



WVSSAC Cheer Manual



Revised July 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING ALL SCHOOLS	3
I. CHEERLEADING OVERVIEW	4
A. Rules and Regulations	4
B. Philosophy	4
C. Sportsmanship and Citizenship	4
D. Supervision	4
II. COACHING PROCEDURES	5
A. Code of Ethics	5
B. General Program Regulations	5
C. Practice	6
III. POLICIES AND REGULATIONS	6
A. Eligibility	6
B. Out of Season Coaching - Cheer Specific	6
C. Team Selection Procedures	7
D. Fund-raising Regulations	7
E. Sanctioning & Travel	8
F. Awards	8
IV. CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP REGULATIONS	8
A. Cheerleader Conduct Regulations	8
B. Basketball Tournament Regulations	8
V. WVSSAC Rules Additions & Modifications to National Federation Spirit Rules	9
A. Uniforms and Appearance	9
B. Sportsmanship	10
C. Stunts/Spotting	11
D. Hand Held Signs	13
E. Pom/Hair Device/Hair Piece Safety Rule	13
F. Incidental Touching Rule	13
COMPETITION POLICIES	14
I. General Policies and Rules	15
II. Regional/State Policies	17
III. Competition Rules	18
JUDGING INFORMATION	21
I. General Rules and Regulations	22
II. Guidelines for Cheer Judges	22
III. Guidelines for Technical Judges	23
IV. High School Regional/State Competition Judging	24
V. Competition Score Sheet Explanation	24
VI. Degree of Difficulty Reference	25
VII. Scoring Procedures	26
MIDDLE SCHOOL/NINTH GRADE TEAM SPECIFIC RULES	27
I. Eligibility Specific	28
II. Safety Rules and Regulations	28
III. Competition Regulations	29

RULES
AND
REGULATIONS
GOVERNING
ALL SCHOOLS

CHEERLEADING

Rules and Regulations Governing All Schools

I. Cheerleading Overview

A. Rules and Regulations

The West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission is a member of the National Federation of State High School Associations and, as such, requires all member schools and teams to abide by the rules and regulations of the National Federation. Cheer and Spirit specific rules will be followed as presented in the National Federation Spirit Rules Book.

This manual will serve as a guide to the participating schools and will provide for greater consistency. Supplementary information relating to cheerleaders or cheer competition will be included in the WVSSAC Interscholastic, bulletins to all schools, and **state-sponsored rules clinics**.

B. Philosophy

The philosophy and underlying goal of cheerleading is to support the school's athletic programs within the school. Each team shall strive to boost school spirit, promote good sportsmanship, develop positive crowd involvement, and help student participants and spectators achieve the most worthwhile educational objectives of the interscholastic program.

Cheer coaches are reminded that their teams can be extremely instrumental in achieving school support for all teams. Coaches, principals, and local county boards of education shall determine a plan which allows the cheer team to effectively support their athletic programs without placing undue academic or time hardship upon the cheer coach or team.

Performing is a secondary role of cheerleading and can effectively promote school spirit when included at appropriate times at interscholastic contests such as pregame, non-injury timeouts and intermissions as well as at pep rallies, assemblies, and competitions.

C. Sportsmanship and Citizenship

The promotion of sportsmanship and citizenship is a prime responsibility of cheerleaders. Good sportsmanship is conduct which imposes a type of self-control involving honest rivalry, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of results. School spirit is a reflection of these attitudes and behavior. If a school is to succeed in one of its prime functions, that of developing good citizenship, it is necessary that cheer teams model proper sportsmanship conduct. Sportsmanship is good citizenship in action.

It is the coach's responsibility to instill good sportsmanship among team members. Poor sportsmanship during athletic contests or competition will result in WVSSAC penalties for the cheer program and, if deemed necessary, the school. At Regional and State Competitions, poor sportsmanship may be considered a rule violation (20 points deduction). Unsportsmanlike acts include, but are not limited to: **See "Conduct and Sportsmanship Regulations"**

D. Supervision

The WVSSAC holds a school responsible, both at home and away, for the conduct of its players, cheerleaders, students, coaches, and fans. Coaches are required to supervise their respective teams.

II. Coaching Procedures

A. Code of Ethics

1. The coach shall master the contest rules and is responsible for notifying their team members. The spirit and letter of rules should be regarded as mutual agreements. **The coach shall not try to seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.**
2. Contest judges shall have the respect and support of the coach. The coach shall not engage in conduct which will incite team members or spectators against the officials. **Public criticism of judges or team members is unethical.**
3. **Code for Interscholastic Athletics - Refer to WVSSAC Rule 127-4-3.7.6**

B. General Program Regulations

It is the responsibility of the cheer coach to provide a program which meets National Federation, WVSSAC, and school administration guidelines. All aspects of the cheer program shall be approved by the school principal or his/her designee.

All provisions of the WVSSAC Cheer Manual and the National Federation Spirit Rules Book shall be in effect for all spirit team activities including practice, games, performances, and competition.

1. The coach shall be knowledgeable in first aid techniques and emergency procedures. A well-stocked first aid kit shall be available at all spirit activities. Coaches shall develop an emergency plan for dealing with injuries at practice/games. Cheer teams, parents, and school administrators shall be knowledgeable of these procedures.
2. The coach, contracted assistant coach, or principal-designated professional faculty representative shall be in attendance and accessible at all scheduled practices and school-sponsored spirit activities.
3. Coaches shall develop and implement a flexibility and strength conditioning program for the team. This program shall be part of the cheer practice. This is a requirement for all teams.
4. Coaches must recognize a team's particular ability level and limit its activities accordingly. Coaches and participants must be trained in proper spotting techniques. All new skills must first be reviewed and approved by the coach prior to performing them. Proper progression, spotting techniques and matting shall be used until each skill is mastered.
5. Coaches shall remain up-to-date on all new techniques, progressions, and safety regulations by attending the State Rules Clinic. The clinic will provide review and instruction of rules and regulations, safety procedures, and conditioning programs. Failure of the head coach to attend will result in a fine of \$50.00. This fee will be assessed to the school.
6. A preseason meeting shall be used to review all rules and regulations with perspective team members and parents. The session must be held prior to the last day of student instruction of the school year. The maximum allowance is one date, one hour. Furthermore, this orientation is for information only; no cheer activities or instruction are allowed.

