

7-12
BUTLER GOLDEN
TORNADO CHEERLEADING
HANDBOOK
2023-2024



7TH GRADE GAME SQUAD
8TH GRADE GAME SQUAD
JHS COMPETITION SQUAD
JUNIOR VARSITY GAME SQUAD
VARSITY GAME SQUAD
VARSITY COMPETITION SQUAD

GAME SQUAD RESPONSIBILITIES

For all teams 7-12, the coaches and the Athletic Department together decide what events we cheer at, and which team cheers at them.

7th Grade Game Squad

- Cheer at all home 7th grade football games
- Cheer at all home 7th grade boys' basketball games
- Attend/participate in squad fundraisers
- Attend scheduled practices
- Wear game day attire to school as scheduled
- Participate in squad community service projects
- The 7th grade game squad does not travel to away games

8th Grade Game Squad

- Cheer at all home 8th grade football games
- Cheer at all home 8th grade boys' basketball games
- Attend/participate in squad fundraisers
- Attend scheduled practices
- Wear game day attire to school as scheduled
- Participate in squad community service projects
- The 7th grade game squad does not travel to away games

Junior Varsity Game Squad (Grades 9 & 10)

- Cheer at all home 9th grade & Junior Varsity football games
- Cheer at all home 9th grade & Junior Varsity boys' basketball games
- Cheer at all girls' Varsity playoff basketball games (home & away)
- Attend/perform at the Pie Festival
- Attend/participate in squad fundraisers
- Attend/perform at Meet the Players for basketball
- Attend scheduled practices
- Wear game day attire to school as scheduled
- Participate in squad community service project

Varsity Game Squad (Grades 11 & 12 - in addition to select Varsity Competition underclassmen*)

- Cheer at all home and away Varsity football games (including playoffs)
- Cheer at all home and away Varsity boys' basketball games (including playoffs)
- Decorate locker rooms prior to home football games
- Attend/participate in squad fundraisers
- Attend/perform at Pie Festival
- Participate in the Fall Clinic / Fall Clinic football game
- Attend/perform at Meet the Players for basketball
- Attend scheduled practices
- Seniors only - create tryout material for following season and assist with tryouts
- Participate in squad community service projects

- Wear game day attire to school as scheduled
- Attend team bonding activities as schedules

COMPETITION SQUAD RESPONSIBILITIES

The coaching staff will determine which local competitions the squads will attend. Additional financial obligations will occur as outlined in the obligation sheet. Parents will receive a copy of the obligation sheet at the pre-tryout meeting, post-tryout meeting, and a copy will be listed on the website for reference.

Varsity Competition (Grades 9-12)

- All competition squad members must also be members of a game squad
- Attend additional group fundraisers and uphold financial obligations as described in the competition squad contract
- Parent participation in group fundraisers (ex. fall clinic) is expected
- Attend scheduled practices & conditioning
- Attend UCA Masters Camp June 24-26
- Attend Choreography Camp August 21 & 22
- Attend all competitions (local, regionals, WPIALs, States, & Nationals - pending qualification)
- Attend team building and community service projects

*Select underclassmen on Varsity Competition may be eligible to cheer on the Varsity game squad. This decision is at the discretion of the coaching staff. Making the Varsity competition squad does not guarantee underclassmen a position on the Varsity game squad. *

Junior High Competition (Grades 7-9)

- All competition squad members must also be members of a game squad
- Attend all competitions (typically 3-5 local competitions)
- Attend scheduled practices

BUTLER GOLDEN TORNADO CHEERLEADING CONTRACT

The coaches take the utmost time and dedication to make sure the rules and regulations are being adhered to by all athletes within the Butler Cheer Program. Special rare circumstances may affect decisions made by the coaching staff in very unique situations. We try our very best to hold each and every athlete to the same standard, but as in life, sometimes unavoidable exceptions need to be made. These decisions are strictly at the discretion of the coaching staff!

Tryouts & Squad Selection

- The number of athletes on each game squad will be determined by a break in the scores at tryouts. There are no set number of spots on any team.
- Female athletes will be evaluated on a cheer, dance, jump, and tumbling at tryouts.
- Male athletes will be evaluated on a cheer, tumbling, and stunting (full group and coed) at tryouts.
- Tumbling is not required but is strongly encouraged. A standing back handspring and roundoff back handspring are preferred skills for game squad athletes.
- Athletes should perform tumbling skills they are confident in throwing without a spot on the wood floor. They will not be spotted on tumbling passes at tryouts. Twisting skills are not permitted on the wood floor.
- We do not give out tryout scores to anyone. If you are not selected for any of the squads and you would like to know what areas you need to improve on based on your tryout performance, you may request this after tryouts by emailing goldentornadocheer@gmail.com. This is the only form of communication that will be responded to with regards to tryout placement. Coaches will not be responding to phone calls or text messages regarding squad selection. A great deal of time and consideration goes into our decisions. Please allow at least 5 days after tryouts for a response.

Scheduling

- Other activities, appointments, and work must be scheduled around cheerleading. We ask that you give a two-week's notice regarding events such as weddings, scheduled appointments, vacations, etc. If we are not able to schedule around them, then you must use an excuse for the event.
- Coaches will post scheduled practices, games, and events in the Band app. Events will also be updated weekly on the website under 'This Week's Events'. Parents & athletes are expected to check the website each week. Last minute scheduling changes will be shared in the Band app. Notifications should remain on for this reason.
- Parents are responsible for making arrangements for their child to be driven to and picked up from the scheduled event. Please be prompt in picking up your child - coaches are required to wait with cheerleaders until they are all picked up after the conclusion of a practice/event/etc.
- If a game squad cheerleader wishes to participate in other activities such as All Star Cheerleading, Indoor Track, Coaching a Youth Squad, other extra-curricular activities, etc. they will need to speak to their coach on an individual basis to make them aware of these situations. Being involved in many activities such as these requires additional responsibility on the part of the cheerleader when it comes to time management and scheduling. Butler Cheerleading must remain the first priority to the cheerleader. Even if a cheerleader elects to participate in activities such as the ones listed above, they will still need to use excuses in the event of absences due to these events, so use them wisely!

