
| See 3 Strike Rule in points section           |     |

**Cheerleaders will follow all the outline rules in the activities handbook set up by the Fort Calhoun schools.**

**Cheerleaders who engage in high-risk behaviors such as drinking or use of illegal drugs, including vaping will be reprimanded according to the school handbook. They will also forfeit their varsity letter for that year.**

**All cheerleaders are expected to be active members in POPP.**

### **Summer schedule**

The cheer squad practices 2-3 times a week through out the summer. During this time, much of the planning and practicing for yearly events occurs and a productive summer can really relieve some of the stress during the school year. 15 letter points are awarded for attending 80% of the required summer practices.

**All cheerleaders will turn in a personal summer schedule to the sponsor in MAY. Dates will be marked on the master schedule for vacations, etc. Cheerleaders must inform the captain if they will be gone on a day NOT marked on their personal calendars.**

Required events and practices

**Camp** (date to be set in June, July, or August)

**Homecoming week decorating** (Sunday October 1st )

**Homecoming cleanup** (Friday October 6th & Sunday October 8th)

**All individual events assigned to a cheerleader** (throughout the year)

**Elementary cheer camp** (September/October)

**Competition practices** (TBA)

**Competitions** (State-February 16-17)

**All Conference tournaments** (VB and basketball mid-season)

**All sub-district tourneys** (end of each season)

**All district finals** (end of each season)

## **Point system**

The advisor has the right to add/deduct points as she feels necessary. Inappropriate behavior regarding conduct of sportsmanship will be dealt with individually as it occurs. Every cheerleader begins the summer with 0 points. It requires 175 points to letter.

| +                       |     | -                        |     |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| Cheer Basketball        | +5  | Incorrect Uniform        | -4  |
| Cheer football          | +5  | No poms when told        |     |
| -2                      |     |                          |     |
| Cheer Volleyball        | +5  | Unsportsmanlike          | -5  |
| Cheer Volleyball Tri    | +10 | Ineligible               |     |
| -5                      |     |                          |     |
| Cheer wrestling dual    | +5  | No Locker Stickers       |     |
| -5                      |     |                          |     |
| Cheer Wrestling Tourney | +10 | -2 <sup>nd</sup> Time LS | -10 |
| Softball/XC Attendance  | +3  | -3 <sup>rd</sup> Time LS | -20 |
| Perform at Competition  | +3  | Missing HC Dec/CU        | -10 |
| Locker Stickers         | +3  |                          |     |
| Banner                  | +4  |                          |     |
| Poster                  | +3  |                          |     |
| Run Through             | +6  |                          |     |
| Parent's Night Stickers | +4  |                          |     |
| Decorating HC/CU        | +10 |                          |     |
| Homecoming Float        | +5  |                          |     |
| 80% Attendance Summer   | +15 |                          |     |

## **3 STRIKE RULE**

- If you miss 3 duties unexcused (practice, meeting, cheering, regardless of the activity) you will not be eligible to cheer for your next event and will lose points for that event.

-If unexcused absences is an issue 5 or more times for a cheerleader she will not be eligible to try out the next year for the squad.



## **Awards**

The squad will recognize members who have gone above and beyond the total points needed for a letter. For 175 points a letter is awarded, for 225 points a certificate of excellence will be awarded, and for 260 points a certificate of superior cheering will be awarded.

## Parent Permission

Our son/daughter has our permission to tryout for Varsity cheerleading at Fort Calhoun Junior Senior High School. We have thoroughly read the cheerleading handbook and will assist in every way to see that these rules and regulations are followed. We understand that failure to follow these rules and regulations in the handbook, the activities handbook, or directions given by the sponsor will mean dismissal or suspension of the squad.

We understand that the school and advisors assume no financial responsibility for the uniforms or any other expense of being a cheerleader. We also understand that the school and advisors assume no responsibility for any accident or injury that might occur at school, during an event, or away from school grounds. Insurance may be purchased for these purposes. We also understand that if the school is unable to provide transportation, we shall provide that transportation with the prior notice given to the sponsor and administrator.

We shall encourage and strive to make it possible for our son/daughter to be a good leader at Fort Calhoun High School.

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Athlete Name

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Address

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Phone

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City

State

Zip

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Parent Signature

Date

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Student Signature

Date

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Email for Wednesday April 5th after tryouts