C. Practice - Refer to WVSSAC Rule 127-2-13

III. Policies and Regulations

A. Eligibility

1. Cheerleaders and mascots shall, if under the supervision of the cheer coach, be included under the jurisdiction of the WVSSAC and will be subject to the eligibility requirements as specified by WVSSAC Rules and Regulations Handbook. Participation at games/contests is limited to a school's spirit team. **This eliminates the use of "little sister" mascots. The school's mascot must be enrolled in that school and must be eligible for participation. This regulation will be strictly enforced to provide for the safety of all individuals.**
2. All cheer team members must be entered on Eligibility Forms. All schools must submit Certificate of Eligibility Forms to the WVSSAC before the first day of participation. Mascots are to be included on the Certificate of Eligibility if the mascot is under the jurisdiction of the cheer program.
If members are added to the team, an addendum must be submitted to the WVSSAC office.
3. Any member of a freshman team in a four year high school that participates (in any capacity) on a junior varsity or varsity team is ineligible to return to the freshman team.
Any such participation at the junior varsity level at any time during the school year would prohibit future freshman eligibility for that school year.
4. Sixth graders in middle schools are eligible to tryout for the cheer team provided individual counties permit this.
5. A cheerleading team shall represent the school only at events in which the school is participating or at events approved by the school administration.
6. A cheerleader shall not represent the school in any cheerleader contest sponsored by any individual or organization outside the school unless the contest is sanctioned by the WVSSAC. It is the coach's responsibility to verify sanctioning with the WVSSAC. **National competitions are not sanctioned by the WVSSAC. See detailed sanctioning information under Competition Policies.**

B. Out-of-Season Coaching - Cheer Specific

1. Refer to **WVSSAC Rule #127-3-7**
2. Cheer Specific
 - a) During the cheer season, **each school is** allowed five one-date outside assistance sessions. This regulation applies to all assistance outside the county professional system whether paid or volunteer (camps, clinics, outside assistance, etc.,). If someone other than the contracted coach is used for any amount of time, any one date, or for any number of team members, it constitutes one of the dates. Interscholastic cheer coaches within the same county may assist each other as long as no compensation is given for the assistance. There is no limit to the number of assisting individuals for a particular date.
Cheer coaches will be required to complete and submit the Outside Assistance

Verification Form. The form must be submitted to the WVSSAC office prior to the first date of assistance. Coaches are required to verify date, location, time(s) and instructor(s).

- b) During out-of-season dates, no school cheer activities are allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, parade performances, talent show performances, etc., Refer to Rule 127-3-7.2 for revisions to allowable dates after season ending date.**

C. Team Selection Procedures

1. Procedures for team selection shall be decided by and are the responsibility of individual schools; however, the date of the team selections may be no earlier than Monday of Week 5 for high schools and Monday of Week 6 for middle school/ninth grade teams. Students are required to have a WVSSAC Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physician's Certificate Form on file with the school and dated no earlier than June 1.
2. Individual schools may set their own criteria for the team selection; however, the WVSSAC and National Federation highly recommend that cheer coaches personally select the members of the team. Cheerleading in West Virginia is recognized as a sport, and cheer coaches shall assume the role of a professional, knowledgeable enough of his/her sport to determine the most qualified individuals for the team.

Based upon a Office of Civil Rights ruling, the WVSSAC recommends that teacher evaluations are not used as a criteria in team selection unless all sport teams in the school use teacher evaluations as a criteria. WV recognizes cheer as a sport and encourage selection of team members to be consistent with other sport team selections.

3. The established season for high school cheering will begin on Monday of Week 5 and end with the Girls' or Boys' State Basketball tournament. For beginning date, refer to National Federation Standardized Calendar located in the WVSSAC Rules and Regulations Handbook. Middle school/ninth grade cheer season begins on Monday of Week 6 and ends with the boys' or girls' basketball season.
4. Individual members of a team must have practiced 14 SEPARATE days with the team, exclusive of the day of the contest, before participating in an interscholastic activity.

D. Fundraising Regulations

1. A school or related organization (booster clubs, etc.,) may be involved in fundraising projects to subsidize student attendance at or in summer camps.
2. Monies from school funds or fundraising in the name of the school may be used to employ choreographers or other individuals employed to create competition routines.
3. Purchase of an item (wearing apparel, equipment, athletic goods, etc.) for an individual whereby any portion is donated by a school, booster club, auxiliary agency or any other group or organization is prohibited.
4. Fundraising by cheer teams is allowed from the beginning of the season until the last student instructional day. However, fundraising between the end of the season and the last instructional day cannot be cheer performance or skill based and only the current cheer team can be involved.

5. Booster Club Auditing Procedures - Established by the WV State Department of Education: **Accounting Procedures Manual for Public Schools in the State of West Virginia.**
- E. **Sanctioning and Travel - Refer to WVSSAC Rule §127-3-16.**
- F. **Awards - Refer to WVSSAC Rule §127-3-5.**

IV. Conduct and Sportsmanship Regulations

A. Cheerleader Conduct Regulations

Cheerleading teams shall be informed of standards of conduct which they are to meet at both home and away athletic contests. Cheerleaders shall be impressed with the necessity for outstanding conduct and sportsmanship because they are influential in dealing with spectators.

The following are standards for cheerleaders:

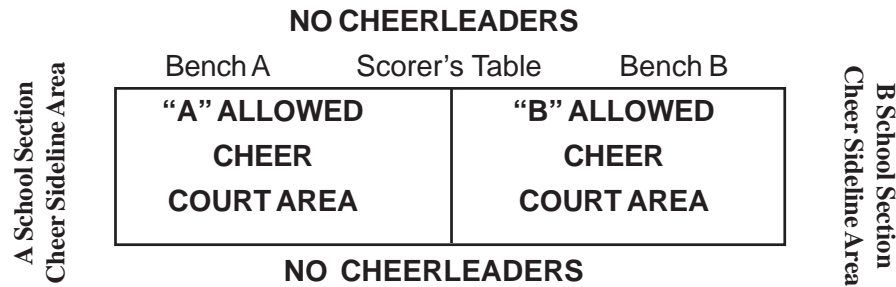
1. The primary factor in sportsmanship for cheerleaders is to **always cheer positively**. It is **never** an asset to the contest or school to cheer against the other team or to cheer at an opposing player's mistake; it is much more effective to **cheer for one's own team**.
2. Cheerleaders shall be required to know the game rules and official's signals.
3. Cheerleaders shall be impressed with the importance of accepting the decision of officials and of discouraging disagreement with them by the crowd.
4. In basketball, cheerleaders shall not station themselves in the extended free-throw lane under the basket during any live ball action. **No actions of the cheerleaders shall be made to purposely distract the players.**
5. At all times, the **cheering teams shall not interrupt the flow of the game or interfere with the responsibilities of the officials or players**. Cheerleaders shall pay attention to the game so as to be able to move to prevent collisions or being hit with a ball, players, or officials.

B. Basketball Tournament Regulations

In the interest of safety, crowd control, and fairness for all, the following regulations are set forth for all cheer teams participating in girls' and boys' high school sectional, regional and state basketball tournaments.