Attendance

- All practices, games, and squad events are mandatory. Butler Cheerleaders are required to attend all games as well as any extra events (fundraisers, pep rallies, decorating, etc.)
- The cheerleader is expected to show up properly dressed and on time for all events and practices.
- If the cheerleader arrives late or unprepared to a game, the coach reserves the right to sit the cheerleader out of quarter cheers, halftime, and possibly the game itself.
- If a cheerleader is found to have been untrue about an absence, then they are subject to disciplinary action and possible suspension and/or dismissal from the squad.
- **Excuses will not be accepted from competing cheerleaders two weeks before a competition.**
- Once the cheerleader accumulates 20 days absent from school (regardless of reason) they will not be eligible to cheer until they accumulate 45 days present in school per school rules. This carries over from year to year. (ex. If you are absent 20 or more days in the spring semester, you are ineligible to cheer in the fall until you have accumulated 45 days present in the fall semester.)
- You must be in school by 10:45 am in order to participate in games or practices that day. If you do not attend school for any reason, you are expected to inform your coach so they may appropriately plan for the game or practice.
- If you are suspended from school (in or out) you are not eligible to participate in anything throughout the duration of the suspension - weekends included. You must still attend the event and be dressed appropriately, but you may not participate. You will need to use an excuse for any events that you cannot participate in due to ineligibility caused by suspension or detention.
- Each athlete will be given one week (seven consecutive calendar days) of excused vacation time. During these seven days, the cheerleader will be excused from all game squad and competition practices/fundraisers/events/etc. In order for this to be excused, the cheerleader must submit the Excused Vacation Form ahead of time.
- All game squad athletes will be provided with three excuses for the entire cheerleading year. Competition squad members (JHS & Varsity) will receive an additional three excuses, bringing their total to six for the season. If there are game squad and competition practices/events happening on the same day, only one excuse needs to be turned in for the day.
- Being a Butler Cheerleader is very time consuming. It is the cheerleaders' responsibility to manage their time effectively in order to attend all team activities. Athletes will not be excused from games and or practices due to procrastination of school work and or personal endeavors. (ex. birthday outings, hair and or nail appointments, work, etc.).
- If the cheerleader needs to miss an event, the following procedures below must be followed. You are expected to know and follow these procedures. If you have any questions please ask your coach.

Excuse Policy & Procedures

ABSENCE REQUIRING AN EXCUSE	ABSENCE NOT REQUIRING AN EXCUSE
<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting colleges • Family weddings • Doctor's appointments • Taking SATs or ACTs • Not feeling well but attended school • Vacations extending beyond one week (seven consecutive days) • Extra-curricular and school activities • Unable to participate due to suspension or detention 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sick from school • Sent home from school sick • Family funerals • One week (seven consecutive days) of excused summer vacation • School events required for a grade (concerts, etc.)
<p>Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coach(es) must be informed as soon as the cheerleader knows they will not be able to attend. • Excuses will not be accepted after the event has begun! If an excuse is not physically submitted before the event begins, then it will be considered unexcused. • The parent or cheerleader must provide a written excuse that must be on a standard form (see Standard Excuse Form). • Planned excuses should be turned in at least one week ahead of time. • Once the cheerleader's excuses are gone, the absence will be considered unexcused (see below). • You are not permitted to use an excuse for work or when you just feel like taking a night off. • You must ask permission to use an excuse. 	<p>Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coach(es) must be informed as soon as the cheerleader knows they will not be able to attend. • If the cheerleader is absent from school, the athlete needs to call the coach as soon as possible during the day. Do not wait until 30 minutes before the activity to call your coach! • If a cheerleader is abusing their "sick" misses, the coach has the right to sit them out based on excessive absences. • One week (seven consecutive calendar days) of vacation will be excused. The vacation form must be completed and submitted as soon as the summer calendars are issued. Additional or extended vacations will require the use of an excuse for each practice or event that is missed for each squad. This will be followed strictly. • For school events required for a grade, coaches must be informed at least one week ahead of time so that all attempts can be made to schedule around this event.
UNEXCUSED ABSENCES	
<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the cheerleader needs to miss an event and does not have any excuses left to use • When the cheerleader needs to miss an event due to work • When the cheerleader needs to miss an event and did not physically submit their excuse form before the absence • When the cheerleader does not show up for an event and did not physically submit an excuse before the absence <p>Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cheerleader will sit out the next scheduled uniformed event directly following the unexcused absence. (If the unexcused absence occurs over the summer, the cheerleader will sit out of the first football game.) • Cheerleaders will not be permitted to have more than three unexcused absences. When the fourth unexcused absence occurs, the cheerleader will be removed from that team. 	

Fundraising

- Fundraisers will be designated either for all athletes or for competition squad athletes only.
- Athletes on the Varsity competition squad will be required to participate in additional group fundraising to cover all competition expenses. Please see the "Fundraising" section under Competition.
- Money fundraised is the property of the Butler High School Cheer Parent Association and cannot be given to individuals or families regardless of the circumstances. The money is to be distributed according to the BHSCPA By-Laws.

