



# **Round Rock Christian Academy Cheerleading Handbook 2026-2027**

**"In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." Romans 12:5**

**"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all it's parts are many, they form one body. So, it is with Christ."**

**1 Corinthians 12:12**

## **PREAMBLE**

The Cheerleading Handbook has been developed to outline the expectations and accompanying procedures for the cheer program at Round Rock Christian Academy. This handbook was designed and prepared as a basic operating instrument to define and explain the qualifications and responsibilities of the cheerleading program.

All extracurricular activity participants will be subject to and abide by the provisions of the RRCA Cheerleading Handbook, the RRCA Student Conduct Covenant, and Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) guidelines. TAPPS does permit a school to impose stricter standards than those of TAPPS requirements, but the school will not impose more lenient standards. Additional cheer program expectations may be established. Therefore, in case of a conflict between this handbook and a campus expectations addendum, this handbook will prevail.

The Round Rock Christian Academy Athletic Department will review and evaluate campus decisions for campus wide consistency and continuity in following the intent and spirit of this handbook. Handbook guidelines and procedures are reviewed annually and revised by the program directors and Athletic Department. The contents of this handbook are not contractual, and do not give rise to a claim of breach of contract against Round Rock Christian Academy. Furthermore, the contents of this handbook apply to all students of the school as the contents now appear in the handbook or as they are amended in the future.

*Disclaimer: Unfortunately, not all situations that arise can be anticipated or accounted for in the handbook. Should events occur that are not covered in the RRCA Cheerleading Handbook, they will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Athletic Director, Campus Administration, and cheer coaches and will be dealt with according to what is fair and just. Furthermore, RRCA reserves the right to alter the rules according to the situation at any time.*

## **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of cheerleading is to create, promote, and uphold school spirit and a positive school environment by participating at athletic events and extracurricular activities as deemed appropriate by the campus administration and coach. Participation in the regular curriculum is a right afforded to each student while participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege that carries additional expectations for acceptable conduct.

## **EXPECTATIONS:**

### A. Leadership

1. Being a cheerleader is an honor and special privilege and therefore he/she is held accountable to a greater standard than that of the general school population.
2. The cheerleader is a recognized representative of RRCA, as well as TAPPS, and as such, must demonstrate the highest levels of character and behavior.
3. Cheerleaders are expected to promote and maintain good relationships with faculty, administration, student body, and work cooperatively with all school organizations and the community.
4. Cheerleaders are high-profile representatives of RRCA, and behavior is subject to scrutiny by peers, the campus, the community, and the media. The actions of a single student-athlete can reflect positively or negatively not only on the individual student-athlete, but also on his/her team and coaches, the entire school campus and RRCA Cheer community. Therefore, cheerleaders are expected to represent RRCA with honor, dignity, and integrity at all times- including when interacting on social networking websites and in other online environments.
5. Cheerleaders should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to the position and in accordance with the rules as stated in
  - a. TMS/TAPPS online paperwork
  - b. RRCA Cheer Handbook
  - c. Campus/ Student/ Athletic Handbook

B. Physical Functions- A cheerleader must uphold the skill level demonstrated at tryouts while striving for continuous improvement while focusing on our primary concern- SAFETY. Physical functions include but are not limited to:

1. Athletic Conditioning (running, weightlifting, stretching)
2. Jumps
3. Stunts & Tumbling
  - a. Members are expected to do proper progressions
  - b. Members will only stunt or tumble with the coach's permission.
  - c. A coach must be present in order for members to stunt or tumble.

### C. Academic

1. Cheerleaders who receive a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period or who fail to meet the standards in the SSIP may not participate in extracurricular activities for the allotted time set by the RRCA/ TAPPS Athletic Eligibility Schedule.
  - a. In conjunction with TAPPS basics of no pass/ no play, failure to pass all classes will result in a 3 week probationary period and the loss of eligibility.
  - b. If after the 3 weeks the member is passing all classes, probation will be lifted and eligibility reinstated.

c. If after the 3 weeks the member is failing any class, the probationary period will continue until the end of the grading period.

d. If the cheerleader fails a second grading period, he/she will be removed from the squad and will be eligible for tryout the following year.

e. During the ineligibility period, the member must practice but will not be allowed to participate in any cheerleader functions outside of practice, per TAPPS rule.

