



SHCA Cheer Program

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The SHCA Cheer program aims to improve the physical ability and skills of the student athletes while supplying a fun and rewarding activity to all the participants.

The Cheer program runs from October to early March. There are three levels – Spirit Squad, Cheer Squad and Competition Squad. Spirit Squad and Cheer Squad have practices 1 day a week, while the Competition Squad practices 2 times a week. The Cheer and Competition Squads will usually perform for the home boys' basketball teams. There will be limited performances at the home girls' basketball games due to team members also playing on the basketball teams. The Cheer Squad will focus on cheers and sidelines routines. The Competition Squad will learn small lift stunts and gymnastics basics (toe touches, cartwheels, flips, etc.). In addition to cheering at home basketball games the Competition Squad may attend outside competitive events where they will perform a structured cheer/dance routine. Coaches are present for all gymnastics and stunt routine practices, which the athletes perform at their comfort level.

At all levels, but especially at the Cheer and Competition level, parents must notify coaches ahead of time if a team member is not going to attend a practice or event. Parents should give coaches as much advance notification of the absence as possible.

Each team **must** have the following to take part in the program:

1. A volunteer **Head Coach** with the proper clearances to coordinate practices and run the team at games. The Athletic Director appoints the Head Coach with the school principal's approval.
2. At least one volunteer **Assistant Coach** with the proper clearances to help with practices and events and to take control of the team in the absence of the Head Coach. The Head Coach may propose Assistant Coaches and the Athletic Director approves them.
3. A volunteer **Team Parent** to coordinate any activities for the team throughout the season.

Progression Of Skills

Below is the progression of skills coaches will aid athletes in mastering during their time in the cheer program at SHCA.

Spirit Squad Level - Grades K to 2

The Spirit Squad is an intramural program that runs from mid-October until late November. There is one session per week. The program usually culminates in a half-time performance at one of the Turkey Shoot Tournament basketball games in late November.

Spirit Squad focuses on preparing athletes for learning the most fundamental skills used at the Cheer Squad level, such as:

- Confidence and voice inflection
- Teamwork and trust building
- Discipline
- Memorization and repetition
- Understanding key moments in the games (when to cheer for points scored, and defensive cheers)
- 3-6 Sideline cheers (based on the athlete's ability to memorize and repeat cheers)
- Basic cheer motions



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The Spirit Squad practices and learns several sideline cheers that they will perform at a Turkey Shoot Tournament game. The Spirit Squad normally does not cheer at home games but depending on participation levels coaches may invite squad members to attend 2-3 games throughout the year (based on availability). The goal is to prepare the athletes for the Cheer Squad and to build confidence. The sideline cheers they learn will carry over into Cheer Squad. There is no tumbling or stunts at this level.

Also, at this level we begin teaching the need for listening to the coach, respecting teammates, and practicing discipline on the court.

Cheer Squad Level - Grades 3 to 8

At this level athletes ***continue to develop skills they learned at the Spirit Squad level***, and to focus on the most fundamental skills, such as:

- Confidence and voice inflection
- Teamwork and trust building
- Discipline
- Cardiovascular, endurance, dexterity, strength, and flexibility training
- Fundamental cheer skills, common language, and terms
- Basic cheer motions
- Chants and potentially basic tumbling

For certain players at this age, you can introduce advanced tumbling. However, for most Cheer Squad members coaches will limit tumbling to the sidelines.

Competition Squad Level - Grades 3 and 8

At this level athletes ***continue to develop skills they learned at the Spirit Squad and Cheer Squad levels***. The Competition Squad also learns a cheer dance routine that requires partner stunts or activities at an advanced skill level. At this level we really stress the importance of teamwork and focusing on the fundamental skills, as well as progressing into basic and advanced tumbling and level 1 stunts. Points of emphasis are:

- Confidence and voice inflection
- Teamwork and trust building
- Discipline
- Cardiovascular, endurance, dexterity, strength, and flexibility training
- Fundamental cheer skills, common language, and terms
- Basic cheer motions
- Chants
- Level 1 or 2 Stunts; no mounting passed the shoulder
- Basic and advanced tumbling
- 4-minute cheer/dance routine



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Attendance at Competition Squad practices and events is mandatory. If a team member is not able to attend a practice or event parents must make coaches aware in advance so there is time to adjust the team's routines in the athlete's absence. Continued failure to notify coaches of a team members absence may result in the permanent removal from the Competition Squad.

Coaching Approach

Coaches should coordinate between all the levels so that athletes can transition seamlessly to the higher levels as they progress. To do this:

- Coaches should strive to attend practices at various levels. It is especially important for the higher-level coaches to occasionally attend the practices of the lower-level teams. The coaches of the lower-level team should occasionally attend practices of the higher-level teams (Spirit Squad at Cheer Squad practices, etc.)
- Higher level teams should call up athletes from the lower-level teams to cheer at games.
- All coaches should be aware of the cheer chants, scheduling, and dance routines.
- Cheer Squad and Competition Squad should have joint practices once a week

At all levels, we teach the need for listening to the coach, respecting teammates, referees, and spectators, and practicing discipline while performing.

All levels should make sure to include some fun activities into the practices.

Home Games

Collecting the game entry fee and selling 50/50 raffle tickets and concessions at home basketball games is crucial to supporting the athletic program. For instance, a basketball double header (JV and Varsity games) costs at least \$120.00 in referee fees. We need parent volunteers for all home game to:

- Run the score board
- Keep the score book
- Collect the game entry fee
- Sell the 50/50 raffle
- Operate the concession stand

Volunteers need to make every effort to sell 50/50 tickets and concessions. That may mean making the extra effort to bake pretzels or setting up the nacho cheese crock pot to have more options for sales. We also need volunteers to help leave the gym in good condition after home games (clean the floor, everything put away, trash emptied, etc.).

While the parents of the team that is playing the game/match have the responsibility to fulfill the above requirements, **we encourage the parents of any cheer teams performing at the game to help too.** The **Team Parent** will help coordinate the scheduling of the needed volunteers for each home game.