1. Cheer teams must follow all cheer rules and regulations as designated in the Cheer Program (The Interscholastic) and the WVSSAC Cheer Manual. Special emphasis is placed on jewelry, facial paint, glitter, appropriate cheering surfaces, location of cheerleaders, taunting, and stunting regulations.
2. Cheer teams must follow Code for Interscholastic Athletics **WVSSAC Rule 127-4-3.4** (WVSSAC Rules and Regulations Handbook).
3. Cheer teams or individual cheerleaders are **not** allowed to enter the court during a thirty (30) second time out, to stunt during warm-ups, or to station themselves in the free-throw lane extended.
4. Cheer teams are not permitted to build "tunnels" for teams.
5. Cheer teams are only allowed to cheer on the court and on the designated area in front of the school spectator section (end of court). No cheering is allowed in the area behind the team bench.

6. Cheer activities are limited to half court at all times. **No cheerleader is to go beyond mid-court at any time.**



7. Cheer coaches are required to accompany teams at all times (locker rooms, half-time, pregame, etc.)
8. Cheer teams are required to bring all athletic trainer supplies (tape, bandages, etc.). CAMC trainers will be on site to provide assistance at state tournaments.
9. At no time shall cheerleaders engage in negative remarks directed at officials or members (cheerleaders, fans, team, etc.) of the opposing school.
10. Cheerleaders are not to lead sidelines/chants when the opposing team's cheerleaders are performing a "floor" cheer. Cheer teams should agree on a system of court usage and time outs before the game begins.

Failure to abide by these rules will result in "benching" of the entire team for the current game and all remaining games of the tournament. Additional penalties may include, but are not limited to, warnings, suspensions, and fines.

V. WVSSAC Rules Additions & Modifications to National Federation Spirit Rules

All of the rules and modifications apply at all cheer activities, practices, performances, and competitions. During competition, violation of these rules and modifications will incur a 20 point deduction. (Exception: Pom/hair piece rule and Incidental Touching Rule)

A. Uniforms and Appearance

A coach shall not permit a team member to participate if, in the judgment of the coach, the participant's hairstyle or fingernails do not conform to NFHS and WVSSAC rules, if the provisions for jewelry or glitter rules are not met.

1. Uniforms shall be functional and meet the school's approval. Apparel must also be safe and conducive to safe physical activity. All midriiffs and torsos must be covered.
2. For safety reasons, sequins/glitter are not allowed on uniforms. In addition to safety consideration, sequins/glitter are not functional or necessary.
3. Glitter that does not readily adhere to the body, face is prohibited. A sign that has glitter that is sealed by laminate or other means is permitted.

4. Jewelry shall be prohibited. This includes all jewelry worn on any part of the body. No body piercing jewelry is allowed. Jewelry must be removed, covering with bandaids is not sufficient. Leather, string, etc., placed in the holes created by body piercing are not allowed. If religious or medical medals are worn, they shall be taped to the body under the uniform. Teams proven (video, photographed or observed) wearing jewelry during practices, games or competition and reported to the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission shall be subject to disciplinary action.
5. Hair devices, which are safe and reasonably secure, may be worn. These hair devices shall be cloth or plastic with no sharp edges. Hair pieces are permitted, but must be secure. Hair pieces with metal clips are not permitted. **Hair pieces and devices that fall out shall incur a safety deduction during competition. (See Pom/Hair Device/Hair Piece Rule)** Small, flat metal barrettes and bobbi pins are allowed. The wearing of hats while performing (regular season and competition) is prohibited. During outdoor events such as football, head cover may be worn if the covering is for the purpose of warmth or protection from weather elements. When such head covering is allowed, no tumbling, stunts, pyramids, etc., are allowed.
6. Hair Regulations - All members of the cheer team must have hair off the shoulders and away from the face regardless if he/she is a base, flyer, or spotter. It is considered unsafe for any team member to have their hair in their eyes or lying on their shoulders.
7. Fingernails: Fingernails shall be kept at a length appropriate for safe participation. The appropriate length for all members of a team means the nails are not visible beyond the end of the fingers when viewed from the palm side of the hands. Long fingernails present a safety hazard to all members of the spirit team. Artificial nails are not allowed.
8. Permanent body marking(s) shall be properly covered. Temporary body marking(s) and paint shall be removed.
9. Hats, body paint, face paint, and facial mascot stickers are not allowed during competition. Of the four items listed, ONLY temporary facial mascot stickers and face paint are allowed during regular season participation. Note: Adhesive mascot stickers are not allowed.

B. Sportsmanship

A participant shall not commit an unsporting act. This includes, but is not limited to, acts or conduct such as:

- Entering and/or exiting the performance area during any part of the performance of other squads.
- Disrespectfully addressing or contacting an official or gesturing in such a manner as to indicate resentment.
- Using profane or inappropriate language or gestures or suggestive words.
- Baiting or taunting an opponent. NOTE: The WVSSAC disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or national origin.
- Use of an opponent's name or mascot during competition

If a Safety Judge determines blatant unsportsmanlike conduct in competition, the result will be a rule violation with a 20 point deduction for each infraction.

C. Stunts/Spotting

Base(s) using hand(s) to support the flyer in an upright position must have the hand(s) positioned under and supporting the foot/feet.

Fly Away twists are legal (Ex. Stunt, sponge, toss) provided the following restrictions are followed:

- A stunt is performed prior to the toss to dismount
- Limited to 2 bases
- Bases may not interlock hands
- Sponge to toss from shoulder height must not go below waist level
- Sponge to toss from extended height must not go below shoulder level
- Must have a hands-on back spotter who must maintain contact with the flyer's ankles to knees OR waist
- May use a front spotter who may either be free standing or hands-on. If hands-on, must follow back spot restrictions
- stunts that do not include an inversion (toe touch, ball out, pencil, twists, etc.) are allowed

Multiple Twist Dismounts are illegal. (Exception: As a dismount from a fly away, NF 2-6-7.)

Show & Go are legal provided the following restrictions are followed:

- Bases and spotters follow the same restrictions as the Fly Away
- If a toss is incorporated, the show must hit prep or extended level prior to toss

Up & Over transitions must have a hands-on back spotter for the flyer(s)

Dead Man, Face Down & Side Lifts if rotated must have 4 bases

Arch-back Cradles from stunts remain illegal. Arches during the toss to cradle are legal provided that the NF Rule 2, Section 10, Article 1d is followed.

Forward Suspended Roll is legal provided the following restrictions are followed:

- NF 2-9-1 (Emphasis hand to hand)
- Posts must have supporting arms fully extended prior to and during the initiation of the forward roll
- Flyer must not invert prior to the initiation of the forward roll
- Forward Suspended Roll **dismounts** may only be initiated from the prep position

Log Roll Variation - Toss (from performing surface) to log roll is legal provided that the following conditions are met:

- a. the toss must be initiated by two bases.
- b. the toss is limited to two bases.
- c. there must be a hands-on head and shoulder, back spotter
- d. as the flyer is standing on the performing surface, the toss can only be initiated from the flyer's thigh, rear, and/or waist ie. **no feet**.
- e. the spotter's hands can only be placed from the waist to the underarms of the flyer during the toss.
- f. the flyer can rotate no more than two times.
- g. the flyer must be caught in a double-based cradle with a hands-on head and shoulder, back spotter.