2. Cheerleaders who become ineligible will not be allowed to perform, travel with the squad, or wear his/her uniform.

3. Cheerleaders who have been ineligible for two grading periods during the cheer season (from date of tryouts to the end of the following school year) will be dismissed from the squad.

4. If a current cheerleader fails two grading periods and is removed from the program, they will be eligible to tryout for the following season but will be placed on probation should they make the team. Any additional failure will result in immediate dismissal from the team, and the student will be ineligible to tryout for the following season.

#### D. Participation

1. Cheerleaders must attend all scheduled practices and performances.

a. Cheerleaders absent from practice, performance, or scheduled event will be subject to discipline.

b. Cheerleaders selected by RRCA will not be allowed to represent the school and/or cheer program without coach approval.

2. Summer Cheer Camps are mandatory.

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:**

#### A. Campus Procedures

1. Cheer coaches manage daily decisions regarding the program. They may develop and enforce standards in addition to, or higher than, RRCA expectations. RRCA expectations are defined as:

a. Student Conduct Covenant

b. RRCA Athletic Handbook

c. RRCA Parent/ Student Handbook and Addendums

2. Cheer coaches are required to follow the National Federation High School Spirit Handbook & TAPPS required coaches training.

#### B. Medical

1. RRCA Concussion Protocol- Due to state law, any student athlete diagnosed with a concussion must obtain physical clearance before beginning RRCA Return- to- Play protocol. Coaches must be apprised of any medical conditions, whether temporary, permanent, or recurring. Withholding pertinent medical information could result in immediate dismissal from the program.

#### C. Misconduct

1. Violations of all RRCA Code of Conduct will be addressed in accordance with TAPPS Rank One/ TMS paperwork, RRCA Cheerleading Handbook, and RRCA Student Conduct Covenant

2. Suspension from school results in automatic dismissal from the program.

D. Communication- If a concern should arise, the following chain of command must be followed and an appointment scheduled at an appropriate time

1. Coaches
2. Campus Administration
3. RRCA Athletic Director

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Uniforms
  - a. Uniforms will be worn to every game.
  - b. The uniform may not be worn for personal use or by anyone who is not a member of the cheerleading squad.
  - c. Only the coach may approve alterations to uniforms. Uniforms must follow the admin's suggestions. No rolling of skirts will be allowed.
- B. Personal Presentation
  1. Cheerleaders will wear hair/ nails as designated by the coach.
  2. Cheerleaders may not chew gum or eat during practice, pep rally, game, or performance.
  3. Members may not wear any type of jewelry while in uniform, practicing, or performing.

## **FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS:**

- A. Cheerleaders are required to purchase a full uniform/s (including appropriate shoes), and any additional cheer items that the coach deems necessary, or we decide on as a team. Poms and bows will be purchased by RRCA Cheer Program and kept at school.
- B. Cheerleaders are responsible for costs associated with summer cheer camp.
- C. Cheerleaders are responsible for RRCA athletic fees.
- D. Cheerleaders may be responsible for costs associated with travel to games.
- E. If uniform, athletic, or camp fees are not paid by the due date, the student will not be able to participate in camp or cheer at the next event until the fees are paid in full.
- F. Any member dismissed, removed, or who resigns his/her position in the cheer program is responsible for all financial obligations for non- returnable/ non-refundable merchandise.
- G. A \$200.00 Uniform Deposit will be collected at the uniform fitting.

