



Dear Candidates and Parents,

Welcome to the process of being considered to be a part of the Bowie Cheer program for the 2024-2025 Cheer Year! This year we will continue many Bowie traditions while developing our skills to keep up with our sport. Please look through the handbook in detail to ensure all parties understand the commitment level required of you and your family over the next year.

This year the Bowie Cheer program will continue our focus as a school spirit organization and a competitive program. We want to support our school and athletic organizations with as much spirit and sideline support as possible, while continuing in our pursuit of excellence as a nationally competitive cheer team. Tryouts in March will be held to select the teams for JV and Varsity Sideline Cheer teams. Competitive Cheer Teams (Game Day Teams and Traditional Team) will be selected in the beginning/middle of our fall semester. All members of sideline cheer will be on at least one competitive team. Candidates must make our sideline team to be eligible for our comp

Cheerleading is a YEAR-ROUND SPORT that will be SINGLE BLOCKED for JV & DOUBLE BLOCKED for Varsity and/or Competition Teams. It requires commitment and dedication.. Students must be physically capable of fulfilling all of the responsibilities and expectations of a cheerleader throughout the entire year. Every candidate needs to understand that he/she will be expected to participate in physical conditioning including but not limited to conditioning, stunting, and standing / running tumbling. Cheerleaders are required to attend practice every day. In addition to the traditional cheer aspects, we will be working on physical strength and conditioning.

The responsibility of the Bowie High School Cheer Program is to support all other sports and organizations on campus. If you decide to try out for this position and are selected, you will be responsible for being present at several sporting events of different types, as well as, various school activities.

This position takes a great deal of time and effort, but is well worth it if you are willing to devote yourself to making the Bowie Cheer Program the best!

**Please be aware that the Cheer Handbook is subject to change. Bowie Cheer Coaches, with the guidance of Bowie administration, will make decisions that will best support our student athletes and the program as a whole.**

We look forward to an exciting year! Good luck!! If you have any questions, please contact the coaching staff at [bryana.bauhs@austinisd.org](mailto:bryana.bauhs@austinisd.org) AND [davis.tran@austinisd.org](mailto:davis.tran@austinisd.org).

# James Bowie High School Cheer Program Handbook 2024-2025

## ***Why we do what we do:***

We believe cheerleading should teach teamwork, discipline, accountability, setting and reaching goals, hard work, sacrifice, and determination. We believe those who have good character, work hard, and have a good attitude are the most successful in whatever they do. We believe learning these qualities in high school prepare you to succeed later in life. These rules are made so we can have fun, be safe, work hard, and develop character qualities that make us successful.

**1. We have discipline so everyone will be safe.** For example, we require that your hair is pinned back out of your face at all times. This is not an appearance/vanity issue; it is unsafe to stunt, tumble, or do other cheer activities if your hair is obstructing your vision. It is also important that everyone is quiet and attentive while coaches/captains are talking. Everyone must hear instructions and counts so we're all on the same page and no one is hurt by a mistake.

**2. We have discipline to maximize the use of team time and create a team atmosphere.** We expect you to be on time and ready for every practice and event. We want to start practices on time so we can be productive, get the job finished, and go home. We respect YOUR time, please respect OURS. Student athletes in extracurriculars are held to a higher standard. As school role models and leaders, Bowie Cheerleaders will be held accountable accordingly.

**3. We have discipline to foster respect and build character.** Many decisions made by the coaches are in response to desires voiced by cheerleaders, parents, and/or administration. The rest of our decisions are made from our years of experience. We want to hear your input and we promise to listen. Sometimes we will compromise on a situation, and other times we will stay firm. We will always do what we believe is the best decision for the program. We respect and trust you enough to take your thoughts and concerns into consideration when making our decisions; please respect us enough to follow our leadership even if you do not always agree.

## Philosophy

1. To be the foundation of spirit for James Bowie High School.
2. To carry out old and develop new traditions that will involve the entire student body.
3. To serve as ambassadors for James Bowie High School.
4. To represent James Bowie High School with a strong work ethic in all activities.
5. To build the morale of the entire Bowie campus.
6. To demonstrate teamwork, positive attitudes, inclusivity, and strong leadership as well as serving as model students at James Bowie High School and in the community.
7. To demonstrate school spirit through performances at various athletic activities as well as competitions.

## **ARTICLE I: CHARACTER QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Section 1: Code of Conduct**

All team members must conduct themselves as leaders of the school and their behavior must reflect this responsibility with dignity, integrity, and high morals. In addition, all members must dress, act, and understand they are representatives of their school and the district **AT ALL TIMES, whether on or off school property.**

Inappropriate conduct consists of, but is not limited to; profanity, drinking, smoking, public displays of affection (PDA), bullying, texting, inappropriate postings on the internet (including, but not limited to email, social media, etc.), use or possession of illegal substances, inappropriate behavior towards another team member or coaches, verbal conflicts, and/or referral to ALC. The coaches will assess the appropriate discipline as set forth in the “Discipline Management” section (Article VI) of this Handbook and the school-wide discipline policy.

### **Section 2: Attitude & Behavior**

All team members must be enthusiastic, positive, and demonstrate good manners. Any disrespect or insubordination toward coaches, leadership, teachers, other school employees, or other members will not be tolerated. The coaches will then assess the appropriate discipline as set forth in the “Discipline Management” section (Article VI) of this Handbook.

***As a Bowie Cheerleader, I will abide by these statements for the betterment of my team:***

1. I will step into all cheerleading activities with a positive, encouraging attitude and a smile on my face. Even if I’ve had a horrible day, I will try my hardest to set that aside and step up for my team. I will encourage all other team members to do the same.