Rationale: The standard log roll is a stunt that is an exception to the release stunt rule and is therefore legal. A toss to a stunt is an exception to the toss rule and is therefore legal.

Ruling: With the conditions (a) through (g) in place, the log roll variation is considered a safe stunt and **does not** meet the definition of a basket toss or similar style toss requiring a surface of grass, turf or appropriate matting. **As with all release stunts, the inversion rule is always in play and care must be taken that the shoulders of the flyer do not drop below her waist.**

The active spotter is an integral part of the safety of a program. Therefore, **an inattentive person is not considered a spotter.**

- **Hands on spotter** is a person who assists in the building of, or dismounting from, a partner stunt or pyramid. The primary responsibility of a spotter is to watch for safety hazards and be in a position to prevent injuries with special emphasis on the head, neck, and shoulder areas. This person(s) shall not provide primary support of (weight-bearing contact with) another person.
 - **Free standing spotter** is a person who stands within arms length of a stunt. In non-transitional stunts, the free standing spotter should be positioned within the back half circle of the stunt. The free standing spotter may not have any physical contact with the stunt participants. This includes no assistance in the building or dismounting of the stunt. The free standing spotter must have, **throughout the stunt, arms fully extended** toward the flyer and be in the appropriate position and location maintaining continuous eye contact on flyer to ensure safety.
1. A spotter is required until a tumbling, partner stunt or pyramid/mount is mastered.
 2. Tip Toes - A spotter is not an effective spotter if he/she is on tip toes. Hands on spotter's feet may leave the floor to assist in the building of the stunt (eg. on toes or balls of feet). However, once the stunt is built, one of the spotter's feet must be flat on the floor so that he/she is in a stable position to properly support the stunt, maintain balance, and remain in control.
 3. Feet Positioning - Feet apart, one foot in front.
 4. **(High school specific)** All basket tosses will be supported by an additional free standing spotter. Therefore, all basket tosses will require a minimum of five (5) cheerleaders to perform. **Male cheerleaders are prohibited from participating in a basket toss at any time (practice, performance, competition) except as a free standing spotter.**
 5. **(Middle school/ninth grade specific)** Shoulder height or above dismounts and all cradles will require a free standing spotter and a separate head and shoulders spotter. A free standing spotter is required for each dismount or extension. *This means that a prep extension that is cradled requires a free standing spotter.*
 6. **(Middle school/ninth grade specific)** - All single leg extended stunts must have a hands-on spotter and a free standing spotter.
 7. All multi-base stunts to a cradle dismount shall have at least 2 catchers and a separate head-and-shoulders spotter. *Therefore, a multi-base extended stunt requires four (4) participants on the high school level and five (5) participants on the middle school level.*

Safety Tips

- Always spot head and shoulders first.
- Use full body to absorb falling person's weight (bear hug to upper torso).
- Spotter shall keep quiet and listen for cues from top person.
- Do not abandon the stunt/pyramid even if it appears steady.
- It is better to come down from a poorly built stunt than to force it to stay up.

D. Hand Held Signs are allowed if held by a team member with both feet on the floor. The sign may be handed to a top person; however the sign must be handed back to a cheerleader who has both feet on the floor before any dismounts occur.

E. Pom/Hair Device/Hair Piece Safety Rule (*Exception to 20 Pt. Violation Rule*)

When poms are used in a routine, every effort must be made to choreograph their placement, use, and release to ensure that the pom(s) is not stepped upon by any cheerleader. A pom, hair device and/or a hair piece under foot is a safety hazard, **therefore** the following deduction(s) will be taken by the technical/safety judge when competition participants step on a pom, hair device, and/or hair piece:

STEP ON WITH NO SLIP OR FALL = 5 PT. DEDUCTION

STEP ON WITH A SLIP = 6 TO 9 PT. DEDUCTION (depending upon severity)

STEP ON WITH A FALL = 10 PT. DEDUCTION

F. Incidental Touching Rule (*Exception to the 20 point Violation Rule*)

Choreographed touching during the Technical portion of the routine remains illegal with a 20 point deduction. However, incidental touching will be penalized as bobbles or falls:

Touching = 1 to 5 PT. DEDUCTION (depending upon severity)

Touching resulting in a FALL = 6 to 10 PT. DEDUCTION (depending upon severity)

COMPETITION

POLICIES

Competition Policies

I. General Policies and Rules

- A. During the regular school term, secondary school cheerleaders may participate only in competitions which are approved or sanctioned by the WVSSAC and WVSSAC approved judges must be used. All cheer activities and performances shall be approved by the school principal. Middle school/ninth grade teams should refer to their specific rules for competition.
- B. Cheer coaches are reminded that teams are only allowed to compete during the specified season dates. If coaches decide to enter an event which may qualify them to advance to the next level of competition, it is the coach's responsibility to notify the competition director, cheerleaders, and parents that the team will not be allowed to advance if the next level does not meet the specified season dates.
- C. The West Virginia Cheer Modifications Information will be sent to all out-of-state sanctioned events.

D. Intrastate Competition Regulations

- 1. All cheer intrastate competitions must be sanctioned by the WVSSAC if more than four schools participate or awards are given.
 - 2. All cheer intrastate competitions must have a head safety/technical judge and an assistant safety judge.
 - 3. All cheer intrastate competitions must require each participating school to submit the following:
 Written outline of the cheer routine. In competitions where the WV high school format is required, an outline form is to be used. If the event does not follow this format, the event tournament director will develop a form and SUBMIT a copy to the WVSSAC Office.
 - 4. The event tournament director or sponsor will designate the due date for receipt of the form and written outline and the recipient, whether it is the tournament director or safety/technical judge. However, the safety/technical judge must receive both items a minimum of two weeks prior to the event. Reminder to coaches - It is not the Safety Judge's responsibility to correct rule violations.
- E. Any competition that leads to National Championship will not be sanctioned by the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission.**

	Competitions	
	<u>Regional Format</u>	<u>Allowed Number</u>
Stand Alone	X	No Limit
Conference	X	13
County	X	13
League	X	13
Support	No	No Limit

- F. WVSSAC regional competition format is required for all high school "stand alone" open or invitational competitions. This includes format, score sheet, and safety judge penalties; however, the limit of 13 participants per team will not be in effect.