Financial Obligations

- All money must be turned in by the required due date. Please pay attention to the due dates.
- All money must be submitted in the form of checks or Venmo. Cash will not be accepted.
- All checks should be made payable to: BHS Cheer unless noted otherwise.
- You are responsible for any fees that we are charged by our bank for checks that are returned to us.
- Checks can be mailed to:
Butler Cheerleading
PO Box 1971
Butler, PA 16003
- Questions regarding your financial obligations should be directed to butlervcheer@gmail.com - this is an email run by the treasurers.
- When your child makes one of the teams, they will be assigned a number that will coordinate with all monies due. Please check the website frequently and pay your balances promptly.
- If you need to post-date checks or divide payments, please speak to or send a note to the Treasurer to make arrangements. Payments should be made in full by the due date. Any special arrangements will be kept private between the family and the treasurer and possibly the coach.
- If you have any money outstanding at the end of the season from anything (clothing orders, fundraising obligations, lost uniform pieces, etc.), the cheerleader will not receive a banquet gift until the balance is paid and an obligation will be placed on file for you at the Athletic Office. The athlete will also not be allowed to try out for the following cheer season until all balances are paid.
- If a cheerleader is removed from any of the Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading squads, or if they remove themselves for personal reasons, any outstanding money that they owe must still be paid. Also, any money that they have fundraised will remain the property of Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading, and they will not be entitled to any banquet gifts, etc.

Practice Outfits & Game Day Accessories

- All cheerleaders will be required to buy some of the necessary uniform accessories for their game squad. Some of those expenses may include, but are not limited to: matching practice outfits, cheer shoes, game day shirt, rain jacket, etc.
- Competition cheerleaders will have additional practice outfits they will be responsible for, as well as competition cheer shoes.
- Optional items such as bags, sweatshirts, etc. will also be available for purchase.

- During the month of October, the cheerleaders will wear pink in support of Breast Cancer Awareness month. All athletes will be expected to purchase a pink t-shirt that will be worn to school on game days. Female athletes will be expected to purchase a pink bow to wear to games.
- It is required that incoming members to the Butler Cheerleading program purchase a warm-up outfit (jacket and pants) to be worn to games and competitions.
- Any item that the cheerleader keeps will be an out-of-pocket expense. Therefore, no fundraising will be done to cover the cost of these items.

Uniforms

- All uniformed pieces supplied by the Butler Area School District are property of the Butler Area School District. They are to be taken care of and respected.
- At no time should cheerleading uniforms (including matching outfits, warm ups, & poms) be lent to anyone other than Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleaders.
- 7th Grade and 8th Grade Cheerleaders will have one uniform and one set of pom poms that are issued by the school district. JV & Varsity cheerleaders will have two to three uniforms and one set of pom poms issued by the school.
- At the end of the season, all members will return all uniformed pieces, tagged with names, and cleaned. If a cheerleader fails to return their uniform on the scheduled date, then they will be turned in to the school for an obligation. The price set for any damaged or missing piece of uniform will be the cost at present that it takes to replace the missing/ damaged items.
- The cheerleader will not be cleared of their obligation until all outstanding money is paid to the Butler Area School District. The cheerleader will not be permitted to try out for the 2024-2025 season unless their obligations have been fulfilled.
- Uniforms are to be worn according to the direction given by the coach.

Personal Appearance

- Hair will be pulled up and secured off the cheerleader's face for every event and practice. Bangs must be pinned back and secured off the face!
- No jewelry/piercings are to be worn at practices or competitions - no exceptions.
- Proper footwear (cheer shoes/tennis shoes) is to be worn at all times.
- For games and performances, the cheerleader is to wear plain white low-cut or high white socks at the discretion of the coach.
- Nail polish must be clear or a pale neutral color for all games, performances and competitions.
- If a cheerleader is not properly dressed and presented, then they will not be eligible to cheer until they make the appropriate corrections.
- Cheerleaders are to wear game day attire to school when they are instructed to. This includes wearing the designated cheerleading shirt from this season, khaki pants/shorts/capris/skirts (unless instructed otherwise). The cheerleader may sit out a performance or a portion of a performance if they do not wear the proper attire as instructed.
- Varsity cheerleaders are to wear warm ups and tennis shoes to all away games (no slides, Crocs, Birckenstocks, or boots!)

Injuries

- If the cheerleader is unable to tumble or stunt due to injury extending beyond one week, the cheerleader must have a note from a doctor. The note must be specific and detailed as to what the cheerleader can and cannot do (stunt, tumble, jump, cheer, etc.), and it must also indicate the dates for the restriction (beginning and ending).
- If the cheerleader is injured, they are still required to attend all practices, performances, fundraisers and events. they should be dressed appropriately for the event as well.

Cell Phones

- Cell phones must be turned off once you arrive at practices, games, fundraisers and events and remain off throughout the event. Abuse of this policy will result in all athletes having their cell phones collected at the beginning of the event and not returned until the conclusion of said event!
- Cell phones should be put away before athletes get off the bus at away games and should not get them back out until we are back on the bus.
- You should not be using your phone at any point during a practice or a game. This includes reading and/or sending text messages, even during water breaks and halftime.
- Cell phones are not permitted to be taken to awards ceremonies for competition athletes.
- If you need to use your phone for any reason, you must ask your coach first.
- Parents - if you need to reach your child in case of emergency during a practice or a game, please call the respective coach on her cell phone.