## **PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS:**

- A. Attendance
  1. Practices are mandatory and each member is expected to attend. Arriving late or leaving early is unacceptable.
  2. Coaches must be given advance notice, in writing, if a member is expected to miss.
  3. The following activities may not interfere with practices:
    - a. Work
    - b. Family Activities/ Vacations
    - c. Tutoring must be scheduled around practices
    - d. College Classes
    - e. All- Star Practice
    - f. Driver's Education/ Tests
    - g. Doctor/ Dentist appointments
    - h. Any other activities, while encouraged, will not be an excuse to miss practice

4. Members must be dressed and in a designated area assigned by the coach.
  5. Before and after school, summer and student holiday practice/meetings may be required.
    - a. Saturday and extra practices may be held throughout the year.
    - b. Members are accountable for all planned events.
    - c. Members will be required to attend sporting events, all district and playoff games, which little notice may be given
    - d. Rare impromptu practices may be needed
    - e. Playoff games may occur during holiday breaks
  6. If knowledge, execution, or effort is lacking, the coach reserves the right to remove any member from the routine or event.
  7. No cell phone or other distractions are to be at practice.
  8. Due to safety reasons, all practices will be closed to the general public,
  9. Safety is a priority! Cheerleaders may be stunting or performing potentially dangerous activities.
    - a. Cheerleaders must be present, attentive, and focused.
    - b. Any side conversations, laughing, and goofing around is not acceptable as serious injury could occur.
- B. Practice Uniforms**
1. Cheerleaders must be dressed in an appropriate workout uniform.
    - a. Applies to practices both during and outside of the school day
    - b. Must wear designated practice clothes and cheer shoes.
    - c. Hair must be securely pulled back and away from the face.
  2. Jewelry is not permitted during practice.

## **GAME AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS**

### **A. Attendance**

1. Cheerleaders are expected to attend all scheduled games, playoff games, pep rallies, performances, and any event scheduled for the school community.
  - a. Little Cheer Camp and Lil Cheer Clinics
  - b. Crusaderfest
2. Excused absence is allowed in cases of funeral, doctor's note, or special school activities with advanced approval from the coach.
3. Prior written notification must be received if a member cannot attend a game/ performance. This does not make the absence "excused."
4. The following activities may not interfere with games/ performances:
  - a. Work
  - b. Family activities/ vacations
  - c. Tutoring must be scheduled around game/ performance
  - d. College Classes
  - e. All- Star Practices
  - f. Driver's Education/ Tests
  - g. Doctor/ Dentist appointments

h. any other activities, while encouraged, will not be an excuse to miss games/ performances

5. A cheerleader must attend school on the day of the game/ performance to participate.

6. Parents are asked to arrive for pick up within 15 minutes of notification

#### B. Uniform

1. Cheerleaders must wear designated uniform to Pep Rally and Games.

a. Uniforms must be complete upon arrival- NO ROLLED SKIRTS

b. Uniforms must be CLEAN and fit appropriately

2. Complete Uniform includes:

a. Correct skirt & shell

b. Correct undergarments that are not showing

c. Socks & Cheer shoes

d. Bow

e. Hair/ Nails as designated by coach

f. A uniform may also include pom poms. Backpack/ bag, and any other approved equipment

#### C. Spirit

1. The purpose of Cheerleaders are to lead the crowd in cheers and to motivate the team.

2. Cheerleaders are to listen and follow the direction of the coaches and leadership to ensure an optimal game day environment.

3. Socializing during the game is not encouraged. Cheerleaders/Mascots need to stay focused in order to ensure the safety of all involved.

#### D. Conclusion of game/performance

1. Each cheerleader has an assignment before, during, and after a game/performance. Each is responsible for placing equipment in the proper location. Cheerleaders will all be dismissed after all equipment is properly stored and the area is clean.

2. Coaches will dismiss cheerleaders as a group.

### **CONSEQUENCES AND DISCIPLINE**

A. All cheerleaders are expected to follow all the rules of conduct as outlined in the RRCA Student Conduct Covenant, RRCA Athletic Handbook, RRCA Cheer Handbook, and other rules that may be developed by the coach with approval of the Campus Principal.

B. Discipline may include, but is not limited to:

1. Opportunity to Improve

2. Warnings/ Demerits

3. Community Service

4. Benching (not being permitted to perform)

5. Suspension

6. Dismissal from the squad

C. Discipline Policy and Consequences are effective the day after tryouts and continues until the last school day of the following year.