- G. WVSSAC regional competition format is required for all competitions which are conference, county, or league regardless of the grade level of the competition. This includes format, score sheet, technical judge penalties, and limit of 13 cheerleaders per team. Mascots may not participate.
- H. Directors of all competitions are reminded to review the WVSSAC Spectator Support Information.
- I. **Cheer coaches who are involved in the organization of a competition are reminded to contact the WVSSAC for the list of approved judges. A technical judge must be used. Only WVSSAC approved judges can be used.**
- J. Restriction on Competition – In order to qualify for any competitions, cheerleading teams of member schools must have participated in the most recently conducted regional cheer competition (high school teams only). **Failure to compete in the most recently conducted regional cheer competition will result in restriction of competing in any other competition for 365 days.**
- K. High Schools - The Regional Cheer Entry Form must be submitted by each participating school to the Regional Director by the specified date.
- L. To be eligible to participate in regional and state cheer competition, each member of the team must have participated in a minimum of 70% of each and all of the team activities (including practice) from first date of season, through Regional Competition. This includes all activities of the team (i.e. cheering as a support group at other sport contests, fund raisers, practices, cheer competitions/invitationals, pep rallies, clinics, camps, etc.). It will be the coach's responsibility to verify that each member has complied with the 70% regulation. The 70% Rule is not intended to penalize cheerleaders who have not been able to actively participate due to injury verified by a physician.
- M. Any cheerleader arriving after the official start of judging of the team will not be allowed to participate.
- N. Failure of a school to have a coach in attendance at the qualifying and state competition shall result in the school's disqualification.
- O. Allowed number of coaches - The allowed maximum number of coaches who may enter with the team during competition is two. These are two school approved and employed coaches. Additional county contracted coach or county board of education approved volunteer coaches may be with the team but are required to pay admission. All such coaches must have county board of education verification of coaching authorization.
- P. Prior to competitions, coaches will be asked to verify that all team members are following all uniform and appearance regulations.
- Q. Drums, musical instruments and mechanical noisemakers are prohibited at all WVSSAC regional and state tournaments and basketball games. Megaphones may be used by cheerleaders only to direct instruction, cheers, and chants to their pep squad and fans during pre-game, half time, and time outs. The megaphones are not to be used as noisemakers directed toward the field or court of play. **Megaphones or other artificial noisemakers are prohibited at all basketball games.**
- R. All banners, helium balloons, posters, and hand-held signs are prohibited at WVSSAC cheer tournaments. This includes the seating designated for cheerleaders. The WVSSAC Spectator Support Information is included in The Interscholastic.

II. Regional/State Policies

Four regions in each class and two will advance from each class and region.

- A. **Order of Performance** - The order of performance rotates each year for Regional and State. Teams will not be allowed to trade position unless emergency situations such as injury occurs and both coaches consent. (See Interscholastic)
- B. **Cheer Outline** - The typed outline must be a written explanation of the routine; diagrams alone are not acceptable. Coaches are required to include the words to the technical part of the routine and to list and number each sequence as a separate item in the open portion of the outline. For regional and state competition, participating schools shall be required to submit a typed outline of the routine two weeks prior to the competition. Copies of the written outline shall be mailed to: Pat Gross, 145 West High Street, Waynesburg, PA 15370. E-mail: patricia_m_gross@yahoo.com. Phone:724-627-9190 and to Kelly Geddis at the WVSSAC office.
- C. **Music** - All music must be recorded to a cassette tape or CD. A back-up must be available. (CD's may be used only if the equipment is available at the regional/state site.) Only a county contracted coach may assist with the music start/stop. Only one start/stop is permitted.
- D. **Coaches' Meeting** - At each regional site, a Coaches' Meeting of each class or all three classes with the Safety Judge and the Tournament Director or his designee is mandatory.
- E. **Warm-ups** - Warm-ups at regional and state competitions will follow the designated class order and order of performance within each class.
- F. **Entering and Exiting the Floor** - Teams shall take the floor upon hearing their name called. No team may come onto the floor prior to the announcement of its school. It is the Regional Tournament Director's responsibility to enforce these regulations at the tournament. During the Awards Presentation, the team and coach may enter the floor to accept the awards. In the interest of safety, parents, fans, etc., are not to enter the floor.
- G. **Mechanical Failure or Injury** - No restarting time will be allowed unless there is a mechanical failure or serious injury. The technical judge makes this decision. If there is a mechanical failure and a restart is necessary the original scoring of the judges and the Technical Judge will remain intact for the portion of the routine that was uninterrupted. If an injury or mechanical failure occurs, the team must restart and do the entire open routine. Judges will not resume scoring during the restart until the point of mechanical failure or injury is reached.
- H. **Tabulation** - In tabulating the score for the routine, the highest and lowest score will be averaged and then added to the remaining scores.
- I. **Tie Breaking Procedure** - The Technical Portion of the routine will be used to determine the winner. The scores of all judges will be totaled to determine the highest score. If a tie still exists, the Perfection and Overall Effect Categories of the routine will be used to determine the winner. The scores of all judges will be totaled in the tie-breaking procedure.
- J. **Awards Presentation** - The Safety Judge will meet with the cheer judges to notify them of the tournament results prior to the Awards Presentation.
- K. **Posting Scores** - At the conclusion of each class competition, the order of finish with technical, open and composite team scores will be posted in an area designated for coaches only. Media may have access but the results will not be announced to the spectators.

- Coaches will receive a copy of the score sheets, technical judge sheets, and master score sheets. These sheets will not be distributed until the end of all class competitions during the regionals and at the end of each class at the state.
 - Order of finish for each class will be mailed from the WVSSAC office upon receipt of regional and state results from tournament directors.
- L. **Scores Issued** - After receiving all tournament results (regional and state), the WVS-SAC office will issue order of finish and scores to coaches. Coaches will only receive the scores of the participants in their particular class.

III. Competition Rules

A. Uniform and Appearance

All of the uniform and appearance rules apply at all cheer activities, practices, performances, and competitions.

1. Participants are not permitted to cut slits in their t-shirts to wear to practice on Friday evening.
2. On Saturday, during the awards ceremony, participants must be legally attired upon receiving their award and will no longer be permitted to be out of uniform or carry stuffed animals, scarves, accessories, etc., onto the floor during the awards ceremony.

B. Format

Competition will begin with a presentation of a technical segment that must be a minimum of 30 seconds and not longer than 40 seconds. The technical portion will be scored, cheerleaders will stay on the floor and resume with the 2:30 open portion at the signal of the safety judge.