Communication with Coaches

- Coaches' cell phone numbers and contact information are not to be distributed to anyone outside of the Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading group for ANY reason. The coaches can be reached at GoldenTornadoCheer@gmail.com by anyone outside of the organization needing to contact one of us.
- All cheerleaders and parents must sign the 2023-24 Signature Page for coaches to be able to contact the cheerleader on their cell phone regarding cheerleading matters. If the parent does NOT grant this permission, they need to check the appropriate spot on the 2023-24 Signature Page, and will need to provide us with a parent cell phone number that we can contact instead of the athlete.
- If a cheerleader is sick from school and will be missing a cheerleading game/practice/event/etc. that evening/day, a phone call from a parent is required for 7th and 8th graders. For JV and Varsity, a phone call is required by the athlete!
- Cheerleaders should not be texting coaches during the day if they are in school. Athletes should be focused on school and not cheerleading matters.
- Cheerleaders and parents should only call/text coaches with questions/situations that require immediate attention. Appropriate examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Parent phone call when athlete is sick from school and will be missing a cheerleading event
 - Parent/Cheerleader phone call/text message when the cheerleader will be late to an event (more than 5 minutes)
 - Any other emergencies/situations that require immediate attention.

- o It is not appropriate for cheerleaders to contact their coaches (via text message or phone call) regarding what time to be somewhere, what to wear, what to bring, etc. We have spent a great deal of time to make sure that this information is clearly displayed on the Bands and the website. If you are unclear or have a question, check your team's Band, the website, or contact a teammate.
- Parents should not contact coaches questioning decisions regarding a team's routine and their child's role in it IE. Stunt/ tumbling/formation positions.

Chain of Command

- The following is our communication chain of command:
 1. Athlete to Coach
 2. Parent to Coach
 3. Parent meet with Coach & Athletic Director
- The idea behind this line of communication is so the athlete may attempt conflict resolution themselves. The athlete should not feel intimidated to reach out to their coach with an issue or concern. It is a non-issue if the chain of command is not met. The relationship between athlete and coach should be one of mutual respect and communication.
- The cheerleader and parents will respect and follow the chain of command.
- We ask that school officials such as the Principal or the Athletic Director should not be contacted regarding cheerleading matters without first discussing these issues with the coach(es). This will ensure that the chain of command works properly.
- Coaches will not discuss individual athletes, their skills, their placement in the routine, or their status with anyone except the individual cheerleader then their parents.
- At no time should anything other than fundraising, outfits, schedules, banquets, competitions, or anything other than general Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading business be discussed at a Parent's Club Meeting. At no time should a meeting be called without the knowledge and approval of the coach(es).

Website

- The Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleaders have our very own website, butlercheerleading.com.
- Athletes are expected to check the website one time per week. It will be updated by 8:00 pm each Sunday. Athletes are responsible for the information posted on the website. Weekly schedules, general information, fundraising information, etc. are posted on the website. Athletes will be given log-in information to the secure users' area once they are selected for the squad.
- Athletes are expected to keep the website log-in information, as well as all information posted on the website, confidential.
- We understand that we are all very busy with the numerous things that we have going on in our lives. The website is designed to help – athletes are responsible for the information that is posted on it!
- If you do not have access to the Internet, it is your responsibility to contact someone who does at least on a weekly basis to find out what was posted on the site.
- By signing this contract, you agree to allow your photograph to be posted on the Butler Cheerleading website for cheerleading purposes.

Knowledge of Material & Maintenance of Skill Level

- All cheerleaders are expected to maintain a minimum of the skill level that they were capable of performing at tryouts.
- All cheerleaders are expected to know all necessary material by the beginning of each season (football and basketball). Game Squads only practice an average of 1-2 times per week - cheerleaders are expected to review their material at home if necessary.
- The coach reserves the right to sit the cheerleader out of games and performances if they are not consistently meeting the minimum skill requirements or if they do not consistently know all necessary material.
- If a cheerleader is absent from a practice for any reason, they are responsible for learning the material missed BEFORE the next practice.

Transportation (*Varsity & JV - playoff Varsity girls' basketball for JV*)

- The cheerleader will ride with the squad to and from all events and activities.
- Rare exceptions will be made only if the following procedure is used:
 - Parent provides advanced notice (both a completed form hand delivered to the coach and a phone call from the parent) before we leave to go to the event.
 - No excuses will be accepted once we leave to go to the event. No exceptions
 - The proper form must be used, and can be obtained from the coach.
 - The cheerleader may only leave with one of their own parents.

Behavior

- The cheerleader will demonstrate respect to the authority in charge of a particular event adhering to all directions given by that person (coaches, seniors, parents, etc.) Ex: Car Washes, Pep Rallies, Decorating, etc.
- The cheerleader will represent the squad in a professional, respectful, and appropriate manner and will act like a champion at all times. They will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times.
- Disrespect of coaches and teammates will not be tolerated. If the behavior remains consistently disrespectful after being addressed, the cheerleader will be removed from their team.
- The cheerleader must realize that they are a reflection of our entire cheerleading program at all times, whether at practice or in public, whether or not in uniform.
- The cheerleader will not demonstrate any public displays of affection while in uniform.
- Cheerleaders will not engage in inappropriate behavior at sporting events such as yelling at refs, cursing or joining in with unsportsmanlike behavior.

School District Policies

- All school district policies will be enforced throughout the season.
- These rules apply to infractions that occur 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.
- The Butler Area School District will not tolerate any form of hazing, harassment, bullying, racial or ethnic intimidation, or sexual harassment.
- Tobacco, alcohol, and drug violations will be handled according to school district policy.
- You must be passing at least 4 full-credit subjects as of each Friday. If you fail to meet this requirement, you will be ineligible the following Sunday through Saturday. You will remain ineligible until you are passing at least 4 full-credit subjects. Any games or practices that the

cheerleader is unable to participate in during your ineligibility will require the use of an excuse. The cheerleader should still be in attendance for practices, games and events and should be dressed accordingly for that event. Additionally, any athletes that are ineligible for academic reasons should talk to their coach to discuss ways to improve their grades such as tutoring, additional help, etc.

