

ACP Spiritline Cheer Handbook

2022-2023



PURPOSE:

- Support the school spirit, activities, and athletics on our campus.
- Establish and engage in traditions that build school spirit on our campus.
- Develop a team mentality to support and encourage young athletes.
- Maintain high academics.
- Develop pride and confidence through campus performances.
- Establish a work ethic that builds a competitive team.

ELIGIBILITY:

- Must be enrolled in a minimum of five courses. Exceptions for graduating seniors who have or are fulfilling graduation requirements and are on target to graduate.
- All students must have a passing grade in all classes.
- Coaches will check grades periodically. A student may not perform with incomplete class work, poor attendance, endanger of failing or failing grade.
- Students must follow all District and AIA guidelines.

TEAM EXPECTATIONS:

- Consist of members who conduct themselves with character, integrity, and class.
- Strive to be the best they can be in every area of their lives.
- Be unified.
- Be team-oriented.
- Respect others and themselves.
- Be a respected team by the students, faculty, and administration.
- Promote school spirit inside and outside the school.
- Encourage their teammates and others.
- Work to be the best cheerleaders they can be.
- Practice every time like they are performing for a national championship.
- Be in top-notch condition.
- Arrive at games, competitions, and other events early and prepared.
- Be on the cheer team because they love the sport of cheerleading.

COMMUNICATION:

- Athletes may text coaches as needed.
- Athletes must be enrolled in the BAND app and on the team text/group chat.
- Athletes are encouraged to initiate conversations with coaches if/ when issues arise.
- Athletes must inform their coach when they are running late to practice, or an emergency arises etc.
- Athletes are to inform their coach immediately if they know they have a field trip that will cause them to miss class.
- No call no shows are unacceptable for both class practice and extra practices.
- If an emergency arises coaches must be informed prior to practice start time.
- Parents are to wait 24 hours before emailing coaches regarding an issue/ or complaint from a

practice or event.

- Respectful communication is always encouraged. Disrespectful and attacking communication will be forwarded up the chain of command and responded to accordingly.
- Parents are to communicate with coaches via e-mail. Parents are not to reach out to coaches via their personal cell phones. (Except in the case of emergencies).
- Parents are to allow coaches 24 hours to respond to their e-mail prior to sending another e-mail or going up the chain of command.

Chain of command: Level coach Head Coach Athletic director Principal

ATTENDANCE:

- **All ACP attendance policies apply for Spiritline class. This includes excused/ unexcused policies, excessive absence policies, and makeup work policies. Please see the student handbook for ACP guidelines.**
 - Coaches reserve the right to retrieve any school records regarding attendance in any class.
 - Students may perform with one absence from spiritline class in a week as long as it is not the day of a game, activity, or performance.
 - If an athlete misses cheer class the day of a game they will not cheer that evening.
 - Students must be present for the majority of the school day, the day of a game in order to cheer that night.
- Attendance Expectations
 - Students must be in the 1st hour Spiritline class.
 - Students must be at all additional practices. This includes break practices and all practices that occur two weeks prior to a competition.
 - If you are “kind of sick” or “not feeling well”, you are still expected to be at practice. You may sit and watch if you cannot participate.
 - If athletes are injured or are ill and sitting out they still **MUST** be dressed out for class/practice.
 - If an athlete is injured or benched they will only receive 50% of the daily points by just attending class/practice, they must also complete makeup work to get full credit for the event.
- Spiritline Tardies
 - Tardies are not acceptable and will result in consequences for the athlete including but not limited to; benching, point loss, or athletic conditioning.
 - Mats need to be rolled out by 7am on school days. Mats need to be rolled out by call time at outside of school hour practices. Failure to do so will constitute being tardy.
 - Failure to be prepared at the start of practice (dressed, jewelry out, hair up, shoes on, injuries taped) will constitute as being tardy.
- Excused/Unexcused Absences
 - An athlete will receive three (pre-approved) total excused absences from spirit events. Anything over three will be considered unexcused.
 - Athletes must submit an absence request form at minimum two weeks prior to an intended absence.
 - Not attending and not alerting your coach prior to any absence will result in a consequence depending on the circumstance.
 - For additional practices and break practices absences must be cleared by both **Head and**

Level Coaches. Depending on reasoning and timing in relation to competition, the absence may be determined either excused or unexcused. Athletes should submit an absence request form for all intended absences.