2. I will set a positive example for and be respectful to all peers, students, and parents, as well as competitors and all other affiliates. I will not be rude or disrespectful to any of these entities. I will not whine or complain about workouts or coaches/captain directions.
3. I will be dedicated, accept responsibility, and maintain good public relations with every volunteer, faculty & staff member, the student body, and community to ensure success and the respect of the team.
4. I will respect all leadership and the coaches. I will not argue with them, gossip about them, or disobey them. I will listen and pay attention when one of them is speaking.
5. I will be honest with the coaches about issues that concern me.
  - If I have a concern, I will ask the coaches for an appropriate time to address the concern in a private manner, not during practice or an event. I will only discuss these matters with them in a calm, respectful, mature, and private way.
  - I understand that the coaches will listen to me, but if they disagree with my issue, I will respect their decision as the leaders of this program.
6. I will work with everyone that has any part in the Bowie Cheer Program. I will follow the guidelines in #5 and seek help if needed.
7. I will be on time and ready for all practices and other cheer events. I will hustle everywhere I go (to practice, onto the field, to the formation). I will put 100% effort in every motion, jump, dance, stunt, routine, workout, conditioning drill, and cheer event. I will not give up. I will be a team player.

### **Section 3: Bowie Student and Parent Handbook**

All team members must adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Bowie High School Student and Parent Handbook. Violations may result in disciplinary action including demerits, probations, removal from our program. Disciplinary actions and decisions are made at the discretion of the program.

### **Section 4: AISD Student Success Guide (Student Code of Conduct)**

All team members must adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Austin ISD Student Success Guide (Student Code of Conduct). Violations may result in disciplinary action including demerits, probations, removal from our program. Disciplinary actions and decisions are made at the discretion of the program.

## ARTICLE II: PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

### Section 1: Camp Requirements (Dates and time are subject to change)

1. Jr Dawgs Cheer Clinic Fundraisers
  - a. All team members must work at our Jr Dawgs Cheer Summer Clinic.
    - i. Set Up: **July 7th** @ 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
    - ii. Clinic: **July 8th - 11th** @ 7:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - b. All team members must work at our Jr Dawgs Cheer Winter Clinic.
    - i. Set Up: TENTATIVE **December 20th** @ 1:40 PM - 3:40 PM
    - ii. Clinic: TENTATIVE **December 21st** @ 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM
2. Bowie Cheer Home Camp
  - a. July 15th - July 18th
    - i. Varsity: 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM
    - ii. All Team: 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
  - b. All team members must attend our Home Camp, held during the summer months before the academic year.
  - c. **Failure to attend** and participate will **result in 6 demerits**
  - d. Stunt group position and spot in formations is subject to change for any member not in attendance at home camp.
3. UCA Summer Cheer Camp
  - a. July 23rd - July 26th @ Great Wolf Lodge in Grapevine, TX
  - b. Attendance at this camp is **mandatory**.
  - c. Athletes who do not attend UCA camp will be removed from the Bowie Cheer Program.
  - d. Team members are not allowed to leave camp and are under the coaches' supervision for the duration of the camp. .
  - e. Athletes will take a bus to and from UCA Camp and stay together in the hotel as a team. If an athlete does not travel or stay with the team he/she forfeits the right to attend and participate at camp. Individual student needs will be taken into consideration for traveling accommodations.
4. If a team member becomes ill or injured, notification must be provided to the coaches as soon as possible so that the team member's level of participation in any camp may be assessed.
  - a. For example, injured team members may not be able to participate in all activities due to the nature and severity of the injury, but may be able to perform support functions and attend camps to foster team bonding and learn from watching.

## **Section 2: Summer Requirements**

1. Practices
  - a. We will have a summer practice schedule for the month of June. If you have a summer vacation planned you do not have to attend. However, you must submit a google form with the dates and reasons that you cannot attend. It will be held on every Tuesday of the week. If I do not get notification of a planned event, the absence will be considered as unexcused which will result in demerit(s).
  - b. If you cannot attend a practice you must make it up by doing workout homework.
  - c. Jr. Dawgs Clinic, Home Camp, and UCA Camp are mandatory. Vacations will not be excused.

## **Section 3: Class Requirements**

1. All team members must enroll in the designated cheer class and remain in the class all year. The only exception being athletes participating in other approved JBHS sports and seniors once their obligations for the season have been fulfilled, including assisting with spring tryouts.
2. Failure to enroll and meet attendance requirements in the cheer class will result in dismissal from the team.
  - a. This is due to the amount of practice and choreography an athlete will miss if they are not present and enrolled in our cheer class period.
  - b. It is a safety hazard to have athletes participate in our performances or routines if they do not practice the skills, formations, and choreography.
  - c. This is a team sport, athletes not present cannot safely participate if not enrolled and present in class.

## **Section 4: Activity Requirements**

1. All team members must attend all designated activities.
2. Activities include but are not limited to games, practices, pep rallies, meetings, community functions, service projects, competitions, and fundraisers.

## **Section 5: Performance Requirements**

1. Teams will be expected to attend and support sports teams throughout the year.
2. Teams will generally cheer for their corresponding sports team. However, coaches reserve the right to designate sporting events the teams must attend, and may allow other teams to participate at certain games.
  - a. Homecoming game - JV may be allowed to cheer for certain quarter(s) of the homecoming game.

3. These will be tentatively scheduled from the beginning of the season and could be confirmed with only short notice.
4. All team members are REQUIRED to compete at any competitions coaches designate them to attend.

## **Section 6: Practice Requirements**

1. All team members must attend scheduled practices throughout the entire season, starting with spring practices after tryouts, summer practices, before and after school practices as well as some weekends.
2. Full participation in all practices is expected of every team member.
3. Appropriate practice clothes and shoes must be worn at all practices. The daily practice attire will be set by the coaches and captains.
4. If a team member becomes ill or injured, notification must be provided to the coaches as soon as possible so that the team member's level of participation in practice may be assessed.
  - a. For example, injured team members may not be able to participate in all activities due to the nature and severity of the injury, but may be able to perform support functions and attend practice to foster team bonding and learn from watching.

