

Emmaus Cheer Team Guidelines 2026-2027

All members of the Emmaus Cheer Team are expected to abide by the Emmaus Cheer Team Guidelines and the Emmaus Athletic Code of Conduct. As a member of the Emmaus Cheer Team, you represent the East Penn School District and the Emmaus Cheerleading program. These rules are instituted to encourage cheerleaders to be responsible and accountable for their actions. We expect the same commitment from each team member whether they are a Varsity cheerleader, Junior Varsity cheerleader, Middle School cheerleader, and/or Competitive cheerleader.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines throughout the season will result in consequences, which could include suspension or full dismissal from the team.

Table of Contents

Season Commitment & Game Schedules	Page 2
General Guidelines	Page 3
Behaviors, Attendance	Page 3
Season Duration, Academics	Page 5
Academics, Communication, Safety Concerns	Page 6
Transportation, Captains, Injuries	Page 7
Varsity Competitive Spirit, JH Competitive Spirit	Page 8
Participation	Page 9
Cell Phone Use & Social Media	Page 10
Team Uniforms and Equipment	Page 11
Emmaus Cheer Team Guidelines Acknowledgement Form	Page 12

Schedules & Time Commitment

Summer

Practices

- Tuesday and Thursdays from 5:30 - 7:30pm at Emmaus High School Aux Gym.
 - If you are not present at practice, we cannot guarantee any placement in stunts, sidelines, or competition teams.
 - Vacations must be told at **least two weeks in advance via email** for it to be excused.
 - Last minute beach trips will not be excused.
 - Work shifts will not be excused.
-

Fall

Football Games

- Monday: JV Sideline 4:30pm - 6:30pm
- Tuesday: Competition Practice 5:00 - 7:00pm
- Wednesday: JV Sideline 4:30pm - 6:30pm
- Thursday: Varsity Sideline Practice 5:00 - 6:00pm; Competition Practice from 6:00-7:30pm
- Additional competition practices may be added on Monday, Wednesday, Saturday, or Sunday as needed.

Varsity Games: Fridays at 7:00pm (Departure for away games can be as early at 4:30pm)

Junior Varsity Games: Mondays at 5:30pm

Winter

Basketball & Competition

- Monday: Competition Practice 5:00 - 7:30pm
- Wednesday: JV Sideline Practice 5:00-6:30pm; Competition Practice from 6:00-7:30pm

Basketball games varies weekly

- Game day is usually from 5:00pm - 8:00pm
 - One game a week - JV cheers one day and Varsity cheers another
 - On your respective day, you will a double header which includes the JV and Varsity game
-

General Guidelines

Behaviors

- You are **always** representing your school. Be cautious of your actions and behaviors in and out of the classroom and on and off of the field/court/mat.
 - Repeated occurrences of disciplinary issues that occur during school hours can result in removal from the team. We expect our athletes to be respectful and well behaved at all times.
- Swearing or vulgar language will not be tolerated at practices, games, competitions, and team events.
- Public displays of affection should be avoided while in uniform.
- **Insubordination or displaying a negative attitude toward the coaching staff, teammates, or cheerleading in general will NOT be tolerated. The athlete will be asked to sit at practice or can be removed from the sideline at games. If negative behavior continues, the athlete may be removed from the team entirely.**
 - **This may include, but is not limited to:**
 - Rolling eyes at coaches
 - Questioning coaches decisions
 - Raising voice in conversation with coaches or teammates
 - Refusal to perform skills asked by your coaches
- A Emmaus Cheerleader's behavior at practice, games, or competitions should include:
 - Arriving on time
 - Having a positive attitude
 - Being alert and ready for direction
 - Being respectful to coaches and teammates
 - Encouraging teammates
 - Putting forth effort in all cheers, stunts, tumbling, dances, etc.
- When you are at practice, games and/or competitions, you are the responsibility of the coaches. You must be in the area where your coach has assigned you.
Athletes may not stunt or tumble without the knowledge of the coach or out of sight of the coach.

