



CHEERLEADING PLAN

Date	Event	Location-Address
3/28/25	HCAL Cheer Championship	TBD

Overview of Document

This document outlines the logistical and registration information regarding the Honor Charter Athletics League Cheerleading Competition.

Please reference the outline provided below to help you find the information that you need for the competition.

- Competition Guidelines
- Team Registration Form
- Competition Score Sheets
- Competition Day Schedule
- Additional Resources for Coaches and Teams

Additional Coach Requirements

Coaches must complete the complete list of requirements listed in the HCAL manual with the addition of the following 2 courses. Failure to complete the courses will result in team disqualification.

[NFHS Cheer and Dance Safety Certification](#) \$85

[Coaching Cheer and Dance](#) \$50

Rosters

Cheer teams cannot consist of middle school and high school cheerleaders. 8th graders are allowed to participate on the high school team but anyone in 6th/7th grade will not be allowed on the high school team. 8th graders must complete the [eligibility form](#) to move up. No one on a high school team (9th-12th) can participate at the middle school level. The roster deadline is March 6th. Anyone who is not listed on the roster on the day of the competition will not be allowed to participate.

Team size- all teams will compete in the same group division that consists of 5-30 cheerleaders on the roster.

Awards

High School

- Performance Division (1st-3rd)
- Game Day Divisions (1st-3rd)
- **Overall HCAL Cheer Champion- best combined score from competing in all divisions**

Middle School

- Performance Division (1st-3rd)
- Game Day Division (1st-3rd)
- **Overall HCAL Cheer Champion- best combined score from competing in all divisions**



Competition Guidelines

Athlete Eligibility

Each team must have a roster submitted and only those cheerleading will be allowed to compete. **Team compliance form (submitted to Director) and rosters must be submitted in the HCAL website by March 06, 2026, and all compliance requirements must be met.**

- Every competing member must be academically eligible.
- If the team competes with a mascot or additional spirit members, those students do not have to be members of the actual cheerleading program. These students cannot be involved in any stunts or tumbling parts of the routine. These students must be included on your roster and be eligible.

Competition Surface and Warm-Up/Touch

- A competition mat will be provided. Teams will compete on the traditional 9 panel cheer surface, 42' x 54' competition floor, marked on the panels with an "X" in the middle of the middle section.
- Teams will receive a warm-up/touch on the competition surface prior to the competition to finalize routines on the space teams will use to compete. Teams will receive 5 minutes for warm up/touch per division they participate in (max 10 minutes). This warm-up/touch time will be held in the morning before the competition. Teams will warm up in the order that they compete for the HCAL Cheer Competition.
- There will be a holding area for teams in the morning prior to the competition.

Competition Divisions

Our competition divisions are modeled after the National Cheerleaders Association (NCA) high school competition divisions. HCAL will utilize the rules, requirements, score sheet set up and judging criteria from the NCA. For more information, you can visit the website: [NCA Rule Book](#). Each coach will be responsible for all music for their divisions. Please ensure you have downloaded and have the proper equipment to play your music.

Performance Division: This division showcases the athleticism of cheerleading with a focus on visual elements. Teams competing in this division have routines that consist of transitional stunts, pyramids and a cheer. The cheer does not have to encourage crowd participation. Routine Length: 2:30 minutes (Music up to 1:45 minutes)

Game Day Division

The Game Day format will consist of **one** 3-minute performance that includes all three Game Day categories, plus a Game Situation Response. These categories will be performed in the following order:

- **BAND CHANT:** Compete with your traditional school band chant or adapt any NCA Summer Camp material to easily fit this category. Incorporate props such as signs, poms, megaphones and flats. Recorded band music must be used.
- **GAME DAY SITUATIONAL RESPONSE:** Each team will respond to audio cues by a game announcer, as heard at football and basketball games. In order to imitate the Game Day environment, audio cues will include an announcer-lead situational cue to which the team will show a definitive OFFENSE or DEFENSE response. Squads should focus on crowd effectiveness, motion technique and skills relevant to game day.
- **GAME DAY CHEER:** Teams should utilize all areas of their squad's crowd-leading strengths. The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is highly encouraged.
- **GAME DAY FIGHT SONG:** **Showcase** your traditional team fight song with poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners to bring your school pride to the competition floor!



Judging will be based on the following criteria:

- Crowd communication, including crowd effective material, spacing and formations, voice and pace, crowd leading skills and use of poms, signs, flags, megaphone, and/or banners.
- Placement, synchronization, and strength of motions.
- Overall impression and crowd appeal.
- Emphasis on crowd involvement and practicality. All material should be suitable for a game or pep rally.
- Crowd communication, including crowd effective material, spacing and formations, voice and pace, crowd leading skills and use of poms, signs, flags, megaphone, and/or banners.
- Placement, synchronization, and strength of motions.
- Overall impression and crowd appeal.

Specific Skill Restrictions

INTERMEDIATE SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Intermediate teams will follow USA Cheer/AACCA Safety Guidelines with these additional skill restrictions.

STANDING TUMBLING: Flips are not allowed. No standing back tucks or back handspring back tucks.

RUNNING TUMBLING: Flips may ONLY be performed in tuck position only and from a round off or round off back handspring(s). Other skills with hand support prior to the round off or round off back handspring are allowed. Punch fronts are not allowed.

No twisting while airborne. (Exception: Aerial cartwheels are allowed.)

No tumbling is allowed after a flip or an aerial cartwheel.

Cartwheel tucked flips and/or cartwheel – back handspring(s) – tucks are not allowed.

STUNTS: Twisting transitions to and from an extended position may not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ twisting transition. Twisting transitions to, from and at prep level may not exceed 1 twisting transition. Release moves must start below prep level and must be caught at prep level or below. Release moves may not pass above extended arm level. Release moves above prep level are NOT allowed.

PYRAMIDS: Braced flips are not allowed. All pyramid skills must follow stunt rules unless braced from initiation of skill.

DISMOUNTS: Only straight pop downs, basic straight rides, and $\frac{1}{4}$ turns are allowed from any single leg stunt. Up to $1\frac{1}{4}$ twists are allowed from any two leg stunt.

TOSSES: Up to 1 trick allowed during a toss. Tosses may not exceed 1 twisting rotation.



For more information, you can visit the website:

[Game Day Routine and Fight Song](#)

[Game Day Band Chant](#)

[Game Day Cheer](#)

[NCA Scoring and Rules](#)

Team Registration Form (must be completed by March 6th)

The Final Cheer Participation Form must be completed and submitted to HCAL by Friday, March 6th. Failure to complete is survey will result in your team not being allowed to participate in the competition.

Competition Score Sheets

HCAL will provide NCA affiliated judges for the HCAL Cheerleading Competition. For sample score sheets, please use the HCAL website to access them. HCAL will be utilizing the [Intermediate Scoring Guidelines and Score Sheets](#).

[HCAL Game Day Band Chant Scoresheet](#)

[HCAL Game Day Cheer Scoresheet](#)

[HCAL Game Day Fight Song Scoresheet](#)

[HCAL Performance Scoresheet](#)

Competition Day Schedule

After all registration forms are received, we will be able to complete the Warm-Up/Touch and Performance Order which will be finalized and sent out prior to the competition.

Available Resources for Coaches and Teams

- Example videos from NCA High School Nationals of these competitions can be found at: [NCA Resources](#)
- The NCA School Rulebook can be found here: [NCA Rule Book](#)