



HANDBOOK

2026 - 2027

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PHILOSOPHY & PURPOSE

Being a part of Del Rio Cheer is an honor and a privilege. Cheerleaders represent their school with pride, sportsmanship, and leadership both on and off campus. Members are expected to demonstrate high standards of behavior, teamwork, and academic achievement. Our goal is to create positive role models who support school spirit, community involvement, and the overall mission of SFDR-CISD.

GOALS & EXPECTATIONS

Del Rio Cheer members are expected to be physically and mentally prepared to perform at games, competitions, and community events. They must maintain academic success, respect for others, and a commitment to teamwork. Participation requires dedication, accountability, and a positive attitude at all times.

Expectations include:

- Following all school, district, and cheer program policies.
- Maintaining academic eligibility and good citizenship.
- Respecting teammates, coaches, staff, and the community.
- Attending all required practices, games, events, and fundraisers.
- Communicating clearly and professionally about absences or conflicts.
- Upholding the image and reputation of Del Rio Cheer in person and online.
- Following the school, district, and cheer program dress code policies.
- Maintaining financial obligations.

ELIGIBILITY, TRYOUTS, & COMMITMENT

Candidates must be enrolled in SFDR-CISD, in good academic and behavioral standing, and cleared medically for participation. Tryouts will be judged by impartial evaluators using a skills rubric. Attendance at mandatory meetings and clinics is required. Final team placements and leadership roles are determined by the coaching staff and administration. Transfer students may have a private tryout in person or by video at coaches discretion and if spots are available on the team. Transfer students will have to be selected before April in order to be able to order uniforms.

- Candidates must attend all tryout practices and clinics.

- Candidates must turn in all paperwork on the assigned date.
- Candidates must be in good standing with the school financially and with no referrals, suspensions, or other disciplinary actions for the current school year
- Candidates who abandon their positions after making the team or are removed may not tryout the following year
- Candidates will receive an end of season evaluation from the previous year that will be tallied into the total tryout score
- If there is a tie, placement of both athletes will be determined by numbers on the teams.
- Varsity eligible candidates will receive a stunt evaluation throughout the clinic days that will be tallied into the total tryout score
- Transfer students may have a private tryout in person or by video with a recommendation from a previous coach at Del Rio coaches discretion and if spots are available on the team.
- Transfer students will have to be selected before April in order to be able to order uniforms.
- Transfer students will have to catch up on any passed payments.
- All transfers will be handled on a case by case basis.
- Candidates must be here on time for their tryout slot or their spot will be forfeited.

Commitment

Cheerleading is a year-long commitment beginning at the date of selection and ending at the end of the following school year (the current year and previous year will overlap). High School Members must be enrolled in the required cheer class. Middle School Members must be enrolled in PE Athletics. All cheer members must participate fully in practices, performances, camps, and community service. Participation in Del Rio Cheer takes priority over non-school extracurriculars. Exceptions or special circumstances will be handled at the discretion of the coaches and administration.

TEAM MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

Team sizes and levels (Middle School, Freshman, JV, Varsity) will be determined annually based

on program needs. Freshman/JV cheerleaders have the opportunity to be promoted to the next level squad when needs arise. Promotions are not guaranteed and will be determined by the coaching staff based on readiness, skill development, and team needs. Leadership positions such as Captain and Co-Captain are optional and appointed by the coaching staff. Responsibilities include assisting coaches, leading by example, and supporting team unity. Leadership appointments may be changed or removed at the discretion of the coaches or administration.

- Leadership looks for:
 - Responsibility
 - Work Ethic
 - Being on Time
 - Attitude/Behavior
 - Grades (must pass the entire year)

ATTENDANCE

Cheerleaders are expected to attend all scheduled practices, games, and events. Absences may be excused only for illness, family emergencies, or school-approved activities, with prior notice to the coaches (at least the day before). Excessive excused or unexcused absences may result in suspension from performances or removal from the team at the discretion of the coaching staff.