Attendance

- Be on time to all practices, games, competitions, and departures for games and competitions.
 - You are considered late after the practice, games and/or competitions begin. Being late could affect your playing time.
 - It is recommended that you arrive 10-15 minutes prior to the times scheduled on the calendar.
 - Note for competition team athletes; **ALL competitions are mandatory.**
- Unexcused and/or missed practices, games, or competitions can keep you from participating further on the competition and game day teams.

- Notify the coach **at least two weeks in advance** of any attendance issues, unless extreme circumstances apply.
- Each athlete is allowed three unexcused absences throughout the fall and winter seasons.
 - i. Unexcused absences include (but are not limited to) cosmetic appointments, being “grounded,” orthodontist appointments, general doctor appointments (specialty appointments and surgeries need to be discussed as far in advance as possible with the coaching staff), work, vacations, coaching another team, birthday events, college tours, etc.
 - 1. If an athlete obtains three unexcused absences, a meeting will be held with the athlete and coaching staff to discuss the athlete’s future with the team. Consequences such as sitting out at games or removal from the team could be put in place.
 - ii. If an athlete needs to arrive late or leave early from practice or games, it will be considered a half-unexcused absence.
 - iii. If a parent is more than 15 minutes late to pick up their athlete, this will result in half-unexcused absence.
- Regarding excused absences, the situation may arise where the number of excused absences accrues to the point where the coaching staff may decide the athlete is undertrained.
 - If the absence situation does not improve, the athlete could be benched or dismissed from the team.
- **If absent from school on a game day or practice day, the athlete should notify the coach at least 2 hours before the meet time.**
 - Athletes will not be allowed to attend practices or games if they have been absent for one-half or more of schooling that day, unless excused by administration. **Arriving after 9:30 a.m. constitutes one-half of a day’s absence.**

Season Duration for Game Day Cheerleading

- The mandatory cheerleading season lasts from the start of fall sports in August, through the end of winter sports playoffs, the end of March.
- Tryout open gyms, summer open practices, and UCA camp are held starting in April through the summer months.
- If you are a multi-sport athlete that plans to try out for a different Emmaus sport in the fall or winter season, you **MUST** schedule a time via email to meet with Coach Eileen (EHScheerleading@eastpennsd.org) **prior to cheerleading tryouts** to discuss this.
 - For those interested in trying out for an Emmaus fall sport:
 - Schedule a meeting with Coach Eileen

- Discuss splitting off-season training time
- Discuss fall end date/cheer start date
- Discuss commitment to cheer
- For those interested in trying out for an Emmaus winter sport:
 - Schedule a meeting with Coach Eileen
 - Discuss winter start date/end date with cheer
 - Discuss commitment to cheer
- If an athlete tries out for their fall/winter sport and does not make the team, they are expected to return to cheer for the remainder of the season.
- The Cheerleading Coaching Staff will work with each athlete on an individual basis to develop the best-case scenario to make both teams work for each athlete during their respective seasons.
- If a game day athlete wants to participate on an outside rec or all-star cheerleading squad during the season, a conversation must happen with Coach Eileen (EHScheerleading@eastpennsd.org) **prior to tryouts** to make sure the commitment is possible to both teams for the duration of the entire season.
 - Failure to disclose alternative training can result in removal from the team.

Academics

- In order to participate at practices, games, or competitions high school students at Emmaus must be passing 4 credits (or equivalent thereof) and middle school students are not permitted to fail more than one class in order to be eligible week to week.
- If academically ineligible, the athlete will not be allowed to participate in practices, games, or competitions.
- If an athlete is academically ineligible for an extended period of time, the coach may discuss with the athlete to stop attending any practices, games, or events, until their grades are in good standing.
 - If an athlete is academically ineligible for a cumulative 3 weeks, removal from the team may occur.