D. Situations that are not mentioned in the RRCA Student Conduct Covenant,

RRCA Athletic Handbook, RRCA Cheer Handbook, or will be handled at the discretion of the coach and the campus administration.

E. If a Cheerleader has been dismissed from the squad, he/she will be responsible for any money still owed.

1. Failure to pay dues will result in being placed on the campus obligation list.

F. Cheerleaders must display appropriate behavior both in and out of school.

The following is a list of behaviors, although not limited to, that could lead to suspension and/or dismissal, whether the behavior occurs on or off campus:

1. Involved in the possession or use of tobacco/vaping/e-cigarettes/JUUL
2. Involved in the use or possession of, or under the influence of, a controlled or illegal substance
3. Involved in the possession or use of alcohol
4. Public nudity
5. Stealing/Shoplifting
6. Chronic misconduct
7. Chronic absences
8. Truancy
9. Bullying/Cyberbullying
10. Harassment/Slander
11. Forgery
12. In-School Detention
13. Disciplinary action involving any law enforcement agency on or off campus
14. Any offense deemed severe by the coaches and/or administration

## **IX. TRYOUTS**

The RRCA Cheerleading Department is responsible for all aspects of the RRCA Cheer Tryout process. All tryout results are declared final by the RRCA Cheer & Athletic Department.

A. Membership Structure

1. Varsity

a. Varsity positions are open to students currently enrolled in 8th, 9th, 10th, or 11th grade.

b. Campus and district administration will work together to determine the appropriate team size that maintains the integrity of the program and the standard for safety.

i. A natural break will be used to determine the varsity squad.

ii. Varsity squad numbers not to exceed 15 members.

iii. If campus enrollment dictates the need, squad size may exceed the maximum number of members.

B. If a cheerleader leaves the program before May 31st, the next candidate scoring above the natural break for the designated team may move into the vacant position.

C. In extenuating circumstances, special consideration may be given to students that move into RRCA after the tryout process but prior to August 1st.

D. Squad membership will exist from the tryout date to the last day of the following school year.

## **X. TRYOUT GUIDELINES**

- A. Candidates must be physically present to be eligible.
- B. Candidates are prohibited from possessing any type of technology during the campus tryout hours. In the event of an emergency, staff will be responsible for communicating with the parent.
- C. Tryouts are closed to the public.
- D. Parents/Guardians are to remain outside the building and may not be in the warm-up area or call-back room.

## **XI. TRYOUT QUALIFICATIONS**

- A. Mandatory Parent/Candidate Meeting
  - 1. Candidate and a parent/guardian must attend the RRCA Cheer Tryout Mandatory meeting.
  - 2. A sign-in sheet will be used to verify attendance at the meeting.
  - 3. If a parent is unable to attend due to extenuating circumstances, they must name a proxy, in writing, to the Head Cheer Coach. The parent must make arrangements to obtain all written and verbal information from the meeting.
  - 4. Failure for BOTH the cheer candidate and the parent/guardian to attend the same meeting will result in ineligibility to tryout.
  - 5. The Candidate and a parent/guardian are expected to attend the full meeting and are not permitted to leave early.
- B. Tryout paperwork submitted by specified deadline.
- C. Candidates must be a student at RRCA in order to participate in tryouts.
- D. All candidates must be clear of all campus financial obligations by the Monday prior to tryouts.
- E. The candidate must have exhibited appropriate conduct in accordance with the RRCA Student Conduct Covenant and RRCA Student/Athletic Handbook. Current cheerleaders who have been removed for violating the campus and/or policies/regulations will be eligible to tryout for the following school year.
  - 1. If the Cheerleader makes the squad for the following school year, he/she will be placed on immediate probation.
  - 2. Any other violations will result in permanent removal from the program and he/she will no longer be eligible to tryout.
- G. Current cheerleaders who have resigned will be ineligible to tryout for the following the school year. This includes current eighth grade cheerleaders.