- 2 unexcused and/or no call no shows- athlete will sit out of the next game and pep-rally/event
- 6 total unexcused/no call no shows/excused practices, events, or games will result in removal from the team
- All events on the calendar are mandatory (practices, games, events, etc.)
- 3 tardies equal to 1 absence
- Attendance at practice is essential. For safety reasons and to ensure proper team coordination, participants who miss practice may be excluded from the performance.
- If you miss a practice, the following will be the make-up workout to be scheduled with a coach within the same week of absence and not during another practice.

- 1 mile run
- 50 squat jumps
- 50 push-ups
- 25 toe touches/back handsprings/tucks
 - If the workout is not complete before the next game/event/pep-rally the athlete will not participate

Medical Clearance & Injury Policy

All members must have current medical clearance prior to participation, including an annual physical exam.

- All injuries, regardless of severity, must be reported to the Director immediately.
- Failure to report may result in restricted or removed participation for safety.
- All injuries, regardless of severity, must be reported immediately to the director. Failure to do so may result in restricted or denied participation.
- Director reserve the right to limit or remove members from practice, performances, or events if medical conditions pose a safety risk.
- Injured members shall not participate without written release from a U.S.-licensed medical professional. Members must fully comply with medical recommendations and any modified participation guidelines.
- Final decisions about participation related to injury and safety rest with the coach(es) and campus administration.

CONDUCT & SPORTSMANSHIP

All cheerleaders are expected to represent Del Rio Cheer with integrity, respect, and positive sportsmanship at all times. Inappropriate behavior, including bullying, hazing, or disrespect toward coaches, teammates, spectators, officials, staff, or any other person, will not be tolerated. Consequences for misconduct will be determined by the coaching staff and administration in accordance with district policy.

Examples of consequences:

- 10 school day spirit probation for 1st offense
- 20 school day spirit probation for 2nd offense

- Removal from the team for 3rd offense

Any offense can result in removal from the team if decided on by the coach and/or administration

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any violation of school, district, or cheer policies may result in consequences ranging from strikes, conditioning, counseling, suspension from events, probation, or removal from the program. Specific outcomes will be determined by the coaching staff and administration, considering the severity and frequency of the infraction.

- Strikes can be for tardiness, jewelry, improper attire, language, cell phone use, etc.
- If an athlete receives 10 strikes, they will be required to sit out of 2 games/events.
- If an athlete receives 15 strikes in a year, they will be removed from the team.
- Merits can be earned to cancel out strikes. It is up to the coach how/when merits are earned

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Team members are responsible for all financial obligations, including uniforms, camp fees, and other costs. Payment plans may be arranged through the coaching staff if necessary. Refunds will not be issued for dismissal, resignation, or withdrawal from the team. All balances must be cleared before tryouts for the following season.

- All items purchased or provided to the athletes will be used throughout the year and need to be taken care of, including but not limited to... bows, uniforms, shirts, shorts, accessories, etc.
- Athletes who are missing any portion of their uniform will receive a strike, may be required to sit out of the game or event, and must purchase the missing item to ensure proper replacement.
- Cheer items purchased/being used during the current year should not be worn outside of cheer events when these items are scheduled to be worn.
- Consequences for wearing the incorrect attire:

- 1st offense: Verbal warning and you will sit out until the correct item can be brought to you
- 2nd offense: Receive a strike and you will sit out for half the game/event/or performance (depending on what it is)
 - Athlete may resume the rest of the game/event/performance once they have the correct item
- 3rd offense: Receive a strike, athlete will sit out the whole game/event/or performance, and the next pep-rally or performance
- 4th offense: Receive a strike, athlete will sit out of the whole game/event/or performance and will not be allowed to be with the team on the sidelines (will wear regular clothes)

The handbook may be amended as needed by the director and administration. Unaddressed situations will be handled individually, respecting confidentiality. Texas law and SFDR-CISD policies supersede this document.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT PAGE

By signing below, both the dancer and parent/guardian acknowledge that they have read and understand the Fine Arts and Del Rio Cheer Handbook for 2026–2027. They agree to follow all guidelines and understand that participation is contingent upon compliance with school, district, and program expectations.