## **Section 7: Grading Policies**

1. Academic probation – any member failing to meet the grade requirements as set forth by UIL “No Pass, No Play”.
  - a. “No Pass, No Play” Policy - Receiving a failing grade (grade below 70 in academic classes; grade below 60 in Advanced/AP or dual credit classes)
2. Cheerleaders who are on academic probation are expected to practice with the team during the class period, but will use outside of school practice time for study hall and tutorials for classes they are failing.
3. Failure in **ANY TWO** of the following eligibility grading checks within the school year will result in dismissal from the cheer program. The parent of the cheerleader will be informed in writing that his/her child is being dismissed from the cheer program.
  - a. 1st 6 week mark, 1st 9 weeks, 2nd 9 weeks, and 3rd 9 weeks
4. While on academic probation, you will be required to attend all practices, but cannot perform, compete, be seated with the team at events, or wear uniforms.

## **ARTICLE III: ABSENCES**

Attendance is mandatory for all cheerleading functions, unless excused by the coaches. Members should arrive on time to all activities and stay until dismissed by the coaches. All absences and tardies will be considered unexcused until the appropriate and required documentation is provided.

## Section 1: Attendance

1. Absences for any reason, *excused or unexcused*, may result in possible removal from an athlete's position in upcoming performances; including but not limited to: games, pep rallies, and competitions.
2. Inform coaches as soon as it is known that an absence is coming.
  - a. Written notification is required
    - Illness: a **signed doctor's note** is required for an illness-related absence, that exceeds 2 days, to be considered excused.
    - School: confirmation with school sponsor, director, coach, or teacher.
    - Excused Family Events: parent written communication at least **48 hours in advance** (handled individually by the coaches).
    - Unique Situation: These will be handled individually at the coaches' discretion. Advanced notice is required.
  - b. Notice needs to be given as soon as possible, but at least **48 hours in advance**

## Section 2: Tardies

1. If you know ahead of time that you may be late to practice or to an event, notify the coach or a captain immediately.
2. If you are late to practice, the consequence will be demerits and possible removal from your position in upcoming performances including but not limited to games, pep rallies, and competitions.

## Section 3: Excused Absences

Excused absences do not count against squad members for disciplinary purposes when the appropriate required documentation is provided to coaches by the deadline. Excused absences may result in ineligibility for participation in performances or events due to safety or the quality of the program. These include:

1. Illness: a **signed doctor's note** is required for an illness-related absence, that exceeds 2 days, to be considered excused.
2. School related absences cleared with the coaches **48 hours in advance**
3. Family events, such as deaths and weddings, will be handled individually by the coaches. Communication must be provided to coaches **48 hours in advance**.
4. Other unique situations could exist. These will be handled individually at the coaches' discretion. Advanced notice is required.



## Section 4: Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences will be handled according to the Discipline Management section of this contract and school policy. Examples of unexcused absences, unless priorly excused by coaches, include but are not limited to:

1. Non-school events
2. Work
3. Outside gym classes/practices
  - a. If a member of Bowie Cheer is also a member of another sport or outside cheer organization, a calendar with ALL events for all teams must be submitted to the coaches.
  - b. We are willing to work with you, but need constant communication. There will be some events for Bowie Cheer that are non-negotiable and will result in demerits or possible removal from an athlete's position in upcoming performances if the event is missed.
4. Non-school organizations
5. Entertainment activities (birthday dinners, dates, concerts, etc.)
6. Choosing not to participate
7. Any other absence not specifically listed in the excused absence list above, or approved by coaches.

## ARTICLE IV: EXPECTATIONS

It is an honor and a privilege, not a right, to be a Bowie Cheerleader; therefore, excellence is expected and required. Being a cheerleader is an important representative responsibility and is a position of influence on student body dynamics, and appropriate conduct is mandated accordingly. Unawareness of these regulations does not excuse athletes from adhering to them.

### Section 1: Game, Event, and Performances

The cheer teams are highly visible when in uniform. The expectations that follow are to ensure the integrity of the program and safety of the athletes are maintained.

1. All cheerleaders are expected to maintain their skills they tried out with, throughout the whole year. Routines will be created with skills tried out with. If you are not throwing or showing these skills on all surfaces, you may be removed from the performance. **This includes "roll call" and the football team "run out."**
2. At games, cheerleaders must pay attention to the game and spirit constantly.
3. If not participating at an event, cheerleaders must not be in a cheer uniform.
  - a. If the performance/participation is not for an entire event, cheerleaders must immediately change out of the official cheer uniform after being excused by the coaches or captains.

4. Everything will be kept in your cheer bag (warm ups, extra bows/ribbon, water bottle, purses, cell phones, etc.). Cell phones can only be used at designated times.
5. Cheerleaders will act professionally at games and other public cheer events.
  - a. There will be no talking or acting inappropriately during the National Anthem, Moment of Silence, and school songs (for both teams).
  - b. For the half-time performances, athletes will be provided a brief break for restrooms and snacks. However, when Bowie program performances begin, we will sit as a group and watch the half-time performance. Athletes will not be permitted to sit in the stands during half-time.
  - c. Your job is to cheer at games, not excessively talk to spectators or players in the stands or while you are in the stands, selling programs.
  - d. If you are not doing your job by yelling during cheers/chants or jumping and tumbling passes, you will be benched. The coach will issue appropriate demerits and the parents will be contacted.
6. When the time is set for arrival that means you are 100% ready to cheer. This includes: bow, makeup, shoes, socks, lipstick, signs, megaphone, backpack, etc.
  - a. Cheerleaders will only wear the appropriate uniforms and WILL NOT wear jewelry when they are in uniform.
  - b. If you do not have any part of your uniform, you will be benched until it is fixed and will receive demerits.
  - c. Hair will be worn in many different ways at times, during games and performances. Bowie Cheer aims to be inclusive of all students from varying cultural backgrounds and hair textures. To continue risk minimization, hairstyles must be pulled up and out of the athlete's face for safety reasons.
7. Restroom breaks will be taken before the game (when we arrive) and at half time with coach approval. Emergent needs should be addressed to the coaches or captains.
8. An evaluation may take place before games. Per coaches discretion, members may not perform without demonstrating his or her knowledge of cheers, sidelines, and band dances.
  - a. If an evaluation takes place, it will be judged by the coaches:
    - i. Tumble Check
    - ii. Knowledge of cheer, chant and band dances moves
    - iii. Technique
    - iv. Overall impression
    - v. Volume
    - vi. Energy/Effort
    - vii. Other specific skills as determined by the coaches
    - viii. Any member not performing satisfactorily during or following the evaluation could be moved within the formation.