## **XII. RRCA CHEER TRYOUT CLINIC**

- A. Occurs the week of tryouts
- B. Athletic attire is required
- C. Closed to the public
- D. Candidates must have a current physical on file with the Head High School Cheer Coach/ TAPPS and/or RRCA Athletic Department in order to participate.
- E. Day 1 and Day 2 (see below) are mandatory days

### **XIII. TRYOUT SCHEDULE - This tryout schedule is for the 2026-2027 season.**

- A. Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup>
  - 1. Clinic Day 1- RRCA Gym
  - 2. 4-5:30pm
- B. Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>
  - 1. Clinic Day 2- RRCA Gym
  - 2. 4-5:30
- C. Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>
  - 1. Cheer Tryout- RRCA Gym
  - 2. 9-11am

### **XIV. TRYOUT ATTIRE**

- A. Must provide a solid white shirt and solid black shorts
- B. Must wear white cheer or athletic shoes
- C. Hair must be worn in a ponytail away from the face
- D. Natural makeup and nails
- E. No jewelry, bows, or ribbons are permitted

### **XV. REQUIRED FORMS**

- A. All candidates must complete the RRCA tryout form, and have a current physical on file with the high school Athletic Department.
- B. Required forms include:
  - 1. Online
    - a. RRCA cheer tryout form
    - b. Teacher Recommendations
  - 2. Physical
    - a. Must be a hard copy or verified on file with the Athletic Department
    - b. RRCA /TAPPS Physical Form
      - i. CANNOT be on any other physical form
      - ii. Must be turned into the high school Head Cheerleading Coach

## **XVI. CANDIDATE CHARACTER EVALUATION**

A. Candidates will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Grades (Course Failures)- maximum of 5 points

- a. 0 failures= 5 points
- b. 1 failure= 3 points
- c. 2 or more failures= 0 points

2. Behavior (Discipline Referrals)- maximum of 5 points

- a. No referrals= 5 points
- b. 1 referral= 3 points
- c. 2 or more referrals= 0 points

3. Attendance- maximum of 5 points

Only unexcused absences and tardies (3 tardies=1 unexcused absence)

- a. 0-2 days with an unexcused absence= 5 points
- b. 3-5 days with an unexcused absence= 3 points
- c. 6-7 days with an unexcused absence= 1 point
- d. 8+ days with an unexcused absence= 0 points

4. Teacher Recommendations - maximum of 5 points

- a. 4 current RRCA teachers that give grades for their class
- b. Scores will be calculated by averaging the received recommendations
- c. Missing recommendations will be averaged as a zero
- d. Recommendation forms will be emailed to all faculty and staff
- e. If a Teacher Recommendation form is forged the candidate will be DISQUALIFIED from the tryout process. The form must be submitted directly from a teacher account, not from a student account.

### **New Enrollees to RRCA:**

- If a new student comes in AFTER the tryout process, a supplemental try out could be offered with judges PRIOR to June 15<sup>th</sup>. The option of a supplemental tryout is up to Coaches' discretion and based on current team size following initial tryouts.

## **Round Rock Christian Academy Cheerleader Commitment Form (26-27)**

Members/guardians will need to read and sign each statement below. This page is due to Coach at the time of the other tryout paperwork; *failure to turn in by the deadline will result in becoming ineligible for tryouts.*

1. I have read and understand the policies and expectations laid out in the **RRCA Cheer Handbook**. I understand that it is my responsibility to know, and abide by these policies and expectations.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date

2. I have read and understand the policies and expectations laid out in the **RRCA Cheer Handbook Addendum**. I understand that it is my responsibility to know, and abide by these policies and expectations.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent/Guardian's Signature

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Date

3. I understand the time commitment involved with being a member of the RRCA Cheer Program. I agree to remain available for the dates designated by coaches.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent/ Guardian's Signature

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Date

4. I understand that as a member of the RRCA Cheer Program, I may be photographed at various games, performances, or events. I agree to allow photos I may be in to be used and/or posted on public platforms.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent/ Guardian's Signature

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Date