Communication

- If an athlete has any concerns they should use the BAND chat to message their coach.
- **We would like to promote the self-advocacy and responsibility of our athletes. Because of this, we would like athletes to communicate directly with their coaches. If there is a serious issue, parents should contact a member of the coaching staff through email.**

- Coaches should not be approached by parents at football games, basketball games, or competitions with concerns. If a parent would like to speak to a coach about a concern, please contact them via email.
- Coaches will respond to athlete and parent emails and calls during normal business hours, Monday through Friday.
- **Text message is not an appropriate form of communication for parents or athletes.**

Safety/Health Concerns

- Athletes must follow all health and safety protocols.
- No jewelry/exercise watches, **including new piercings**, may be worn due to safety. This will be strictly enforced this year. **If an athlete refuses to remove jewelry, they will not be permitted to participate.**
 - Jewelry includes: earrings, belly button rings, nose piercings, bracelets, anklets, rings, apple watches etc.
- All nails, real or fake, must be at an athletic cut due to safety concerns. Competition nail color must be neutral or white. **If an athlete's nail length is significantly above their fingertips, they will not be permitted to participate.**
 - The coach will make the determination if it is safe for the athlete to participate in stunts, tumbling, etc.

Transportation

- Athletes must travel on school-provided transportation to and from games and/or competitions.
 - If approved by the coach, an athlete may be released to the custody of the parent at the conclusion of an away game or competition with the proper [travel release form](#) found on the Athletic Webpage.
 - Approval is up to the discretion of the coaching staff.
 - Athletes will not be excused from the games and/or competitions until dismissed by the coach.
 - A parent must meet with the coach before leaving with their athlete from the games and/or competitions.

Captains

- Captains will be picked by the coaching staff during the summer optional practices, based on their knowledge, level of experience, ability to work with other athletes, ability to organize and lead, and ability to communicate positively and effectively between the squad and coaches.

- Captains will be selected for our Middle School, Junior Varsity, Varsity Sideline and Varsity Competition Teams. The number of captains varies each year.
- The decision on captains will be based on a team vote and is up to the discretion of the coaching staff. Please keep in mind that a captain may not be the most senior member. Not every capable leader will be named as a captain. This does not mean that they cannot be great leaders on their team!
- **The position of captain may be suspended or removed if a team captain is not fulfilling their duties as a leader.**
- The position of captain is not up for negotiation with athletes or parents.

Injuries

- Athletes must notify the coach of any injuries immediately so that a trainer can assess the situation.
 - It is crucial for athletes to promptly inform their coach of any injuries. Be sure to notify the coach of the injury during the practice in which it occurs.
- Under PIAA guidelines of scope of practice for certified athletic trainers, they are only allowed to treat interscholastic athletic injuries.
- The coach will consult with the trainer to determine if the athlete can safely participate in the next practice, game, or competition. Parents will be contacted if there is a serious injury.
- Injured athletes must attend all practices for approved conditioning or attend Physical Therapy.
- Injured athletes are still required to attend all practices/events.

Varsity Competitive Spirit Team

- The Varsity Competitive team will be selected during the normal tryout processes. Selection of athletes for local competitions, Leagues, Districts, States, & Nationals will be **based on performance, course profile, attitude, work ethic during practices & attendance throughout the season.**
 - A competitive cheerleader must possess tumbling and stunt skills required by the coaches, and execute them at a level of mastery.
 - Athletes who do not make it “on mat” may be placed as an alternate.
 - Varsity competition cheerleaders must cheer both the fall and winter game day seasons to participate on the competition team.