9. If knowledge or execution of a routine or skill is lacking, the coaches reserve the right to remove any member from the routine or event.
10. Mascots must be in full uniform and in character during all events. They may take breaks in their designated area as needed, but must complete all events in costume until dismissed by the coaches.

## **Section 2: Practices**

To maintain the high standards of the cheer program and continue the growth of the teams and as individual athletes, team practices are mandatory. All practices are closed to non-team members or non authorized faculty/staff. The expectations for team members at all practices are:

1. Always come to practice prepared and with a positive attitude. Leave negativity at the door.
2. Be respectful to the coaches and leadership.
3. No excessive side talking, laughing, or goofing off.
4. Stunt in any position, with any stunt group that is requested.
5. Hustle!
6. Appropriate and correct practice clothes and shoes must be worn at all practices.
7. You may NEVER wear jewelry to cheer class, practice, games or performances. This includes cartilage piercing and facial piercing.
  - a. This is a state policy that will be enforced by the Bowie Cheer coaches.
  - b. Do not plan to get a new piercing while cheer is in season or before.
8. If a cheerleader has a concern with anything regarding practice, this concern should be addressed to the coach after practice.
9. If at any time the coach feels the athlete's technique is putting them or others at an increased risk of injury, the coach may choose to pull that athlete from that activity.
10. If a member misses practice for any reason, the member may be cut from that week's performance.
  - a. Beginning with the first spring practice, all days are mandatory and missing will result in demerits and a potential removal from performances.
  - b. Injured team members must still be in attendance at all events.
  - c. Anyone who is late or misses the last practice before the performance could be removed from that week's performance.

11. A routine evaluation may take place before each performance. If a member fails to meet the stated criteria, per coaches discretion, the member may be removed from the routine.
  - a. Any team member removed from a performance will continue to participate fully in practice. The member must continue to uphold all responsibilities as an alternate for that routine.
  - b. Routine evaluation shall be judged by the Coaches and critiqued by the Captains on:
    - Tumble Check
    - Knowledge of routine
    - Technique
    - Overall impression
    - Volume
    - Energy/Effort
    - Other specific skills as determined by the coaches
  - c. Any member not performing up to the standards set during or following the evaluation could be removed from that week's performance.
  - d. Being removed from a performance is not dependent on an alternate being available for that position.

### **Section 3: Community Service**

The goal of community service is to build connections between the local communities and our Bowie High School community.

1. All members of the Bowie Cheer program will be required to attend community service projects and other events selected by the coaches, leadership, and others associated with the Bowie Cheer Organization.
2. Each semester you are required to participate in 8 hours of community service projects and projects are assigned to reflect that community service.
  - a. 4 service hours with Bowie Cheer
  - b. 4 service hours with events of choice
3. Failure to complete the required hours will affect the athlete's final exam grade.

### **Section 4: Spirit Activities**

1. Bowie Cheer program members will participate in making/painting and hanging posters, banners, and signs as scheduled by the coaches. Supplies will be provided by the school.
2. Bowie Cheer program members will participate in activities such as: Bulldogs and Hotdogs, any other community events, Jr Dawgs Cheer Summer Clinic, Jr Dawgs Cheer Winter Clinic, photo shoots, appearances, send-offs, and other spirit activities as assigned by the coaches.

## **Section 5: Scheduling and Communication**

1. Bowie Cheer program members will be provided a schedule of mandatory events. This initial calendar is the basis for the school year, however, it will be updated throughout the year.
2. Bowie Cheerleaders **MUST** participate in each scheduled event. This schedule will be available through the Band App and/or other communication platform designated by the coaches, and our Booster Weekly Update. We expect both athletes and guardians to check this calendar for updates and changes.
  - a. Athlete Band App ran by coaches
  - b. Guardian Band App ran by a team parent and Booster Club President and Secretary.
3. Schedule changes will be communicated as soon as possible.
  - a. Bowie Cheer program members will be responsible for informing parents of schedule changes, extra practices, rule changes, etc.
4. Bowie Cheer program members will be responsible for all information given verbally and through Band, group chat, or email.
5. It is expected that team members schedule appointments, tutoring sessions, and other activities around the cheer calendar.
6. Students need to communicate with their teachers when we are traveling to determine a plan and expectations for making up the missed material and work.
7. Communication between cheerleader and (or) parent with the coach is key!
  - a. When a child is injured or ill, parents must communicate with the coach.
  - b. When academics are in trouble or tests need to be retaken, the cheerleader and the parent must communicate with the coach for options that work.
  - c. All communication must be in written form: email. If a matter is discussed in person, the parent and/or coach must follow up the oral communication with a written email.

## **Section 6: Equipment and Uniforms**

1. Bowie Cheerleaders will be responsible for securing, storing, cleaning and maintaining all equipment before, during and after all performances and practices.
2. Equipment assigned to cheer program members is the member's full responsibility. If lost, stolen, or damaged in any way, the cheerleader must pay the cost of the repair or replacement. This includes, but is not limited to: signs, mascot costumes, warm ups, tossables, megaphones, uniforms, poms, etc.

## **ARTICLE V: ATTIRE**

Bowie Cheerleaders will wear appropriate attire for every event. This requirement is to ensure a team environment and ensure a safe environment for the athletes.