1. Technical

The technical portion of the routine will comprise 30% of the total score. The technical portion is comprised of words, motions, jumps, and transitions in formation.

a. Requirements

Technical portion **must**:

- 1) Be a minimum of 30 seconds and a maximum of 40 seconds long.
- 2) Incorporate 2 different jumps sometime during the technical portion. The two jumps may be performed by any number of team members. (Responsibility of Technical Judge to check for jumps.). Failure to perform the required jumps will result in a 5 point deduction for each jump not included.

b. Prohibitions

- 1) **No basket tosses.**
- 2) In an effort to clean up the material that is being incorporated into the cheer routines, repetitive **pelvic thrusts must be eliminated** during cheer performances and competitions. Should a team choose to exhibit this in their routine, it will result in a twenty (20) point deduction.
- 3) Touching, bracing, tumbling, pyramids, partner stunts, poms, dance, music

2. Open

The open portion of the routine **may** include words, motions, jumps, transitions in formation, touching, bracing, tumbling, pyramids, partner stunts, poms dance and music.

a. **Requirements**

If music is used, a quality copy (with back-up) must be available, edited for the whole 3 minutes. (Only one start and stop permitted when using the tape/CD).

b. **Prohibitions**

1) **No basket tosses**

C. **Timing Procedure**

1. Time limits shall be imposed at regional and state competitions. A minimum of two (2) people shall operate timing devices. Tournament directors are also asked to provide backup time pieces. **The time of the Technical Judge is the official time.**
2. **Beginning : To indicate the beginning of the time, each team will designate one member who will deliver the arm signal to the timer(s) and Safety Judge. To begin the technical portion of the routine, the right arm is to be fully extended from the shoulder and located beside the head. The arm must drop forward (not to the side) immediately and sharply (within one second of the beginning of the descent). When the hand hits the right leg, the time will begin. To begin the open portion of the routine, the right arm is to be fully extended from the shoulder and located beside the head to signal the safety judge that they are ready to begin. A slap down is not required. The time will start with the first word, motion or the beginning of the music. No motions, words, actions, etc., may begin before this time. No synchronized actions such as salutes, stomps, kneeling, etc., are allowed. All competitors will start from the floor.**
3. **Time STOPS when ALL cheerleaders have returned to the cheer surface.**
4. No restarting time will be allowed unless there is a mechanical problem or a serious injury.

D. **Changing Uniforms**

Changing uniforms or accessories during judging is not allowed (exception in case of emergency). Changing also refers to altering the uniform in any way during the judging.

E. **Entering and Exiting Floor**

There shall be no gymnastics upon entering or exiting the floor. No words, motion, actions, (salutes, stomps, use of the word "Ready") etc., may occur prior to the start of the routine. At the end of the routine, the team needs to exit the performing floor immediately. Once the competition has begun, no coach, fans, parents, etc., are allowed on the floor with the exception of the coach in case of injury.

F. **Sportsmanship**

All sportsmanship rules apply. **In addition:**

1. Celebration on the performing floor and at the end of the routine is prohibited.
2. During the entire routine, mention or reference to past championships and/or awards either in audible or visual form is prohibited.

G. Safety

1. Rules

Refer to *Nation Federation Spirit* rule book and *Cheer Manual*, "Rules and Regulations Governing All School", Part V.

2. Technical/Safety Judge Deductions - The following penalty points shall be deducted from the total score:

Bobbles	1-5 points
Falls	6-10 points
Time violation	20 points (per violation)
Rule violation	20 points (per violation)
Pom/hair piece/device violation	5-10 points
One jump omitted	5 points
Two jumps omitted	10 points

JUDGING

INFORMATION

I. General Rules and Regulations

In all cheer competitions, every attempt will be made to hire judges from outside school county to prevent conflicts of interest. Every effort will be made to assure that judges shall have no ties with any school or team they are judging. Judges shall be familiar with WVSSAC and National Federation cheer rules and regulations. Rules and regulations for judging shall be followed by all member schools and all county, conference, league, regional, state, and “stand alone” cheer competitions.

A. Cheer Judges

1. Coaches shall have no communication with judges concerning the judging. Any questions which arise should be conveyed through the director of the competition. Coaches are not permitted in the judging area.
2. Judges should not confer during the time of judging. The only exception is a competition procedural question directed to the Technical Judge.
3. Judges **must** sign or initial their judging sheets.
4. Keep a running total of all squads; the running total will assist in fair and consistent scoring. (A Cheer Recordkeeping Form is included and required).

B. Technical Judges

1. During the safety check, the Technical/Safety Judges shall conduct all communication concerning rule violations or routine violations with the coach. Safety Judges should not communicate with any cheerleader unless the coach is present.
2. Prior to the start of a competition, Technical/Safety Judges shall review each team’s routine and notify the coach of any safety/rule violation. However, the Safety Judge will not assist in changing the routine to make it legal; this is a coach’s responsibility. Complete the Technical Judge Checklist for the sequence of the routine.
3. Prior to the start of a competition, the Safety/Technical Judge will ask the coach to verify that all team members are legal in uniform attire and appearance by signing the TECHNICAL JUDGE ROUTINE/TEAM CHECKLIST.
4. Prior to the start of a competition, the Safety/Technical Judge will meet with all cheer judges to review judging procedures and score sheet completion.
5. The Technical Judge will confer with the coach concerning the designated beginning and ending of the routine.
6. Technical Judge is not to interfere with the cheer judges’ scoring of routine(s).
7. The Technical Judge is NOT allowed to view a video tape to determine a violation.

II. Guidelines for Cheer Judges

- A. Memorize the score sheet to be able to concentrate totally on the routine.
- B. Study the Cheer Manual - Competition Policies and Judging Information.
- C. Arrive at the competition site one hour before start time and immediately introduce yourself to the tournament director.
- D. Dress professionally for the judging assignment. (No blue jeans please.)
- E. Refrain from watching warm-ups before competition.
- F. Give undivided attention to the entire routine. Write down judging comments, and score after the routine is finished. Use a tablet to script the routine to refer back to after the routine is complete.

- G. Judge technique of the performers rather than style or music selection. Remember, the quality of jump, stunts, tumbling, etc., determines the point value, not the quantity.
- H. The cheering style is entirely up to the discretion of the team and its coach. The WVS-SAC in no way dictates or encourages any particular style of cheering. Judges must judge only the execution of the style - not the style itself.
- I. Do not allow crowd reactions to influence judging scores.
- J. Do not confer with the general public, coaches, other judges, or participants prior to the competition.
- K. Use the comment box on the score sheet to explain point deductions and to compliment strengths.
- L. Keep a positive facial expression.
- M. Be legible when writing your comments and when signing your name.
- N. Say something positive about every squad on their score sheet. No matter the difficulty or execution of the routine.

III. Guidelines for Technical Judges

TECHNICAL JUDGE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Technical Judge must have a working knowledge and understanding of National Federation Rules. Study the Cheer Manual - Competition Policies and Judging Information.
- B. Contact the Tournament Director several weeks before competition to check on facility set-up.
- C. At least two weeks prior to the competition, review outlines and prepare the Safety Judge Check List (included in the Cheer Manual Forms section).
- D. Arrive at the competition site one and one-half hours prior to the start and immediately introduce yourself to the Tournament Director.
- E. If there is more than one Safety Judge, meet and determine responsibilities and judging location. Arrive at a solid consensus as to what constitutes a bobble or a fall and be consistent..
- F. Check timing devices, scoring areas for Safety and Cheer Judges, and tabulator equipment. Minimum of 2 timing devices and tape calculator required for tabulator.
 - 1. Conduct a meeting with all judges on the day of the competition. Score sheets, levels of tumbling, stunts and pyramids, degree of difficulty, and scoring procedures should be thoroughly discussed.
 - 2. Conduct a meeting with all coaches in each class prior to the start of the class competition.
 - 3. Before the competition begins, ensure that the Tabulator has a tape adding machine/calculator.
 - 4. Ensure that the Tabulator completes and signs the Tabulator Check List.
 - 5. Verify the Awards Announcement prior to presentation of awards by conferring with cheer judges and reviewing score sheets.