- When absences are unexcused athletes may lose class points, be benched from all or a portion of a game/ performance, or be pulled from competition.
- Excused Absences
 - Personal illness or accident
 - Funeral or death in the family
 - Weddings in the immediate family (parents, grandparent, siblings)
 - Special school activities which are approved in advance by the coach
- Unexcused Absences
 - Out of town trips and vacations during the school year
 - Work
 - Social gatherings
 - Failure to inform the coach in advance (exceptions are made if the situation does not allow for this).
- Attendance Discipline
 - Any student absent more than one day in a week may be benched, depending on the individual's situation and the circumstances of that week.
 - Students may be benched with an unexcused absence from practice or a performance.
 - Students may be benched if they have excessive absences and/or tardies from practices.
 - If a student has a conflict with scheduled events, he/she must have their absence approved by **head AND level coaches two weeks prior** to the event, except for emergencies. Unapproved absences will have consequences.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATION:

- All payments must be made on time.
- Parents must initiate communication if they need payment extensions.
- Coaches reserve the right to withhold gear until payments have been made.
- Extras such as nationals gear will be the responsibility of each athlete.
- **If balances are not completely paid for things such as attending nationals, trying out for Pom and Cheer, trying out for other sports/activities, signing up for some electives, Prom and graduation can be withheld until balance is paid in full.**
- All payments are made out to: ACP and paid to the bookstore. Unless specified otherwise.
 - The receipt you receive from the bookstore after making a payment must be brought to your head coach so that she can record your payment in her file.
- The Head Cheer coach will keep you updated on balances owed. If you have any additional questions regarding payment, balance, etc. please contact your head coach.
- Tax Credit: You can use tax credit once a year starting in January, to pay for certain Cheer expenses. (i.e. Camp, Competitions, Nationals)

PRACTICES/GAMES/PERFORMANCES/ACTIVITIES:

- **Attire Expectations**
 - Purchasing game day and competition uniforms. Buy back program will be set up.
 - Students must wear assigned uniforms to be able to practice, perform or attend performances.
 - **Practices** – T-shirts/practice tanks are to be worn to and from ALL practices. T-shirts/practice tanks are to be worn during conditioning.
 - Practice attire – shirt, cheer shorts, sports bra, shoes, and socks – NO BOWS
 - All cheer members will need running shoes, game/track shoes and competition shoes
 - **Games/Performances** – Uniform, spandex, no show sports bra, bow, shoes, and socks.
 - **Game Day Outfit** – Assigned jersey/t-shirt, bottoms, white tennis shoes, and hair done as assigned.
 - ACP uniforms are not to be worn outside of games and competitions or into any ACP events unless directed by a coach. Athletes should never be in attendance at a game in uniform if they are not cheering.
 - Being in uniform means you are in the right attire from head to toe for the event in question.
 - If an athlete quits or is dismissed from the cheer program clothing received is not to be worn. Clothing not received will be forfeited to the program.
- **Hair, Nails, and Jewelry**
 - Students must wear makeup and hair correctly and must make changes if asked by a coach. Hair must be pulled up out of the face. When cheering, hair must not touch shoulders.
 - Nails must be kept short (not to be seen over fingertips) AT ALL TIMES. If an athlete has nails that are not short they may be asked to sit out and lose points for the day.
 - Nails must be short and clean of any and ALL polish for competitions and performances. This includes but is not limited to; traditional nail polish, gel nail polish, acrylics etc.
 - Students are not allowed to wear any kind of jewelry. This includes medical bracelets or necklaces that are not securely affixed to the body.
- **Game/Performance/ Activity Behavior Expectations**
 - Athletes are expected to be on their best behavior at all ACP events. Failure to do so may result in being pulled from the event, loss of points, future benching, or other disciplinary action.
 - Students must come dressed for all practices, games, and performances
 - Students must be on time to all practices, games, and performances. Call times will be given in advance.
 - Coaches may pull a student from games/performances/activities at any time.
- **Belongings**
 - **ACP High School, CUSD, and Coaches are not responsible for any lost/stolen items.**
 - Students may bring their cheer bag to football games. Only the essentials will be taken out onto the track.
 - Students may bring their cheer bag to performances/activities when traveling. Students may not bring valuable items to off campus events.
 - Students must keep all items in their own locked locker during practices and basketball games.
 - Students will be assigned a lock and are **required** to use it.