### **Section 1: Official Uniform**

Team members are expected to attend activities wearing the official dress designated by the coaches and captains. Uniforms may only be worn at authorized school functions and **may not be worn by non-team members.**

1. The only attire and equipment approved at events are those required and purchased by and/or provided to every team member as an official part of the uniform.
2. Bowie Cheerleaders must wear ONLY those uniform pieces designated by the coaches or captains to official cheer events.
3. No part of any cheerleading uniform may be given to or worn by another student or person who is not a member of the team AT ANY TIME without the coaches' permission. This will result in demerits.
4. Uniforms will not be remodeled in any way without the permission of the coaches. The cheerleader is responsible for the upkeep of the uniform and all materials handed out to the cheerleader. The cheerleader will replace the part or whole depending upon the damage or loss.

### **Section 2: Letterman Jackets**

In order for a Bowie Cheerleader to receive authorization to purchase their letterman jacket they must meet the following criteria:

1. Make the Bowie Varsity Cheer team after the initial cheer tryout.
2. Fully participate in spring, summer, and fall practices (injuries discussed on a case by case basis).
3. Fully participate and cheer in 6 Varsity athletic events.
4. Volunteer for at least 2 Bowie Cheer or JBHS Cheer Booster Club community service events.

### **Section 3: Practice**

Team members are expected to wear designated practice outfits and come completely ready to start practice (i.e. hair pulled out of face due to safety reasons, no jewelry, cheer shoes on, etc.)

### **Section 4: Games, Events, and other Performances**

1. Only the items designated by the coaches or captain may be worn. All uniform parts must be readily available in the event of weather changes.
2. Addition or substitutions to the uniform will be made only for special circumstances. Those changes will be made only by the coaches' approval.

## **Section 5: School Theme Days**

As spirit leaders of the school, the cheer program selects the theme days, with administration's approval, for football games. All team members are required to fully participate in Spirit Theme days. Failure to do so will result in demerits. If there are any concerns about the theme please address them with the coaches in advance prior to the actual spirit day. If financials present a problem, please let the coaches know as soon as possible.

## **Section 6: Inappropriate Attire When in Uniform**

Certain items may not be worn at any time when in uniform, unless permission is given by coaches. Such items include but are not limited to:

- Jewelry, including body piercings
- Homemade necklaces, bracelets, anklets
- Nail Polish except French tip, tan/neutral or clear
- Long nails (keep at athletic cut)
- Flip flops or sandals
- Pajamas
- Visible tattoos (these must be concealed or covered)
- Jackets that are not a part of the uniform

Failure to comply with the uniform rules will result in removal from the activity until the problem has been corrected, and the appropriate discipline will be assessed and handled at coaches' discretion.

## **ARTICLE VI: DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT**

Discipline will be fully decided on and enforced by the coaches and assigned administrator. Disobeying cheer program rules or expectations will be followed with consequences outlined in this handbook. Coaches will not discuss discipline or consequences with the entire team in regards to any one cheer member due to privacy issues. Cheer members and parents must refrain from asking coaches about any incident, discipline, or consequence not involving themselves or their athlete.

Although all infractions cannot be listed in the handbook, cheerleading is a school sponsored activity and discipline infractions also fall under the AISD Student Success Guide (Student Code of Conduct). All laws set forth by the state of Texas, all listed rules, and all rules in the student handbook must be strictly followed at all times.

## Section 1: Demerits

Demerits are issued for improper conduct as defined by the district, campus, and cheer policies. Demerits will not directly affect the grade but will affect the active status and the possible removal from the organization.

- Demerits may be given to all members by coaches at any practice or function, with approval of coaches.
- Demerits are how the coaches determine which members are not upholding their obligations to the team.
- Athletes will be removed from the team after acquiring the designated number of demerits. The number of demerits re-sets after fall semester.
  - For the 1st semester athletes can receive 9 demerits from **March - December**. On the 10th demerit athletes will be removed from the program.
  - For the 2nd semester athletes can receive 4 demerits from **January - March**. On the 5th demerit athletes will be removed from the program.
- Items posted to any platform, including social media, pertaining to infractions of this or any Austin ISD official code will have appropriate consequences issued.

## Clause 1: Acquiring Demerits

The following are examples of infractions, but **the list is not all-inclusive**. Coaches have the right to issue demerits for situations not specified on this list. If an athlete refuses to sign for any issued demerits, those demerits will still count towards the Bowie Cheer Demerit Consequences (see Article VI, Section 1, Clause 2). These are all per occurrence.

### A. Disrespect & Non-compliance

- **10 Demerits**
  - Removal to ALC
    - Removal from squad
- **9 Demerits**
  - Out of School Suspension (OSS)
    - Benched 1-2 games, events, or performances
- **8 Demerits**
  - In School Suspension (ISS)
- **Up to 5 Demerits**
  - Repeated violations the Austin ISD Student Success Guide (Student Code of Conduct)
  - Repeated violations of Bowie High School Student & Parent Handbook
  - Repeated violations of Bowie Cheer Handbook
- **5 Demerits**
  - School Referral (per occurrence)



- **3 Demerits**
  - Disrespect or insubordination to captains or coaches
  - Failure to follow instructions given by any staff member or authorized adult
  - Arguing or causing a significant disruption to the team and our duties
  - Talking or horseplaying during events, games, appearances, or performances
  - Excessive talking or horseplaying during stunting (safety hazard)
  - Excessive talking or horseplaying during practice (safety hazard)
- **2 Demerits**
  - Unsportsmanlike or inappropriate conduct
  - Failure to fully participate in the class period
  - Leaving an assigned area without permission
  - Inappropriate public display of affection
  - Teacher formal complaint, subject to due process

## **B. Attendance**

- **8 Demerits**
  - No call/ No show from an event, game, or performance
- **6 Demerits**
  - Unexcused absence from cheer fundraisers, Summer Junior Dawgs Cheer Clinic, Winter Junior Dawgs Cheer Clinic, Home Camp
    - Reminder: UCA Camp is Mandatory, failure to fully attend will result in athlete removal from the program.
- **5 Demerits**
  - Communicated Unexcused absence from an event, game, or performance
- **3 Demerits**
  - No call/No show from cheer class period or practice
  - Leave an event, game, or performance early unexcused
- **2 Demerits**
  - Leave practice early unexcused
  - Communicated Unexcused absence from practice
  - Delay of more than thirty minutes (30) for pick-up after an event, practice, game, or performance
- **1 Demerit**
  - Communicated Unexcused reason for leaving from practice or cheer class period
  - Tardy to an event, practice, game, or performance
    - Athletes will NOT be counted as “present” until they are completely ready to participate safely:
      - Hair is pulled out of face for safety reasons