IV. High School Regional/State Competition Judging

In addition to information in Sections II and III, the following points are emphasized.

- A. Judges for Regional and State Competition will be assigned by the WVSSAC.
- B. There shall be a minimum of three (3) judges for regional and five (5) for state competition, preferably five will be assigned. In addition, a Technical Judge must be assigned. When possible, two or three Technical Judges will be assigned to each region. The Technical Judge(s) is responsible for judging the routine in the area of safety violations or rule violations.
- C. **All new judges** or judges that did not complete the previous year's seminar must attend a 4 hour Judge's Training Seminar and pass the National Federation Spirit Rules Test. **Judges who completed the previous year's seminar** must attend a Cheer Rules Interpretation Clinic (see clinic schedule) and pass the National Federation Spirit Rules Test. Attendance at the 4 hour seminar is optional. **Judges will be selected from those who attend clinics.**
- D. Technical Judges will deduct 1-5 points for each bobble and 6-10 points for each fall.
- E. All rule and safety violations will result in a twenty (20) point deduction per violation. (Refer to Competition Policies and Rules). The Technical Judge will deduct the following points from the total for violations:
 - Time Violations 20 points for each violation
 - Rule Violations 20 points for each violation (**Exception: Pom Rule**)

Rule Violations - Call what you see and see what you call. During the routine, direct all attention to the routine to watch for violations.
- G. The Safety/Technical shall review the tie-breaking procedure.
- H. Procedure for Score Tabulation if Less Than Five Cheer Judges
 1. If only four judges, average the high and low. Therefore, you will be totaling three scores instead of four.
 2. If only three judges, use all three scores. Do not average any scores.

V. Competition Score Sheet Explanation

TECHNICAL CHEER

Motion Technique: Clean motion technique (arms, legs) placement, levels, sharpness, arms, wrist, fists.

Precision of Motions: Synchronization, unity, placement of motions as a team (same).

Formations Spacing/Use of Floor: Change of formations, flow, variety, creativity, transitions. Correct spacing, utilization of floor, creativity.

Voice: Clarity of words, voice, inflection, enunciation, and audible.

Jumps: Preps together, timing of jumps, landing, pointed toes, proper technique, height, synchronization.

Choreography/Creativity: Variety of moves, incorporation, transition/flow, formation, and line work compliments the cheer.

OPEN

Variety/Rhythm: Variety of moves, styles, steps, synchronization, timing with the music.

Music Interpretation: Moves go with the music, variety of formations, delivery to audience.

Execution: Clean technique, flashy, exciting, synchronization, formation/spacing perfected, execution of dance movements.

Tumbling: Level III (refer to Section VI.)

Level IV

Level V

Partner Stunts and Pyramids:

Level III

Level IV

Level V

Basket Toss

Level IV Pencil

Level V Toe Touch

When judging pyramids and partner stunts, stability, confidence, and **proper technique in building and dismounting are very important.**

OVERALL APPEAL

Choreography/Creativity: Variety of moves, incorporation, transition/flow, formation, and line work compliments the music.

Degree of Difficulty: Should be considered in judging tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and choreography. (Refer to Section VI.)

PROJECTION

Expression/Spirit: Facial, expressions coincide with cheer/music, eye contact, smiles, attitude, personality.

Showmanship/Spirit: Routine exciting, flashy, fun to watch, communicates enthusiasm to the crowd, overall visual effect, team personality, words and actions exhibit good sportsmanship.

OVERALL EFFECT

- 1) Timing for stunts, jumps, cradles, pyramid building and dismounting, missed motions.
- 2) Perfected transitions and formations
- 3) Synchronization throughout routine
- 4) Perfection of routine

VI. Degree of Difficulty Reference

Degree of difficulty should be considered in judging tumbling (gymnastics, partner stunts, pyramids). If the routine involves a variety of levels, judges will use the scale of the highest level.

GYMNASTICS

On a 5 point Scale
Maximum Awarded

Level III	Forward rolls, back rolls, cartwheels, roundoffs, walkover	3 pts
Level IV	Back handspring, roundoff back handspring	4 pts
Level V	Full twist, standing back tuck, roundoff back tuck, roundoff back handspring tuck, aerial, front punch, synchronized series tumbling, layouts, arabian, half twists, whip backs, passes that involve more than three stunts.	5 pts

PARTNER STUNTS AND PYRAMIDS

Level III	Double thigh stand, double base shoulder stand, single base shoulder stand, shoulder sit, pony mounts, Russian lift, "L" stand, *skills performed at thigh stand level.	3 pts.
Level IV	Double base prep, double base extension, pendulum, hanging liberty, suspended splits, double base split catch, sailor lift roll down (or T-lift roll down), power mount chair (or calf pop-3 people), rotating double base extension, heel stretch or liberty performed at shoulder height, flat backs, walk in chair, helicopter. *All mounts/dismounts including 180 degree or less of rotation are considered Level IV difficulty.	4 pts
Level V	Liberty, liberty heel stretch, arabesque, scorpion, one leg extension stunts, *Approach to single leg extension stunt (free standing or braced) <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Step in2. Walkover from extension3. Press from double base prep4. Ground up mount Single base toss to stunt, single base extensions, cupie, up-and-over. * All mount/dismounts including more than 180 degree of rotation are considered Level V difficulty	5 pts

VII. Scoring Procedures

- Concentration:** Give undivided attention to the performing team. Mark the score after the performance of a team, not during the performance.
- Consistency:** It is the responsibility of the judge and the integrity of the tournament to be fair and consistent.
- Scoring:**
 1. Individual criteria with a possible point value of **five**: average 3; above average 4; perfect 5.
 2. Individual criteria with a point value of **ten**: average 6; above average 8; perfect 10.
 3. When scoring, judges may use either whole numbers (1,2,3,4,5) or the decimal equivalents of tenths of a whole number (3.3, 3.5, 3.8, 4.2, 4.5, etc.). Do not use common fractions (1/4, 2/5, 1/2, 5/8, 3/4, etc.) and decimal equivalents beyond the first decimal place (.25, 3.55, 3.75, 4.33, 4.67, etc.)
 4. Make sure all scores are added correctly.
 5. Changing a score: **Draw a line through the score, initial the change and write in the new score. Do not blacken the original score.**
 6. Keep a running total of each team's score.
 7. Be legible when writing comments and signing your name.
 8. **Confidentiality** is of the utmost importance.