Participation

- In games and/or competitions, we will compete with our best **TEAM** lineup, not line up the best individuals.
- All team functions or activities must receive prior approval from the coaching staff.
 - Athletes are required to inform the coach of any external training or practices. The coaching staff cannot help you improve or develop as an athlete if we do not know all the factors going into your training. Rest is a critical part of training.
- Athletes must remain focused at games and competitions.
 - Parents: We respectfully ask that you refrain from interacting with athletes during games and before competitions. This policy is consistent with other sports (e.g., football, soccer) where parents and spectators are not allowed on the field or in team huddles before, during, or after games, practices, and competitions.
 - At football games, basketball games, and wrestling matches, parents are not permitted to stand by the fence to speak with their athlete. Brief greetings are acceptable, but extended conversations should be avoided, as cheerleaders need to remain focused on their responsibilities, and we strive to minimize distractions.
 - Parents are not permitted to sit or stand with the coaching staff during games or competitions, as the coaches are focused on their duties.
 - Athletes should eat dinner before all evening games and matches. They will not be permitted to purchase food to eat in between warm-ups and the game/match unless there are extenuating circumstances. Eating a healthy dinner before a game/match is part of the preparation for that game.
 - Athletes are required to remain in the designated area during halftime as assigned by the coach. They are not permitted to go into the stands or bleachers during games.
 - The use of cell phones or smart devices, such as Apple Watches, is prohibited during warm-ups and throughout the game. Special exceptions may be made by the coaching staff, allowing athletes to use their phone during halftime to contact a parent or guardian.

Cell Phone Use & Social Media

- Athletes must follow the guidelines of EPSD regarding cell phone use and social media.
- Use of cell phones is prohibited during practices, games, & competitions. Cell phones are required to remain in the athlete's bag for the entirety of practices and games. An athlete may request permission to text or call a parent/guardian.

- If an athlete is found using their phone during a practice, game, or competition, the coaching staff will confiscate the phone for the remainder of the event.
- Athletes should not take videos or photos that may poorly represent themselves, the Emmaus Cheerleading Program, or East Penn School District.
 - If you would not want your coach or parents to see it, refrain from posting or sharing it.
- Any negative comments posted OR reposted online that are associated with cheerleading, teammates, coaches, our teams, or other teams can result in disciplinary action and/or removal from the team.
 - This may include, but is not limited to: Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, X (twitter), Snapchat, etc.
- **Disciplinary actions or removal from the team can occur if these guidelines are violated.**

Team Uniforms and Equipment

- You will be issued a skirt, shell, and liner.
 - You are responsible for the equipment issued to you.
- Uniforms must be washed regularly and need to be hung dry. This will keep the uniforms in better shape for the future.
- School-issued equipment is only to be worn to school (when instructed by coaches), games and/or competitions.
 - **If you plan on going somewhere after a game/competition, you are expected to bring clothes to change.**
- All school-issued equipment must be returned on the scheduled return dates to be eligible for any awards (letter, outstanding athlete, etc.).
- Athletes are responsible for purchasing pom poms, black leggings, white cheerleading sneakers, warm-up jackets (high school only), bows, crew socks, bloomers, and any other clothing items stated as “required” for the season by the coaching staff.
 - We will provide an opportunity for you to purchase these items at the beginning of the season.
- Liners, bloomers, yogas/joggers, and leggings must be solid black with no colors on the waist. Sports bras must be black, white, or gray.
 - Example: No Nike Pros with a colored waistband.
- All athletes will wear the outfit determined by the coach on game days (camp wear, bows, warm-ups, & uniforms with/without leggings).
 - **Athletes could be benched for not wearing the assigned outfit.**
- Athletes could be benched for not having all pieces of their uniform at a game. The following items should always be worn to games or brought with you in your bag:

- Shell, skirt, liner, bloomers, socks, sneakers, ALL bows, warm-up jacket, crew neck, black leggings, grey sweatpants, poms, and large trash bag (for rainy football games).

*****Any other situation not addressed here or in the Athletic Code will be evaluated by the coaching staff and ruled on.*****

EMMAUS CHEER TEAM GUIDELINES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

STUDENT:

I have read the Emmaus Cheer Team Guidelines and agree to abide by the rules and regulations set in it. I understand that holding the position of a cheerleader in the Emmaus Cheerleading Program demands priority, commitment, and dedication. I have read and understand the requirements and expectations for tryouts and the cheerleading season.

STUDENT'S NAME (PRINT) _____

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

PARENT:

I have read the Emmaus Cheer Team Guidelines and agree to abide by the rules and regulations set in it. I understand the requirements and expectations for tryouts and the cheerleading season.

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME (PRINT) _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

RELATIONSHIP (CIRCLE)

MOTHER FATHER GUARDIAN