- Phones must be put away during all practices/games/performances/activities. If a student needs to use his/her phone for an emergency he/she must have permission from a coach.
- **Games and Activities**
 - Athletes must travel **to and from** all games and activities with their team and coaches.
Exceptions will seldom be made prior to the event and must be approved by head AND level coaches.
 - While in uniform at games/performances/activities, the attention of the squad must remain on the game/performance/activity at all times. Captains will be the only ones communicating to call chants, cheers, stunts, or dances.
 - Students may not go into football/basketball/competition stands to talk with parents or friends without receiving approval from a coach first.
- **Breaks**
 - Due to the importance of Summer Camp, athletes must receive approval from a coach if they are not able to attend upon tryouts.
 - There are often games and events over break. These are mandatory unless prior approval has been received.
 - Break practices are mandatory! Unless approved by a coach upon tryouts. If a student does not attend break practices, the athlete may be removed from the next competition, game, or performance at the coach's discretion.

COMPETITIONS:

- Squads will fulfill the “Philosophy of Spiritline” stated in AIA bylaws 39.3 before competing.
- Varsity and JV and Freshman cheer will compete. It is up to the head and level coaches’ discretion which members will compete. Coaches reserve the right to add/replace a student for competition.
- Athletes must be present for choreography to compete.
- Athletes may be listed as an alternate. Athletes may also be made alternates at any point during the season for not throwing required skills, not throwing the same skills they threw at tryouts, or breaching their contract in any way.
- Alternates are required at all competition practices and performances. Alternates may be called to compete at any time; therefore, alternates do still pay all competition fees.
- Athletes will have additional expenses for competitions.
- Mandatory practices outside of class time will be set up for competition.
- If any athlete misses a practice (1st hour class/outside practices) two weeks prior to competition, he/she may be replaced, and he/she will not compete for that competition. (Coach’s discretion)

MANDATORY SPIRIT EVENTS: will be referred to as MSE’s

- All members are expected to be at all **MSE’s**.
- **MSE’s** include but are not limited to 1st hour, Weights, outside of school hour’s practices, games, competitions, fundraisers, and community service. Schedules are released by coaches as they become available. Athletic schedules (including practices) can and often do change.
- Coaches will post schedules on the spiritline band app. Weekly newsletters will be sent to parents. It is expected that athletes and parents stay recent on the calendar.
- If an athlete has an excused absence from first hour, they need to complete a makeup assignment to

redeem their points. They have the same amount of days they were absent to do this. MU work can be found on the Spiritline website.

- Athletes are responsible to attend all **MSE's** unless cleared through the head coach **at least 2 weeks in advance**. If a student is approved to miss any MSE's they need to fill out a Makeup work Form. Coaches will work on a case by case basis with parents and students on such events.