**MIDDLE
SCHOOL**

NINTH GRADE

TEAM SPECIFIC

RULES AND

REGULATIONS

Rules and Regulations Specific to Middle School/Ninth Grade Teams

***Note: Middle School/ Ninth Grade Teams are responsible for following all WVSSAC Rules and Regulations presented in this manual, the WVSSAC Rules and Regulations Handbook, and the National Federation Spirit Rules. The regulations listed here are middle school specific or points of emphasis.**

I. Eligibility Specific

- A. Any member of a freshman team in a four year high school that participates (in any capacity) on a junior varsity or varsity team is ineligible to return to the freshman team.
- B. Sixth graders in middle schools are eligible to tryout for the cheer team. If individual counties permit.
- C. Ninth grade students in a K-9, 6-9, or 7-9 school configuration are eligible to participate of a high school team at its feeder school (10-12) provided the county has approved such participation. However, once the ninth grader participates on a high school team, the student is ineligible to return to the ninth grade team at the feeder school. By county permission, a sixth grade at an elementary feeder school may participate on their middle school team. Approval for the sixth and ninth grade participation must be granted by the county board of education/governing body and the school principals involved.

II. Safety Rules and Regulations

- A. Middle school cheerleaders are **not permitted to perform basket tosses**. This includes 9th grade teams.
- B. All extended stunts must have a hands-on-spotter and a free standing spotter.
- C. All backward dismounts [Backward Dismount - A dismount in which the top person drops backward to catchers who are behind the base(s).], shoulder height or above dismounts and all cradles will require a free standing spotter. A separate free standing spotter is required for each dismount or extension. A free standing spotter must have arms fully extended toward the flyer and may not be touching anyone. The free standing spotter is not allowed to assist in the building of a stunt and may only assist in the dismount if the purpose is to prevent a fall. Coaches are responsible for determining the appropriate location and position of the free standing spotter. Refer to Coaching Procedures - Section II. E for additional regulations.
- D. The National Federation has recommended that middle schools not be allowed to perform pendulums, extensions, and suspended rolls. The WVSSAC has determined that the performance of these stunts is left to the discretion of the coach. The coach is responsible for judging the readiness and ability of the team and shall make the decisions as to whether the team possesses the skills and abilities to perform the stunts.
- E. Coaches who determine that their teams have the abilities to perform stunts must pay particular attention to the rules regarding:

- Fly Away Twist - A stunt must precede the toss. Middle schools are not permitted to execute double downs (double twist cradles) from any stunt *including fly aways* in practice, performances or competitions.
 - Pendulum - Number of catchers and spotters; bases may not become spotters or catchers. Top falls away from bases.
 - Suspended Splits - Four bases must slow the momentum and there must be hand (top) to base contact.
 - Flatbacks - Not a pendulum or dismount. Bases become catchers. Two head and shoulder spotters are required. Flyer falls between the two bases.
- F. Middle school/9th grade spirit team coaches shall emphasize:
- a) Conditioning
 - b) Basics [i.e. arm motions, jumps, partner stunts (shoulder height and below)]
 - c) Importance of the spotter.
- G. Middle school /9th grade are not permitted to execute double down (twist cradle) in practice, performances or competitions.

III. Competition Regulations - Modifications of NFHS and High School

- Cheer coaches who are involved in the organization of a competition are reminded that only WV Certified judges can be used. And that a technical (safety) judge must be one of the judges.
 - Cheer coaches are reminded that teams are only allowed to compete during the specified season dates. If coaches decide to enter an event which may qualify the team to advance to the next level of competition, it is the coach's responsibility to notify the competition director, cheerleaders, and parents that the team will not be allowed to advance if the next level does not meet the specified season dates.
 - The West Virginia Cheer Modifications Information will be sent to all sanctioned events.
 - In all competitions, ninth grade teams enter as middle school teams if a separate ninth grade team competition is not offered.
 - Ninth grade teams must follow middle school regulations.
 - For middle school/ninth grade in-state competitions, the use of the Cheer Outline is mandatory. See Competition Policies.
- A. During the regular school term, secondary school cheerleading teams may participate only in competitions which are sanctioned by the WVSSAC.
- B. To be eligible to participate in cheer competition, each member of the team must have participated in a minimum of 70% of the team activities. This includes all activities of the team (i.e. cheering as a support group at other sport contests, fund raisers, practices, cheer competitions/invitationals, pep rallies, clinics, camps, etc.). It will be the coach's responsibility to verify that each member has complied with the 70% regulation. The 70% Rule is not intended to penalize cheerleaders who have not been able to actively participate due to injury certified by a physician.

Competitions Middle/Jr./Ninth		
	<u>Regional Format</u>	<u>Allowed Number</u>
Stand Alone	No	No Limit
Conference	X	13
County	X	13
League	X	13
Support	No	No Limit

If the high school regional competition format is required, all teams must follow all the rules of the format (outline, point deductions, procedure for beginning and ending routine, allowed number of coaches, entry and exit on performing surface, etc.,) Coaches should refer to the section of this manual entitled **Competition Policies (ivory).**

- C. Middle school/ninth grade may modify the Regional-State competition format if the competition consists of judging while the team is performing a support function for another sport. If any modifications are made, each participating team shall be informed of the criteria for judging and the modification two (2) weeks prior to the competition. Any modification made to competition regulations must be approved by the WVSSAC office. Modified competition formats must be included with the Sanction Form. Cheer competitions are to be conducted on wooden floors - no pavement or concrete.
- D. If a middle school/ninth grade cheer competition/invitational is a “stand alone” event, the competition/format must meet all requirements of the WVSSAC Sanction Form, follow all safety rules, and assess the WVSSAC required point penalty for safety rule violations. Cheer competitions are to be conducted on wooden floors - no pavement or concrete.
- E. If the middle school/ninth grade cheer competition is a county, conference, or league “stand alone” event, the format must be identical to the high school competition format. In addition, the number of team members is restricted to thirteen. Directors are reminded to review the Spectator Support Information included in The Interscholastic.
- F. Coaches are reminded that Technical (Safety) Judges will deduct 20 points for a safety violation if a free standing spotter is not used when required (for example, extensions, back extensions, pop dismounts, etc.,).
- G. Coaches shall refer to the Competition Section of this manual for further information on sanctioning, competition format, and judging.

West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission

**2875 Staunton Turnpike
Parkersburg, WV 26104-7219
Phone: 304/485-5494
Fax: 304/428-5431
Web Site: www.wvssac.org
E-Mail: wvssac@wvssac.org**

**Gary Ray, Executive Director
C. W. Powell, Assistant Executive Director
Kelly Geddis, Assistant Executive Director
Ray Londeree, Assistant Executive Director**