- Jewelry is out for safety reasons

### C. Uniforms

- **3 Demerits**
  - Inappropriate wearing or lending out any part of the uniform to a non-team member
- **1 Demerit**
  - Failure to wear correct practice attire
  - Jewelry, hair not pulled out of face for safety reasons, finger nail polish at event, game, or performance - benched until fixed
  - Wrong uniform/shoes/socks/ribbon/poms/etc. - benched until fixed

### Clause 2: Demerit Consequences

The following procedures will be used when demerits are issued:

- **3 Demerits**
  - Conference with the team member and the coaches
  - Parent/guardian notification by coaches
- **5 Demerits**
  - A team member will be removed from one upcoming event, game, or performance
  - Athletes must attend the event and sit with the coaches
- **8 Demerits**
  - Parent and administrator notification
  - At this point, athletes are on a behavioral probation
  - Benched for 2 upcoming events, games, or performances
  - Stripped of title, if applicable (captain, officer, etc.)
- **10 Demerits**
  - Dismissed from the team: If 10 demerits have been accumulated by the cheerleader, the team member will be dismissed from the team. If a cheerleader is dismissed from the team for nonacademic reasons, the cheerleader may not try out for the Bowie Cheer team the following school year.
  - Students are given a class schedule change as soon as possible.
  - All district issued uniforms and equipment must be returned.

### Clause 3: Removal from Team

1. Removal from the team consists of a team member being permanently removed from the cheerleading team for the remainder of the school year.
2. If a team member receives the 10th demerit they will be removed from the team.

3. Cheerleaders may be dismissed from the team for situations that warrant dismissal at the discretion of the coaches and the principal.
4. If an extreme discipline situation occurs that is not covered in the discipline management section of this Handbook, the coaches reserve the right to remove a team member with administrative approval. This includes, but is not limited to, violations of the Bowie Student Handbook, the Austin ISD Student Success Guide (Student Code of Conduct), the Bowie Cheer Handbook, suspension from school, placement in ALC, etc.
5. If a team member is academically ineligible for **ANY TWO** of the following eligibility grading checks within the school year will result in dismissal from the cheer program. The parent(s) of the cheerleader will be informed in writing that their child is being dismissed from the cheer program.
  - a. 1st 6 week mark, 1st 9 weeks, 2nd 9 weeks, and 3rd 9 weeks
6. Removal from the team because of demerits, behavior, or resignation renders the student ineligible to try out for cheer for the following year.
  - a. **If an athlete, at any point, is removed from the team or quits and returns to the team, they will start on a behavior contract** that will be discussed with the athlete and guardians, coaches, and administrators.
  - b. SENIOR CLAUSE
    - i. If a junior is removed from the squad for academic reasons only, administrators and coaches can decide to let them tryout for their senior season. This will be decided on a case by case basis and in the sole discretion of the coaches and administrators.

## Section 2: Merits

The following are ways in which a cheerleader can earn merits to deduct from demerits given. Merits can ONLY be earned if demerits have already been issued. Cheerleaders/mascots cannot accumulate merits to cover the potential possibility of receiving demerits. Athletes are responsible for turning in this information to the coaches.

1. Every 5 merits earned will dismiss 1 demerit
2. All A's and B's per 9 week grading report
  - a. 5 possible Merits - per 9 weeks.
3. Community service
  - a. Outside of the team required events and after the cheerleader/mascot has already met their semester requirement of 8 hours earned for their community service hours)
  - b. 5 possible Merits - per 9 weeks (1 hour = 1 merit).
4. Cheer service hours
  - a. Assisting the coach when needed

- b. Assisting other teachers/sponsors/administrators on campus (must be cleared with coaches prior to count)
- c. 5 possible Merits - per 9 weeks (1 hour = 1 merit)
- 5. Being helpful, selfless, and doing things that benefit the team without being asked
- 6. Additional conditioning by coaches/captains (optional)

## **ARTICLE VII: LIMITED SIDELINE PROGRAMS**

As the Bowie Sideline Cheer program's number one focus is school spirit and unity amongst the student body at school and athletic events, we will continue offering unique opportunities for the 2024-2025 school year.

### **Section 1: Varsity Limited Sideline**

Rising senior cheerleaders who have served as Bowie Cheerleaders for 3 years and have demonstrated Bowie pride throughout their high school cheer experience, will be eligible for the opportunity to be selected to serve in a Limited Sideline Varsity position for their senior year.

1. A Varsity Limited Sideline position is only offered for seniors who meet the following criteria:
  - a. Must have gone through the tryout process and made a score that falls within the JV Sideline score.
  - b. Must have cheered for Bowie for their freshman, sophomore, and junior year.
  - c. Must never have been put on any form of probation in cheer or probation in school (behavioral or academic).
    - i. Academic Probation: Failing to meet the grade requirements as set forth by UIL "No Pass, No Play".
    - ii. Behavioral Probation: Receiving 8 demerits or more, Being placed on a behavior contract
  - d. Must be in good standing with the Bowie Cheer program.
  - e. Must meet all the eligibility requirements for the Bowie Cheer program tryout process.
  - f. Must meet the minimum skill requirements for the program.
    - i. Running & standing backhandspring
2. Expectations and Limitations: The following expectations must be met to fulfill the terms for being on the Varsity Limited Sideline team; and some limitations may be applied:
  - a. You will not be allowed to compete on the Traditional Comp Team.
  - b. You must maintain all skills thrown at your tryout throughout the whole cheer year.
  - c. You may be able to participate on either Game Day Comp Team at the sole discretion of the coaches and choreographers.

