

2011 MPA CHEERLEADING BULLETIN (FALL)

(updated 09/13/11)

FALL CHEERLEADING SEASON

August 1-August 14	Hands-off Period (Sport Season Policy)
August 15	First Practice - Fall Cheering Squads
	Fall season ends with the completion of your school's Football/Soccer/Field Hockey Team's season
November 5	Fall Sports Season Ends

GENERAL INFORMATION

Cheering is recognized as a competitive sport only during the winter sport season. Fall cheering squads exist solely to support a school's football, soccer and/or field hockey team. The fall season should not be used to prepare for the winter season. It is inappropriate for fall squads to construct or practice a winter routine, stunts, or to work on winter skills or routines. Individual or team tumbling and gymnastics lessons mandated by the coaching staff are a violation of the sport season policy.

Exhibition competitions may not be held in the fall and teams may not travel out of state unless they are accompanying a football, soccer or field hockey team.

MANDATORY FALL CLINICS

There will not be a mandatory rules clinic held for fall cheerleading coaches.

AACCA SAFETY TRAINING

All cheerleading coaches (both fall and winter) must have completed AACCA Safety Training prior to the start of the season in which they are coaching. Classes are available on the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.org).

NATIONAL FEDERATION SPIRIT RULES

The MPA strictly enforces all appropriate 2011 - 2012 National Federation Spirit Rules for the fall cheerleading season. These rules are in effect at all times when the team is participating in any event that may include all practices, volunteer events, or games. Failure to follow the rules will result in ground bounding your team for the season. It is the responsibility of the principals and/or the athletic administrators to ensure that fall teams are not practicing skills to be utilized for the winter season.

Rule 2-1-1..."A coach must not permit a team member to participate if in the judgment of the coach the participant does not conform to the NFHS rules." When practicing the fundamentals of cheerleading a step-by step progression should be followed and recorded by a qualified coach and should be used until the skill is mastered.

Rule 2-1-3... "Cheerleading Practice Sessions should be held in a location suitable for spirit activities, i.e. appropriate surface/area, reasonably free of obstruction and excessive noise, etc." The National Federation Spirit Committee recommends the use of mats when practicing indoors during inclement weather

Rule 2-1-4..."Performing surfaces must be suitable and free of objects." **Stunting shall not be performed on concrete, wet surfaces (grass), cinder tracks, or where there is not enough space or adequate lighting.**

Rule 2-1-5..."Stunts must be modified to be appropriate to the performing surface/area."

Rule 2-1-6..."Adequate warm up, including stretching, must precede all activities."

Rule 2-1-12..."Participants must not chew gum or have candy in their mouths during practice or performance."

Rule 2-2-1..."Jewelry must not be worn except for religious or medical medals, which shall be taped to the body (without a chain) under the uniform," No exceptions to the rule.

Rule 2-2-3...The hair must be worn in a manner to minimize risk for the participant." All hair must be worn tied up in a ponytail/off the participant's shoulders.

PRACTICE SESSIONS

All appropriate NFHS Spirit Rules apply at all times when the team is present and practicing. All practice sessions should include front and back spotters. Suitable mats or a grassy area should be used while all stunts are being learned. Step-by-step procedures should be used to master all stunts and learning sessions should be supervised by a qualified coach, in accordance with NFHS Spirit Rules. Principals and athletic administrators are responsible for the teams to ensure they are not practicing skills to be utilized in the winter season.

BONA FIDE TEAM RULE

A member of a school team is a student athlete who is regularly present for and actively participates in team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are prevented from missing high school practice or competition to compete or practice elsewhere.

* A single waiver per student athlete per sport season may be granted by the principal on a case-by-case basis for extraordinary circumstances. (e.g. If a student/athlete were invited to participate in a prestigious weekend event then a waiver may be granted. If a student/athlete were invited to participate in a nationally recognized tournament over a school vacation then **that** waiver may be granted for that activity. If a student requests to miss practice every Friday because he/she is receiving specialized coaching from an outside team/coach, then a waiver should not be granted **because it violates the spirit and intent of the rule.**)

** This policy is not intended to restrict dual sport participation in schools that allow dual participation.

*** Penalty for violation of this policy:

1st Violation Report violation to MPA office, suspension from play for one game/contest

2nd Violation Report violation to MPA office, removal from team for remainder of season

(Effective Date: 2011 Fall Sport Season)

THE ROLE OF A CHEERLEADER

(See Cheerleading Philosophy in the National Federation Spirit Rules' Book)

- * Promote school spirit not only during games but throughout the season for all sports.
- * Cheerleaders have a job to promote school spirit during school and at the games.
- * Only performing stunts during time outs or between quarters does not promote school spirit.
- * Try to get the crowd involved. Utilize signs, band, and crowd cheers. Go back to the basics. Easy cheers- response cheers.
- * In order to get the student body involved you need to earn their respect. Catch their attention. Get the crowd of all ages involved.
- * Be aware of your team's behavior- this includes pre-game, during the game, and after the game. Are the cheerleaders organized and enthusiastic? Does the team complete their time-out, quarter cheer, or half time routine and then walk off having discussions? Or do they try to get the crowd excited?

Game situations for the fall season - Safety Issues

- * Hair pulled back into a ponytail and off the face and shoulders.
- * Appropriate attire suitable for what the cheerleaders are doing.
- * No jewelry permitted- this includes belly button rings or spacers.
- * No chewing gum
- * No swearing.
- * No stunting on wet grass. Only stunt on appropriate surfaces.
- * Stretching and warm-ups should not be done directly in front of a crowd.
- * Talking should be kept to a minimum.
- * No basket tosses performed on courts, hard surfaces, or unsafe areas.
- * **Basket tosses, elevator tosses and similar multi-base tosses are permitted only on grass (real or artificial) or a mat.**
- * Perform only **legal** perfected material.
- * No stunting while the ball is in play. No exceptions. The crowd is focused on the game during this time.

Exhibition competitions may not be held in the fall and teams may not travel out of state unless they are accompanying a football, soccer or field hockey team.

CHEERLEADING CLASSIFICATION

CLASS A <u>725+</u>	CLASS B <u>400-724</u>	CLASS C <u>200-399</u>	CLASS D <u>0-199</u>
<u>EAST</u>	<u>EAST</u>	<u>EAST</u>	<u>EAST/WEST*</u>
Bangor Brewer Brunswick Cony Edward Little Hampden Lawrence Lewiston Messalonskee Mt. Ararat Mt. Blue Oxford Hills Skowhegan	Foxcroft John Bapst Maine Central Morse Mt. Desert Mt. View Nokomis Old Town Presque Isle Washington Waterville	Bucksport Dexter Mattanawcook Orono	Rangeley
<u>WEST</u>	<u>WEST</u>	<u>WEST</u>	
Biddeford Bonny Eagle Deering Gorham Kennebunk Marshwood Massabesic Noble Portland Sanford Scarborough South Portland Thornton Westbrook Windham	Freeport Fryeburg Gardiner Gray-New Gloucester Greely Leavitt Lincoln Medomak Mountain Valley Oak Hill Poland Spruce Mountain Wells Winslow York	Lisbon Madison Sacopee Traip	

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