Name: _____ ID#: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 1: Uniform and Appearance Expectations *(amended 8/11/2026)*

Uniform, hair, makeup, nails, and jewelry are all part of DR Cheer's standard of appearance. Every athlete is expected to follow these guidelines at practices, games, competitions, camps, and all team social events unless a coach states otherwise in advance.

1. Uniform Attire

DO ✓	DON'T X
• Wear full team attire: top, bottom, bow, hair styled per guidelines, shoes, poms, megaphone, and makeup. • Treat every item purchased for DR Cheer as part of the official uniform. • Wear only coach-approved attire for each event. • Wear pants or shorts with no holes when required.	• Do not show up with missing items (e.g., no bow, hair not pulled up) — missing pieces will not be excused. • Do not show up missing any part of practice or event attire. • Do not alter or personalize any DR Cheer attire. • Do not wear pants or shorts with holes as part of a DR Cheer look.

Please do not lend out your DR Cheer attire — no one will take care of it like you will.

2. Hair

DO ✓	DON'T X
• Wear all hair slicked back in a tight, secured ponytail while in uniform. • Secure hair with gel or hairspray; curled hair is permitted. • Keep hair in its natural color while in uniform. • For half-up, half-down styles, secure the top section with hairspray or gel.	• No loose hair — all hair must be pulled back while in uniform. • No messy hair or hair without hairspray/gel. • No unnatural hair color, including small dyed strands, strips, or tips. • For half-up, half-down styles, the top section may not hang loose.

Hair is part of uniform attire.

3. Makeup

DO ✓	DON'T X
• Wear red lipstick, pink blush, and mascara — these are part of the uniform. • Use natural-tone blush and eyeshadow while in uniform. • Natural false lashes and black eyeliner are allowed while in uniform. • Highlighter and bronzer are allowed while in uniform.	• No bare face — makeup is required while in uniform. • No colored eyeshadow or unnatural-tone blush while in uniform. • No dramatic long lashes or bold winged eyeliner while in uniform. • No glitter makeup or designs while in uniform, except when a coach approves it for a specific event.

Makeup is part of uniform attire.

4. Jewelry & Ear Piercings

DO ✓	DON'T X
• Be jewelry-free in uniform and at all practices. • For a brand-new piercing, small flatback or ball studs may be worn, covered with a bandage, during PRACTICE ONLY, and only while healing. • Notify your coach in advance if you have a new earlobe piercing (heals in about six to eight weeks). • Notify your coach in advance if you have a new cartilage piercing (heals in about four to twelve months).	• No jewelry of any kind during games, social events, camp, competitions, or practice. • No sharp-back studs or earrings with loops, even for a new piercing, during games, social events, camp, or competitions. • No jewelry during games, social events, camp, competitions, or practice — no exceptions once healed. • No jewelry in uniform at games, social events, camp, competitions, or practice.

Jewelry falls under uniform attire and is a safety concern — we have to be cautious with this.

5. Nails

DO ✓	DON'T X
• Keep nails short — no longer than 1.3 cm (about the length of the fingertip). • Nail color may be a school color — navy, white, or clear — while in uniform for games, fundraisers, and social events. • Choose square or oval nail shapes; these are the safest for preventing injury. • Nail art/paint designs are fine as long as they use approved colors.	• No nails longer than the fingertip. • No nail polish or acrylic nails at camp or competitions. • No square, stiletto, ballerina, or coffin-shaped nails. • No nail jewelry or embellishments.

Nails fall under uniform attire and are a safety concern — we have to be cautious with this.

Why It Matters

A team uniform builds unity and a sense of belonging among athletes. Every member of the team is equally valuable, and wearing a uniform lets the squad come together as one cohesive unit rather than as individuals.

A successful team is built on strong leadership, clear communication, and athletes who work well together. Personal style is welcome and valued outside of uniform settings — these guidelines simply keep the team looking unified and safe while representing DR Cheer.