## **Section 2: JV Limited Sideline**

Other Limited Sideline opportunities may be provided with respect to our JV team at the sole discretion of the coaches and Bowie Administration. These JV Limited Sideline opportunities may be provided in order to foster inclusivity and/or accommodate the participation of students with mobility or other impairments that might limit their technical skill sets.

1. Expectations and Limitations: JV Limited Sideline members will be allowed to participate on the sideline at JV games for football and basketball season and activities throughout the year, but will not be on a competition team.
  - a. You must maintain all skills thrown at your tryout throughout the whole cheer year.
    - i. Coaches and administration will determine the individualized requirements if your mobility or other impairments limit your tumbling abilities.
2. All requirements of the Bowie Cheer Handbook and AISD Student Success Guide (Student Code of Conduct) will apply to these opportunities.
3. Austin ISD and Bowie High School are committed to providing students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. Reasonable accommodations can provide students with disabilities the chance to participate in cheerleading. Please speak with the coaches or ARD committee if you have any questions or concerns.

## **ARTICLE VIII: PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMITMENTS**

To make our Bowie Cheer program successful we need parent/guardian commitment throughout the entire year. Below are the expectations for the year; this applies to each family within the program.

1. It is expected that parents join the JBHS Cheer Booster Club and play an active role in the club. Please see the JBHS Cheer Booster Club Bylaws and positions to see where you can participate.
2. Serve on at least one committee in the JBHS Cheer Booster Club. Parents/guardians who are currently serving on the JBHS Cheer Booster Club Board are exempt from serving on additional committees.
3. Each family must sign up for a minimum of 2 volunteer slots for Jr. Dawgs Cheer Clinic or the Merchandise Table as set up at games or other events. There will be a Junior Dawgs Cheer Clinic held in July and a Junior Dawgs Cheer Clinic held in December.
4. Parents/Guardians hold an important role in supporting their athletes and the program. The essential elements of character building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility,

fairness, caring, and good citizenship. We will lead by example and teach our children how to carry themselves as young adults on and off the field.

5. Parents agree to the following:
  - a. I will not force my child to participate in sports.
  - b. I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials, directors and spectators at every game, practice or sporting event.
  - c. I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well-being of the athletes. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
  - d. I will demand that my child treat other players, directors, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, age, or ability.
  - e. I will never ridicule or belittle my child or other participants for making a mistake.
  - f. I will respect the officials and coaches and their authority during games. I will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
  - g. I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches of the team.

## **ARTICLE IX: FINANCES**

### **Section 1: Financial Responsibility**

Since participation in cheerleading is voluntary, cost for uniforms, camp fees, materials, workshops, physical exams, etc. shall be the responsibility of the student and their parents. The price ranges from \$2000-\$5,000. Prices are always subject to change.

1. The costs of all uniforms and accessories are the responsibility of individual cheerleaders. Uniforms include those articles of clothing worn at games, pep rallies, camp, game days, and any other event where the team is representing the school.
2. Any equipment/accessories, uniform or part of the uniform paid for by the individual cheerleader will remain the property of the cheerleader. Any item purchased by the school will remain the property of the school. Damaged or lost property will be replaced at the cheerleaders' expense.
3. Equipment belonging to the cheer program that is assigned to cheer program members is their full responsibility. If lost, stolen, or damaged in any way, the cheerleader must pay the cost of the repair or replacement. This includes, but is not limited to: signs, mascot costumes, warm-ups, spirit can, megaphones not purchased by the cheerleader, uniforms or uniform elements lent to the cheerleader, etc.
4. Bowie Cheer Participation Fees: (subject to change)

- a. The Bowie Cheer program is funded entirely by the participating families each year. Bowie Cheer and the JBHS Cheer Booster Club hold fundraising activities throughout the school year to help offset these expenses; however, the families are all ultimately responsible for the entire amount of the fees.
  - b. Fees will cover summer camp, clothing, competition, transportation, etc.
  - c. These fees can vary based on the number of athletes in the program, actual costs vs. budgeted costs, fundraising opportunities, location of competitions, coaching expenses, etc.
5. Competition Fees: (subject to change)
- a. UCA Regionals - Both Game Day and Traditional Competition Teams
    - i. There will be multiple UCA Regional Competitions in the 23-24 Cheer Year. Location and date are TBD. Athletes will take a bus to and from over-night competition and stay together in the hotel as a team. If an athlete does not travel or stay with the the team he/she forfeits the right to attend and participate at the competition as a Bowie Cheerleader. Individual student needs will be taken into consideration for traveling accommodations. All travel costs are paid to the Bowie Cheer program individually by each participant. These costs will be included in the total costs for the program.
  - b. UIL State Spirit Championships – Game Day Competition Team-
    - i. The UIL competition is traditionally held in Ft. Worth, and a bus will be provided, which all athletes are required to ride. Athletes will stay together in the hotel as a team. If an athlete does not travel or stay with the team he/she forfeits the right to attend and participate at the competition as a Bowie Cheerleader. Individual student needs will be taken into consideration for traveling accommodations. Hotel costs are paid to the Bowie Cheer program individually by each participant. These costs will be included in the total costs for the program.
  - c. Nationals High School Cheerleading Championship – Varsity Traditional Comp Team & Elite Game Day (subject to change)
    - i. If the Traditional and/or Game Day Competition Team qualifies for UCA national competition, typically held in Orlando, Florida at the ESPN Zone, all travel costs are paid to the Bowie Cheer program individually by each participant. The Bowie Cheer program books all travel and hotel rooms for the competition. All participants are required to fly together both to the competition and back from the competition. If an athlete does not travel or stay with the team he/she forfeits the right to attend and participate at the competition as a Bowie Cheerleader. Individual student needs will be taken into consideration for traveling accommodations. The Bowie Cheer program subsidizes a portion of the cost. Families will be responsible for a portion of

the cost. These travel costs and payment are to be determined and due before the end of the relevant Fall semester (date subject to change).