SAFETY:

*** The safety of all of our athletes is our number one concern.***

- Any new skills need to be pre-approved by coaches before performing. Coaches will be doing skills tests periodically.
- All injuries need to be reported immediately to a coach. Injuries will be assessed by athletic trainers/nurse. Trainer/Nurse will determine the need for medical attention.
- At any time if an athlete hits their head they need to report the suspected injury to the Head and Level coach REGARDLESS of if they are having concussion like symptoms.
- When out with an injury coaches will not return the athlete to play until both the trainer and a physician have FULLY cleared them. Partial clearance is not accepted. A doctor's note will be required. Exceptions made for concussions not referred to a physician- The trainer has the ability to clear these.
- A doctor's note from a family member does not suffice when athletes are either out injured or returning to play.
- When out with an injury an athlete will not compete or practice on another team prior to being cleared by a physician. Doing so can result in dismissal.
- All athletes are required to take the Brain book concussion course. Athletes are expected to follow the protocols stated in the course.

CHALLENGE RESOLUTIONS:

- Any and all problems that the students may have with the squad or the coach need to be addressed by the student first.
 - Always allow at least 24 hours for the coach to make a decision and readdress the problem. If talking to the coach does not change the problem a parent may then become involved in the situation. (Again, allow at least 24 hours for the coach to think about the problem and make a decision or answer a question.)
 - Proper chain-of-command is as follows:
 - Student/coach
 - Student and parent/coach
 - Student and parent/ school administrator
 - Problems between cheerleaders are encouraged to be resolved by each other or with the assistance of captains. If the situation does not change then the coaches need to be notified and will deal with personal relationships between team members according to the situation.
 - If any cheerleader feels her personal safety is threatened, she needs to notify the coach, school counselor, the school resources officer, or an administrator immediately.

COMMITMENT:

Spiritline members will be bound by their contract from the day of selection until the last day of school. Once an athlete is selected their 110% commitment is expected. Quitting during the season will result in money paid being forfeited and not being able to tryout the next season

- **ACP Spiritline commitments should come before other obligations—second only to academics.** The ACP Spiritline schedule **Must ALWAYS** come before other activities; other teams, jobs, clubs, family parties etc. This includes not leaving practice early or coming late due to an outside activity. If a schedule conflict arises, ACP Spiritline / your team **MUST** be your first priority. If you cannot fully commit to cheer because you also chose to be a part of another demanding outside activity, then you may be dismissed from the program, and any money paid will not be refunded. Coaches will work on a case-by-case basis with parents and students on such events.
- While the AIA allows being members of both all-star and high school cheer, all-star cheer schedules must never interfere with ACP Spiritline schedules if athletes choose to do both. Athletes must never continue to practice with their all-star team if deemed unfit to practice by our trainer, nurse, or a physician. Families need to make thoughtful, informed decisions when deciding what is best for their athlete. An athlete may be removed for absences due to all-star obligations, and a refund will not be issued. This rule is in effect from the day of selection until the last day of the school year.
- Athletes are encouraged to be involved in other school activities, but they must come second to ACP Spiritline. Athletes must alert coaches prior to tryouts if they plan to tryout/participate in a second sport or school activity that may conflict with Spiritline. Campus coaches/sponsors will determine if dual participation is feasible.
- The following circumstances can result in automatic dismissal from the ACP Spiritline program: non-payment for mandatory cheer items or events, failing grades, breach of contract, or any violation of the ACP school code of conduct.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

Benching may occur for any of the below reasons:

- Required level skills are not met.
- Students fall below a D in any class at a progress check they will be deemed ineligible for participation.
 - To regain eligibility...
 - The student **must** follow all ACP athletic requirements to regain eligibility.
- The athlete is injured (must have doctor note)
 - Injured students will be benched until coaches have a doctor's note clearing him/her to participate 100% with **NO RESTRICTIONS**.
- Athletes are out of game day or performance uniform.
- Athlete displays insubordination or disobedience towards any coach, captain, or squad member with delegated responsibilities.
- Poor attitude.
- Missing practices and/or performances without an approved excuse.
 - Last minute absences will result in benching from **AT LEAST** 1 quarter of the next game.