- Each athlete will be required to get a physical dated June 1, 2023 or later. You must get a physical by your family doctor or any medexpress type facility and have the necessary paperwork completed and submitted to the Athletic Office by a date you will be given at the first parent meeting after your child makes a team. Coaches cannot accept this paperwork. It must be turned into the athletic office. If you do not have the proper paperwork completed by the deadline, you will be ineligible to participate in any practices/games/camps/etc. until this is done. All practices missed for this reason will be unexcused. The school district also charges a \$75 athletic fee to be paid when turning in physical paperwork. Anyone receiving free or reduced lunches will have this fee waived or reduced respectively.

Enforcement of Rules

- A cheerleader may be removed from a Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading Squad at any time if:
 - Any of the rules stated in this contract are broken or abused.
 - Any school rules/policies are broken or abused.
 - Their attitude is negatively affecting the team and/or his/her performance.
 - The athlete has engaged in underage drinking, smoking, or illegal drug activity.
- If a cheerleader engages in a physical fight with another person, there will be immediate disciplinary action taken, which could result in their removal from their team! This is not behavior becoming of a Butler Cheerleader!
- If continued violations occur, the cheerleader may sit out of events for an undetermined amount of time. If problems continue, the cheerleader may be subject to dismissal from the squad.
- The cheerleader will be given sufficient warnings regarding these discipline measures.
- As other rules or requirements are necessary, the coaches will make them known to the cheerleader. The cheerleader will in turn, follow these rules.
- If a cheerleader is removed from their team for any rule violation, it is a possibility that they may not be eligible to try out to be a Butler Cheerleader the following season!

Social Media

- There is an absolute expectation that no cheerleader is posting negative, vulgar, or defaming images or comments on social media regarding their teammates, coaches, or anything related to the Butler Cheerleading Program. This includes, but is not limited to, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and TikTok. Keep it classy!
- Athletes should understand that how they represent themselves on social media is a reflection on their team. They should think before they post at all times.

BUTLER HIGH COMPETITION SQUAD CONTRACT

The following pertains to Varsity Competition Squad members.

Goals/Intentions

- Varsity Competition will be attending Trails End Camp June 24-26
- Varsity Competition will attend a two-day choreography camp August 21 & 22
- Varsity Competition typically compete at 5-6 local competitions in addition to Nationals; however, this is subject to change:
 - Miami Valley Regional Competition (Dayton, OH) - October
 - South Hills Showdown (Bethel Park, PA) - November*
 - PA State Cheerleading Championships (Indiana, PA) - November*
 - Allegheny Regional Competition (Slippery Rock, PA) - December
 - Bishop McCort (Johnstown, PA) - December*
 - Battle in the Burgh (Pittsburgh, PA) - December*
 - WPIAL Championships (Hempfield, PA) - January
 - PIAA State Spirit Championships (Hershey PA) - January
 - National High School Cheerleading Championships (Orlando, FL) - February
- *also attended by JHS Competition members
- We will perform our Nationals routine after the last home basketball game before we leave for Florida. If this is unable to happen for any reason, we will host a performance at Center Township Elementary.
- The squad does not automatically participate at States or Nationals. They must qualify for these events.
- Please keep in mind that our trip to the National Competition in Orlando, Florida is a team event. In other words, no significant others should be accompanying the athletes on the trip.
- All competition practices will be closed practices unless specified otherwise. If you need to discuss something with the coach, please email the coach to set up a meeting.
- Please keep in mind that our trip to Nationals is not a vacation; it is a time for us to accomplish our goals that we have worked for all season. Your #1 focus and priority during the entire trip will be cheerleading.

The following pertains to Junior High & Varsity Competition team members.

Squad Selection

- All athletes must decide at the time of tryouts whether they would like to be considered for a spot on the competition team. Athletes in 9th grade will be eligible for a spot on the Junior High or Varsity competition teams.
- All athletes must re-tryout each year. No one is guaranteed a spot on the team regardless of grade or seniority.
- At tryouts, a competition squad consisting of an unspecified number of members will be selected. The total number of athletes selected is at the discretion of the coaches.
- There is no set number of athletes that will be taken from season to season. The number of athletes selected for the team (both competing members and non-competing members) will be determined by the number of athletes at the appropriate skill level. These decisions will be made strictly by the coaches.