6. Bowie Cheer members who quit, resign, or are dismissed from a team will be responsible for unpaid balances. No money will be refunded. If they do not return school owned/loaned items, that money will be owed to the school.
7. Refunds; There are no refunds of any fees paid for the program, regardless of circumstance.

## **Section 2: Financial Deadlines**

1. It is expected that money for camp, camp attire, and uniforms must be turned in at the required deadline dates. The financial obligation form will be given out during the parent information meetings that take place prior to tryouts. Payments should be given to the coaches that are over the squad to which the student is a member or paid directly to the specified company.
2. Failure to meet financial obligations may result in not being allowed to participate in events. Participation in practices will still be required. The deadlines to meet the financial obligations are listed in the JBHS Tryout Packet.

## **Section 3: Fundraising**

Fundraising is done to raise money for cheer expenses. The money raised from a fundraiser is used to offset the expenses of the program collectively, and is not directly attributable to an individual cheerleader's participation expenses.

## **Article X: TRANSPORTATION**

1. All team members must provide their own transportation to and from school for practices or events as necessary.
2. All team members must ride to and from away games on the bus unless the team member has approval from the coaches and has turned in the signed permission form from their parent or guardian. Phone calls are not acceptable. There will be no exception.
3. Team members will not be allowed to ride home from any away game with someone not on their AISD Private Travel Form.
4. Parents and Guardians are responsible for transporting their athletes to and from all home and playoff games unless the student is of legal driving age and has a valid driver's license.

## **Article XI: VETO CLAUSE**

Since the coaches and administrators are directly responsible for the welfare of this organization, they shall have the authority to make any decisions necessary for the welfare of the organization. Any action that needs to be taken concerning a situation not covered by this



Handbook or, in extreme cases, in opposition to stated policies will be the responsibility of the coaches and administration.

Austin Independent School District and Bowie Cheer does not discriminate against any student on the basis of sex, race, creed, disability, or financial status in the educational programs of extracurricular activities, which it operates.

## **Article XII: CONCERNS**

Any member or parent who has a concern should follow a chain of communication in order to address their concerns.

1. Athlete direct communication with coaches at appropriate times.
2. Parent and athlete conversation with coaches at appropriate times.
  - a. Outline and define objectives for a meeting and stick to discussing facts only.
  - b. Schedule a meeting via email, do not confront the coaches before, during or after a practice, game, or event.
3. If (after a meeting with the coaches) a member or parent is not satisfied, then they should contact the school administrator assigned to the cheer program.

## **Article XII: INTERPRETATION**

1. The interpretation of this Handbook is the sole right and responsibility of the coaches and the school administration. They have the right to add or change those things they feel must be changed for the benefit of the organization at their discretion.
2. This document is meant to be a basic operating instrument and is NOT intended to cover EVERY operating policy.
3. If an incident should arise that is not specifically addressed in this document, the coaches and school administrators will address the incident on an individual basis at their discretion. The resolution of this incident may or may not be addressed team wide, especially when privacy issues are involved.

## **Article XIV: HANDBOOK CHANGES**

Revisions will be made every year to strengthen the welfare of the Bowie Cheer program and its athletes. All revisions will be approved by the coaches and JBHS administration. In order to benefit the cheer program, the coaches and/or administrators reserve the right to revise this document at any time at their discretion.

## **Manager Addendum**

Managers are a part of the cheer program and expected to follow all of the guidelines laid out in the cheer Handbook. Managers must be enrolled in the class period and work all sports and events. They are eligible for letter jackets after fully serving on the Varsity team for at least a year.

### **Positions**

Application and teacher evaluation process are required in order to be considered for the position. Each candidate will be required to submit the application form and a letter of recommendation.

### **General Responsibilities**

Managers will be responsible for supporting the entire cheer program, as assigned. Candidates may be an incoming freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior. One manager will be appointed as the Lead Manager and will be the supervisor over the other managers.

### **Summer Requirements**

Managers are expected to attend some practices during the summer. Varsity Managers are also expected to attend the overnight UCA camp with the team. JV Managers can choose to come to camp if they would like to.

### **Activity Attendance**

All Managers must attend all designated activities. Activities include but are not limited to football games, basketball games, practices, pep rallies, meetings, community functions, service projects, and fundraisers. All Managers must arrive at the designated time and be dressed in the appropriate uniform specified by the coaches.

### **Sporting Events Responsibilities**

All Managers will be assigned games to work. Managers are expected to attend designated events and complete their weekly assigned duties that include but are not limited to:

- Preparing spirit items
- Supporting the teams at pep rallies and games
- Managing the equipment
- Assisting mascots
- Other responsibilities as assigned by the coaches and administration

Some or all managers may be asked to attend the Regional, State, and National competitions.



## 2024-2025 Bowie Cheer Athlete Handbook Agreement

I, as the student athlete, hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the information in our Bowie Cheer Handbook. I further understand the responsibilities and privileges of being a Bowie Cheerleader and will abide by these rules and regulations in this document (as well as discussed in class/practice) and will abide by the rules, expectations and requirements set forth by the Bowie Cheer program.

I/We understand that failure to follow the rules and regulations of the Bowie Cheer Handbook, James Bowie High School Parent-Student Handbook, Austin ISD Student Success Guide (Student Code of Conduct) will result in suspension or dismissal from the Bowie Cheer Team/Program.

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Candidate Name (print)

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Candidate Signature

Date Signed

## 2024-2025 Bowie Cheer Parent Handbook Agreement

I, as the legal guardian, have read and understand the information in the Bowie Cheer Handbook. I further understand that my child will be responsible for the information in this document. I will help my child be accountable to the rules, expectations and requirements set forth by the Bowie Cheer program.

I/We understand that failure to follow the rules and regulations of the Bowie Cheer Handbook, James Bowie High School Parent-Student Handbook, Austin ISD Student Success Guide (Student Code of Conduct) will result in suspension or dismissal from the Bowie Cheer Team/Program.

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Parent Name (print)

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Parent Signature

Date Signed

If you have any questions, please contact the coaches via email.