- When benched from games for disciplinary reasons the athlete will lose points.
- Excessive absences and/or tardies.
- Ditching any classes.
- Not attending school the day of a game, performance, or activity.
- Breaking school policies.
- Not following the rules of the ACP Spiritline Contract.
- Inappropriate pictures or comments on the internet, on **ANY** social media forum/or text messages, etc.
- Any form of bullying.
- Any other situations that may arise and are unbecoming of a ACP Spiritline Member. Benching will occur at the discretion of the head and level coaches on a case-by-case basis.

Responsibilities of Benched Student Athlete:

- A student benched must attend all practices, games, performances, and activities unless suspended from school.
- A student benched may lose privileges to wear an ACP uniform during this time.
- A student benched must follow all rules of practices, games, performances, and activities.
- A student that does not follow the requirements of benching may be benched for a longer period of time or dismissed from the squad.
- A student benched more than three times may be dismissed from the Spiritline Squad.

Social Media:

- You are not allowed at any time to take inappropriate pictures/ videos while wearing anything saying ACP on your outfit.
- You must follow the ACP athletic policy regarding social media.

Dismissal:

- A student may be dismissed from the squad at the discretion of the coach and/or administration for such actions set in the Spiritline Contract, Student Citizenship Contract, Athlete Code of Conduct, and AIA Rules and Regulations.
- A student receiving an “F” in any class on a progress report, or semester grade may be dismissed.
- A student may be dismissed for such actions that include, but are not limited to smoking, drug use, vape use, alcohol use, profanity at any event or at school, ditching classes, breaking school rules, inappropriate use of internet, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, etc., and/or text messages.
- A student who has been unable to commit to the ACP Spiritline program or has excessive absences due to another demanding outside activity may be dismissed.
- A student who receives a school suspension.
- **Bullying/cyber bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.**
- A student that has been dismissed or has quit the team:
 - does not letter.
 - is not eligible for any end of the year awards.
 - will not attend the end of the year banquet.
 - is responsible for all expenses on his/her behalf prior to being dismissed.
 - Will not wear ACP Spiritline gear and will forfeit all items not yet received.
 - Will **not** receive a refund of **any** payments made.
 - **Will be unable to try out next season.**

LETTERING: In order for a member of Varsity Spiritline to receive a letter or patch and qualify to purchase a jacket, he/she must; remain academically eligible, remain in good standing (B grade or higher in spiritline class), perform in all required events, and be a member of the Varsity Cheer for a full consecutive year.

Students will receive a Participation Certificate, Megaphone Pin (one time only) and a Varsity Letter (one time only) if they have successfully met the requirement. All ensuing years after a Varsity Letter is earned, a 'Bar' will be given to the athlete. All student-athletes who compete will receive a separate certificate of participation.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS:

- Parents/guardians are expected to support the coach in following this Handbook understanding it is put in place for the best interest of the team.
- Parents/guardians are expected to make sure their cheerleader arrives at practices, games, and other activities at the designated time.
- Parents/guardians agree to ensure the athlete has notified the coach as far in advance as possible or as soon as they know about absences or tardies to practice, games, events, etc.
- Parents/guardians agree to carefully check the weekly newsletter update and notify the coach if they see a conflict with another school activity or if they see a mistake on the cheer calendar.
- If a parent/guardian has a concern, it is important they take the concern directly to the coach and not discuss it with other parents or cheerleaders.
- Parents/guardians understand decisions regarding the team and each individual cheerleader are made in the best interest of the team.
- Parents/guardians understand if they create conflict among the team, other parents, coaches, or administration, and it cannot be worked out with the coach, it will be taken to the administration.
- Parents/guardians will understand the elected Spiritline Booster Club Executive Board in conjunction with the coach will have the final say in how funding and fundraisers will be spent and distributed.