- The coach(es) reserve the right to choose the initial competition squad and make changes as they see fit. This includes holding tryouts or inviting additional athletes to join the team at any point throughout the season if the need arises (injuries, athletes quitting, athletes falling below the required skill level, athletes not reaching or maintaining a certain skill level). This also includes removing athletes from the squad if their skills are not consistently meeting the required level (stunting and/or tumbling).
- The coaches reserve the right to decide what division the team will compete in, and this is subject to change throughout the season based on what is best for the team.
- To be considered for the competition squad, individual athletes will need to meet the criteria as outlined below. For competition purposes, we will mainly focus on tumbling and stunting technique and ability, and consistency in all of the areas.
- All athletes are expected to maintain their stunting/tumbling abilities throughout the entirety of the season. If you perform a certain skill at tryouts, such as a standing tuck, you should be able to throw a standing tuck throughout the entire season. We have seen way too many athletes push themselves to perform skills at tryouts and then stop working to maintain these skills. These athletes should have no expectation to maintain their placement on the team.
- Athletes on Varsity Competition must be in grades 9-12 and attend Butler High School. All athletes on Junior High Competition must be in grades 7-9 and attend Butler High School.
- It is highly recommended that any athlete that is to be considered for competition be able to successfully demonstrate the following skills at the time of tryouts:
 - A standing back handspring
 - A standing back handspring back tuck
 - A standing back tuck
 - A roundoff back handspring back tuck (two step approach)
 - Layouts and fulls with a two-step approach are encouraged
 - If you do not have the majority of these skills consistently, then you should not expect to be considered for the Competition Squad. Tumbling is not required but is strongly recommended.
- Athletes must be able to successfully complete advanced partner stunt skills as a back spot, main base, side base, coed base, or a top. Stunting is just as important as tumbling. Athletes may be asked to try new positions throughout the course of tryouts and throughout the season. Maintaining positive attitudes and flexibility are necessary in this area – we do what is best for the team.
- We are looking for athletes that are motivated, driven and dedicated. Athletes must be able to work together as a team and to accept constructive criticism.
- We encourage athletes to participate in other sports and activities, but Butler Cheer must come first.
 - Competition members are not permitted to be a member of any other club sports teams or All Star cheerleading squads during our cheerleading season that would result in conflicts with our schedule. Winter sports are especially difficult due to the competition schedule and basketball games. Competition members involved in All Star cheer may not be on more than one All Star team.
 - It is impossible to work around every other competitive sport in the area and still conduct effective mandatory practices; therefore, missing for any other team/organization will require an excuse and follow the excuse policy outlined earlier in this handbook.
 - When a member chooses to participate in another high school sport that may conflict with the competition team schedule, it is the athlete's responsibility to bring this to the

head coaches' attention. Every effort will be made to work with the other high school coach to coordinate schedules. This requires communication skills and compromise from both coaches. It is at the head coaches' discretion to make accommodations for other Butler high school sports' teams.

- Competition squad members who wish to play another fall sport for Butler are not required to cheer game squad football but you are required to cheer for basketball in the Winter/Spring.

Competing Members vs. Non-Competing Members

- A competition team will be announced at tryouts. All competition squad members will attend all practices, camps, fundraisers, competitions, and all mandatory events of the competition squad whether they are a competing member or a non-competing member.
- Competing and non-competing athletes will not be identified at tryouts. The coaches will announce these positions prior to each competition and reserve the right to move members on and off the mat due to the needs of the team at any given time.
- Both gymnastics ability AND stunting ability will be considered when selecting athletes to represent the team on the mat at competitions.
- Competing members will not be announced at the selection of the team but rather before each competition.
- If a competing member of the competition squad is injured, ill, etc. a non-competing member will be moved to fill that position. The coaches will determine if or when the original competing member will return to the routine and who will be removed from the routine at that time if at all.

Fundraising

- All fundraising will be done as a group and participation in all fundraisers is mandatory.
- If a fundraising event requires the participation of a parent (clinic, car wash, competition, etc.), athletes are required to use one of their excuses if a parent or adult is not present.
- Possible fundraisers include:
 - Selling flowers/water at graduation
 - Sponsor shirts
 - Fall Clinic
 - Car Washes
 - PA Pride t-shirts
 - Candy Bars
- If our fundraising efforts throughout the season come up short of the amount that we need to send our athletes to Nationals, each athlete will be expected to pay the remaining balance out-of-pocket. If this occurs, we will decide on the amount needed per athlete and you will be given the option to participate in individual fundraisers and/or to pay this amount.
- If the cheerleader is removed from the competition squad due to rule violations, falling below the required skill level, or if they remove themselves for personal reasons (including injury), they will not be allowed to make the trip to any competitions, including Nationals. The fundraising money that they have helped to raise up to that point is the property of Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleaders and will remain property of the Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleaders. If those individuals' parents have, at that point, paid money to the National's trip, then the responsibility of taking the trip, finding someone else to take their spot, or making cancellations, is theirs. Any money that the cheerleader owes for outstanding expenses must

still be paid. The Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleaders will not be responsible for reimbursing any money that may have been lost due to disciplinary action and/ or a family's decision (for any reason) to not make the trip past deadline points where monies have been forfeited.

Out-of-Pocket Expenses

- Below are the estimated out-of-pocket expenses for the entire season for the competition squad. These figures are based on new members to the team, returning members will already have some of the items. Please also remember that these costs are in addition to the game squad expenses!
 - Clothing: Additional practice clothes/bows, competition cheer shoes
 - UCA Summer Camp: approx. \$300 plus bus fee TBA depending on how many athletes we have and if we have another team to split expenses with.
 - Local Competitions Fees: approx. \$100
 - Choreography Camp: approx. \$275...this includes choreography and music
- Nationals: Airfare, hotel, competition fees, park tickets, group meal will typically be covered for each athlete (provided we meet our fundraising goals). While they are more than welcome to attend, cheerleaders are not required to have a parent attend Nationals.

Transportation

- For all local competitions, the cheerleader will be responsible for arranging their own transportation. Cheerleaders are not permitted to drive themselves to any competitions - unless their parents are in the car with them. All athletes must be driven by their own parent or another parent on the team. Athletes are not allowed to be driven to or from a competition by a significant other, no matter what their age may be.
- For each local competition, we will either select a local meeting place to meet before we depart for the competition or select a time to meet at the competition. All cheerleaders must meet at the named location at the appropriate time.
- The Butler Golden Tornado coaches and the Butler Area School District are not responsible for the cheerleaders while they are in transit to and from the competitions. Supervision will begin by the coaches once the cheerleaders arrive at the event and will end at the conclusion of the event.

Enforcement of Rules

- In addition to the rules outlined in the Butler Golden Tornado Cheerleading Contract, a cheerleader may be removed from the Competition Squad for the additional reasons below:
 - Their skills fall below the requirements for any of the given areas.
 - They are not showing improvement and/ or maintaining skills already acquired.
 - Their attitude is negatively affecting the team.

DECISIONS ARE BASED ON WHAT IS BEST FOR THE ENTIRE TEAM, NOT INDIVIDUAL CHEERLEADERS!!!!

Butler High School Cheer Parent Association

By-Laws

ARTICLE I – Name and Purpose

- a. And now, this first day of June, 2021, this Association shall be formed in Butler, Pennsylvania and shall be known as the Butler High School Cheer Parent Association (BHSCPA).
- b. The purpose of this Association shall be to assist the Butler High School Cheerleading squads to raise, deposit, manage, and disburse funds for projects, activities, and equipment; to plan events and activities, as needed, in conjunction with the Head Coach; and to comply with BHS, PIAA, and UCA policies and guidelines.
- c. This Association shall be a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that consists of parents/guardians of cheerleaders. BHSCPA is organized to promote, develop, supervise, and voluntarily assist fundraising events for the Butler High School Cheerleader members. BHSCPA will strive to meet the program's needs and desires all for the betterment of the athletes and parents involved.

ARTICLE II – Membership

- a. Every parent or guardian of a Cheerleader is encouraged to attend all meetings of the BHSCPA and participate in all efforts of the BHSCPA.

ARTICLE III – Officers and Duties

- a. The **President** shall be responsible for the operation of the Parent and Board meetings pursuant to these By-Laws. This shall include conducting meetings through an agenda. A copy of the agenda will be provided to all attendees of the meeting. *(See Appendix A: Officer Descriptions for a complete list of duties and responsibilities.)*
- b. The **Vice-President** shall assist the President and represent when the President is unavailable. He/She will also coordinate and organize all fundraisers. *(See Appendix A: Officer Descriptions for a complete list of duties and responsibilities.)*
- c. The **Secretary** shall maintain all written records, produce all written communications and approval forms (i.e. room reservations, etc.), prepare and distribute copies of the minutes from the previous meetings, provide notifications to parents/guardians of upcoming meetings, and any other pertinent information pertaining to the Association. *(See Appendix A: Officer Descriptions for a complete list of duties and responsibilities.)*
- d. The **Treasurer/Co-Treasurer** shall maintain an accurate budget of all expenditures that have been directly ordered by the Association, all revenue, and prepare and distribute copies of the Financial Report at each meeting to all in attendance. He/She will also submit a copy to the Secretary for record keeping. If the Treasurer cannot attend a meeting, he/she will forward any financial documents and accounting reports ahead of time to the Secretary for representation. All receipts will be given to the school office to show expenses. Each year there will be an independent accountant who will review the prior year's expense account. *(See Appendix A: Officer Descriptions for a complete list of duties and responsibilities.)*
- e. Removal of an Officer – Whenever it is deemed in the best interest of the Association, any Officer elected or appointed by the Association may be removed by the Association with a two-thirds majority vote of parents/guardians in attendance at the meeting, in conjunction with the head coach.
- f. Election of Officers – This will be held at tryouts each spring for open positions. Once the new officer(s) is/are elected, a special Board Meeting will be held between the incoming and outgoing Board Members to pass off duties and responsibilities. The annual budget will then be made by the incoming officers in conjunction with the outgoing officers.

- a. If more than two (2) senior parents are on the Board, their positions will need to be advertised at that year's try-outs to bring in co-officers to learn from the senior parents.
- g. Changes to By-Laws – changes may be made to these by-laws:
 - a. Suggestions are presented during the next Open Board Meeting (held quarterly)
 - b. Board will discuss the suggested change(s) and vote on it.
 - i. A unanimous vote will allow the change(s) to go forward.
 - ii. The Secretary will make the change(s), and attain the proper signatures, before publishing the new By-Laws.

ARTICLE IV – Meetings

- a. Parent meetings will be held monthly, during the cheer season (June through February). Additional meetings may be held at the discretion of the Officers in conjunction with the Head Coach.
- b. Board meetings will be held monthly, all year long.
- c. Parent and Board meetings will be scheduled for the season at the May Board meeting.
- d. A notice of the scheduled meetings will be sent using whatever reasonable means available. For example, but not limited to, email, BAND app, website, and text.
- e. In order to vote on any decision, you must have attended at least two (2) parent meetings.

ARTICLE V – Disbursement of Funds

- Monies fundraised for Nationals are for the competition team(s) as a whole. If, for whatever reason, the funds are not used in a given season, they will be rolled over to the following season for Nationals.
- Monies fundraised for the athlete's individual account will be used to pay the current season's obligation fee. If the athlete is removed from or quits the team, the monies will be used to pay the current season's obligation fee (if necessary) or will be deposited in the BHSCPA general fund account.
- If siblings are on the team, parents/guardians must specify how the monies will be allocated to each athlete; otherwise it will be allocated at the discretion of the Treasurers.
- If a check made payable to the Association has been returned for insufficient funds, the Association will charge the Parent the same fee the bank has charged. If a check has been returned a second time or more, the Association will charge the same fee the bank has charged – and their ability to pay by personal check is then revoked for the current cheer season.
- Obligation fees must be paid by the due date. Financial schedules are passed out at the first meeting of the season.
- If an athlete quits the team, for any reason, obligation fees to that point must still be paid (ie: clothing, choreography, camp, etc.).
- No monies shall be reimbursed to an athlete or their family. Money paid via obligation fees goes toward program costs, such as: clothing, camp, choreography, team bonding, etc. Most of these are ordered or reserved before the season is underway.
- If we fail to meet our fundraising goal for the year, the difference must be paid by the athlete's parent/guardian.
- It is imperative parents/guardians participate in ALL fundraising events.
- Unpaid Balances:
 - a. The Athlete will be prohibited from attending the End of Season Banquet and receiving their Banquet gift.
 - b. The Board is responsible for informing the School Board of unpaid obligation fees. If the Athlete is a senior, they may not receive their diploma or transcripts until the balance is paid in full.
 - c. If the Athlete is an underclassman, they will not be able to try out for the next season until the balance is paid in full.

- If the Butler High School Cheer Parent Association disbands, the monies shall be transferred to the Butler High School Cheer Program, to be used by the coach(es) to continue the cheer program at Butler High School.

Article VI – Conflict of Interest

1. BHSCPA shall adopt a Conflict of Interest policy.
2. BHSCPA shall annually discuss hypothetical situations that could result in a conflict of interest and then discuss how the Board would manage that potential conflict.
3. BHSCPA shall include in its board meeting minutes any instances of conflicts of interest that are disclosed by its member and how the conflict was managed (discussion without the board member in the room, a vote with the “interested” member abstaining, etc.).
4. BHSCPA shall circulate a questionnaire annually to ascertain whether any board members have a conflict of interest. The questionnaire will require board members to disclose existing conflicts and remind them to disclose any that may arise in the future.

Article VII – Execution of Bylaws

1. Agreed to and executed this 9th day of May, 2023.

Kelly Smith, President

Martha Brown, Vice President

Rachelle Holt, Treasurer

Lori Lewis, Co-Treasurer

Pam Flanigan, Secretary

Article VIII – Parent/Guardian Agreement to By-Laws & Financial Obligations

I, _____, have read, understand, and agree to the articles put forth in these By-Laws.

I understand my financial obligations to the Butler Varsity Cheer Program and will fulfill my obligations.

I understand, if my athlete quits for any reason, I will be responsible for obligation fees owed to that point and that any monies I/we assisted in the fundraising efforts are considered the property of Butler Cheer.

I understand that any unpaid obligation fees may result in my athlete being prohibited from attending the End of Season Banquet and receiving their banquet gift.

I understand that the School Board will be notified of unpaid obligation fees. If the athlete is a senior, they may not receive their diploma or transcripts until the balance is paid in full. If the athlete is an underclassman, they will not be able to try out for the next season until the balance is paid in full.

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

ADDITIONAL PARENT COMMITTEES

In addition to the BHSCPA officers, we will need parents willing to step up into the following roles throughout the season.

- Varsity Team Parent
 - Assist coaches with Football and Basketball senior nights; work with coaches, senior cheerleading parents, and football and basketball boosters (if necessary)
 - Coordinate hot chocolate for football games
 - Assist coaches with uniform distribution and collection
 - Assist Game Squad Fundraising Coordinator with fundraiser pick-ups
- 7th Grade, 8th Grade, & JV Team Parent (1 per team)
 - Assist coaches with any special activities
 - Work with football and basketball boosters if necessary
 - Assist coaches with uniform distribution and collection
 - Assist Game Squad Fundraising Coordinator with fundraiser pick-ups
 - Assist coaches with money collection and transfer to treasurer
- Banquet (1 parent from each team)
 - Decorations, reservations, cakes, assist with gifts
 - Organize February-March
 - Banquet end of March/beginning of April

POTENTIAL FUNDRAISERS

Below is a list of possible fundraisers and when they happen throughout the course of a typical season. Additional fundraisers may be included at the discretion of the coaching staff and BHSCPA. Varsity Competition fundraisers require a group effort from all competition parents. Please help with as many fundraisers as you can. The fundraisers benefit your children and help relieve out-of-pocket expenses!

PROGRAM-WIDE

- Candy Bars: start of season
 - Order, sort, & distribute candy bars to athletes/parents to be sold
- Day in the Burgh
 - Coordinate Day in the Burgh prize (ex. dinner, Steelers tickets, hotel stay, etc)
 - Organize in July/August. Drawing in November

VARSITY COMPETITION

- Graduation: June 9
 - Corporate Sponsorship: June-August
 - Send letters to local businesses, log donations, & send thank yous to contributors
- Car Washes
 - Organize car washes throughout the summer
 - Coordinate dropping off/picking up of car wash supplies
 - Coordinate with treasurer to have start-up money at car washes
- Corporate Sponsorship Committee
 - June-August
 - Send letters to local businesses, keep a log of donations, and thank contributors at end of season
 - Coordinate banners to be printed for football/basketball games, as well as t-shirts to be thrown at games
- Pig Raffle Fundraiser*
 - Reach out to Thoma Meat Market to see if they're willing to donate a pig to raffle
 - Organize in June/July. Facebook Drawing early Fall (NEW FOR 2023)
- Fall Cheer Clinic
 - Organize June-September. Select appropriate football game to have attendees cheer at with head coach approval.
 - Coordinate fundraising table (clothing, poms, etc)
- Advent Box
 - Organize August-November. Facebook Drawing end of November
- Super Bowl Squares
 - Organize two weeks prior to the Super Bowl. Follow along with the Super Bowl and distribute monies to winners. Super Bowl is Feb 11, 2024
- PA Fan Shirts
 - Coordinate and organize sales of PA t-shirts
- Send Off Party & Gifts
 - Organize October-December
 - Part in January for States. Coordinate with head coach on exact date