- Students must follow all District and AIA guidelines. **Initial:** _____
- If an athlete misses cheer class the day of a game they will not cheer that evening. **Initial:** _____
- An athlete will receive three (pre-approved) total excused absences from spirit events. Anything over three will be considered unexcused. **Initial:** _____
- If an athlete is injured or benched they will only receive 50% of the daily points by just attending class/practice, they must also complete makeup work to get full credit for the event. **Initial:** _____
- When absences are unexcused athletes may lose class points, be benched from all or a portion of a game/performance, or be pulled from competition. **Initial:** _____
- If a student has a conflict with scheduled events, he/she must have their absence approved by **head AND level coaches two weeks prior** to the event, except for emergencies. Unapproved absences will have consequences. **Initial:** _____
- Nails must be kept short (not to be seen over fingertips) AT ALL TIMES. If an athlete has nails that are not short they may be asked to sit out and lose points for the day. **Initial:** _____
- Coaches may pull a student from games/performances/activities at any time. **Initial:** _____
- **ACP High School, CUSD, and Coaches are not responsible for any lost/stolen items.** **Initial:** _____
- Athletes must travel **to and from** all games and activities with their team and coaches. **Exceptions will seldom be made prior to the event and must be approved by head AND level coaches.** **Initial:** _____
- Break practices are mandatory! Unless approved by a coach upon tryouts. If a student does not attend break practices, the athlete may be removed from the next competition, game, or performance at the coach's discretion. **Initial:** _____
- Excused Absences **Initial:** _____
 - Personal illness or accident
 - Funeral or death in the family
 - Weddings in the immediate family (parents, grandparent, siblings)
 - Special school activities which are approved in advance by the coach
- Unexcused Absences **Initial:** _____
 - Out of town trips and vacations during the school year
 - Work
 - Social gatherings
- If an athlete has an excused absence from first hour, they need to complete a makeup assignment to redeem their points. They have the same amount of days they were absent to do this. MU work can be found in google classroom. **Initial:** _____
- Athletes are responsible to attend all **MSE's** unless cleared through the head coach **at least 2 weeks in advance.** If a student is approved to miss any MSE's they need to fill out a Makeup work Form. Coaches will work on a case by case basis with parents and students on such events. **Initial:** _____
- At any time if an athlete hits their head they need to report the suspected injury to the Head and Level coach REGARDLESS of if they are having concussion like symptoms. **Initial:** _____
- Last minute absences will result in benching from AT LEAST 1 quarter of the next game. **Initial:** _____
- A student that has been dismissed or has quit the team: **Initial:** _____
 - does not letter.
 - is not eligible for any end of the year awards.
 - will not attend the end of the year banquet.
 - is responsible for all expenses on his/her behalf prior to being dismissed.
 - Will **not** receive a refund of **any** payments made.
 - **Will be unable to try out next season.**

- A student may be dismissed from the squad at the discretion of the coach and/or administration for such actions set in the Spiritline Contract, Student Citizenship Contract, Athlete Code of Conduct, and AIA Rules and Regulations. **Initial:** _____
- You are not allowed at any time to take inappropriate pictures/ videos while wearing anything saying ACP on your outfit. **Initial:** _____
- A student benched more than three times may be dismissed from the Spiritline Squad. **Initial:** _____

By signing this agreement, I acknowledge that I fully understand and will abide by the rules and regulations of the ACP Spiritline contract, in addition to AIA, NFHS, and USA Cheer rules and regulations. Athletes will not be permitted to begin practice until this agreement is on file with ACP Spiritline Coaches. I understand that it is expected I read this contract thoroughly and I understand that if I/my child chose to not follow these rules disciplinary action shall be enforced.

Parents: If my athlete breaks a rule in this contract, I will not argue the disciplinary actions set forth by coaches. I understand my athlete is expected to be a model of student behavior and citizenship and I support the coach's decisions if my athlete chooses not to uphold this contract.

Athletes: I understand the expectations set forth by this contract and agree to them. By signing this, I accept my spot on the team and agree to be a model of student behavior and citizenship. I understand that any breach of this contract will result in disciplinary action such as loss of points, conditioning, benching, or dismissal.

STUDENT (Print)

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT (Print)

PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE