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**2016 SPF PAL RAIDERS**

CHEERLEADING EXPECTAIONS AND HANDBOOK

[**www.spfpal.com**](http://www.spfpal.com)

PURPOSE:

1. It shall be the purpose of the SPF PAL Raider Cheerleading Squads to promote and uphold team spirit, demonstrate good sportsmanship and support good relations in the community and between teams and squads during events.
2. Cheerleaders will be expected to cheer at all games, attend all practices and participate in summer cheerleading camp. Cheerleaders will be encouraged to participate in additional activities as requested by their coaches (including but not limited to promotions, fundraisers, community and charity events and potential competitions.)

CONDUCT:

1. Squad members, parents/family members, coaches and volunteers are expected to obtain and uphold the reputation of the SPF PAL Raider Cheerleaders through their own conduct and squad spirit.
2. Squad members, parents/family members, coaches and volunteers are expected to be courteous, polite and friendly with each other and with other teams.
3. All cheers and chants shall be of a positive and sportsmanlike manner.
4. Squad members, parents/family members, coaches and volunteers will make every attempt to ignore or discourage negative responses at events and not become involved in such action themselves.
5. Cheerleaders are expected to cheer with their squad during their designated game and will take breaks only when scheduled by the coach. If a cheerleader feels ill during a game or practice, she should notify her coach immediately.
6. During the game, cheerleaders are expected to stand in ready position and should not engage in conversation between cheers.
7. Cheerleaders should not build stunts without a coach present and should follow all safety instructions of the coach.
8. During games, practices and meetings, cheerleaders are not to use cellular phones. Their use should be reserved for emergencies only. They are not to be used during breaks or other “down time” where instructions are being given or the coaches otherwise need the full attention of all cheerleaders.
9. Cheerleaders will not eat, chew gum, or consume anything other than WATER during practice and games. Please make sure the cheerleader has had something to eat and is well hydrated prior to practices and games.

ATTENDANCE:

1. All cheerleaders will be given a practice schedule no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of the season’s practices and will be provided with a game schedule as soon as it is available from the New Jersey Suburban Youth Football League. It is expected that all cheerleaders will be in attendance, on time and in “proper dress” for all practices, games and cheerleading events as notified.
2. Parents should arrive 10 minutes prior to the end of practice. This time will be dedicated to parent/cheerleader/coach communication.
3. **All cheerleaders on all squads are strongly encouraged to attend summer camp.** This is a fantastic opportunity (with all team members in attendance) to build unity and develop strong teamwork among the squads prior to the official start of the season; learn the lesson’s half time routine and hello cheer; and developing stunting and other cheering skills.

**Cheerleading camp will be held at the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School August 24th and 25th. The cost is $75.00 and is payable to SPFHS. Registration Forms for camp will be sent out after PAL registration/ (This is a separate cost that is in addition to any fees paid to SPF PAL to participate in the cheerleading program.) All payments will be due no later than July 31, 2016.**

***Please notify the head coach immediately if there is a conflict or issue with camp attendance.***

1. Please review the attendance policies below and discuss issues with your head coach.
2. Attendance is required at all games (including ones that are “away” games) as well as at all practices and strongly recommended for all (3) days of summer camp. **Cheerleaders are expected to have their own transportation to and from games, practices and summer cheerleading camp.**  It is not provided by the SPF PAL organization. Coaches are not permitted to transport team members due to liability issues. Therefore, arrangements must be made to get cheerleaders to and from all required events. Absences due to transportation issues will be considered unexcused absences.
3. In the event a cheerleader is unable to attend a practice, game or other event, or is going to be late to a practice, game or other event, the head coach **must** be notified by the cheerleader or parent as soon as possible. At the time of contact, the cheerleader or parent will be notified by the head coach if this will be considered an excused or an unexcused absence/lateness. If the head coach cannot be reached, please contact the assistant coach or team mom to inform her of the absence/lateness and the Cheerleading Director for determination of “excused” or “unexcused” absence/lateness.

Out of consideration for our coaches, team members and other volunteers, please make sure your child arrives on time, and that she is picked up on time. If your child is not picked up on time, it will be treated as an unexcused lateness.

1. Excused absences may include:

* Doctor/dentist appointment with note
* Illness (must notify head coach as soon as possible)
* Funerals (must notify head coach as soon as possible)
* Family and/or school functions(approved in advance by head coach)

1. Unexcused absences may include:

* Doctor/dentist appointment without a note
* Other personal business
* Absences due to transportation issues
* Any absences without prior contact with the head coach

1. Being late three (3) unexcused times will equal one unexcused absence.
2. The third (3rd) unexcused absence will result in dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season.
3. Practices will consist of a 10-15 minute warm-up. This is NOT optional. All cheerleaders must warm up prior to practicing.
4. Cheerleaders will be present ONE hour prior to and until 10 minutes after each game, unless otherwise instructed by the head coach. Cheerleaders must stay with the team, unless given permission by the head coach.

ATTIRE/UNIFORMS:

1. Team members are expected to be dressed in appropriate, clean uniforms for games and practices. This includes:

* Neat hairstyles that are secured up out of the face, not needing attention (combing, etc.) while performing.
* No jewelry (for safety reasons)
* Make up (if worn) should be natural and not excessive – no colored nail polish permitted.
* Sneakers that tie (no backless/slip-ons/skater sneakers etc.) with socks should be worn for practice
* “Uniform” cheerleading sneakers should be worn AT GAMES and other approved PAL events ONLY (not to practice).

1. Cheerleaders are expected to arrive for practice and cheer camp in Soffe-type cheer shorts or other similar “gym” shorts and a t-shirt. Soffe royal blue original cheer shorts can be purchased from many local retail stores, including Sports Authority, Modell’s and Kohl’s, and can also be purchased on line at [www.soffee.com](http://www.soffee.com). Prices (depending on sales and size) range from $6-$10 per pair.
2. **One t-shirt is provided by the PAL organization and is included in your registration fee.**
3. **Cheerleaders are expected to purchase the required undergarments and sneakers to accompany the game uniform.** A list of local and on-line vendors will be provided with approximate prices of each item and a “uniform check” will be conducted prior to the start of the season to ensure all cheerleaders have obtained the required items. **Please estimate the following costs for these items (figuring high): sneakers: $20.00, bloomer briefs: $10, white tank top or t-shirt (as determined by the head coach) $10, “Under Armor” type turtleneck: $17. Cheer socks $5 per pair, leggings $20.**
4. Hair bows for “game day” are a required part of the uniform, and are provided to cheerleaders prior to the first game at no additional charge. **If the cheer bow is lost or damaged, the replacement cost of the new bow will be charged to the cheerleader. (This cost can range from $10-$20.)**
5. Game uniforms (vest/skirt) are the property of the SPF PAL and are loaned to the cheerleaders for the season. They must be kept spotless at all times. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that no “staining” foods/drinks (i.e. Gatorade, candy or baked goods with artificial colors) be consumed while in uniform.
6. Uniforms are to be washed by turning the garments inside out, washing in cold water, separate from your other laundry, in the gentle cycle or by hand only. Please hang dry. Placing them in the dryer can cause the “Raiders” emblem to become damaged. Alternatively, they can be laundered at a professional dry cleaner.
7. Uniforms are NOT to be altered, tags should NOT be removed and names should NOT be written inside the uniform. Please advise your coach if there is a sizing issue.
8. **Uniforms are NOT to be worn at any other time except at games and SPF PAL sanctioned events. This includes not wearing the uniform as a costume for Halloween, school function or variety/talent show.**
9. At the end of the season, coaches will notify all cheerleaders of uniform collection procedures. It is expected that the uniform will be laundered prior to returning it to the PAL. **If the uniform is not returned as requested, is returned in poor condition, or is altered (requiring replacement in all cases), the cheerleader will charged the $200 replacement cost. If the uniform requires cleaning upon return the cheerleader will be charged a $15 professional laundering cost.**
10. **Cheerleaders are highly encouraged to purchase a “Raiders” cheerleading jacket and white stretch gloves (gloves available at local retailers and “dollar” stores) to accompany the game uniform for inclement weather, including rain, wind, cold and even snow. Ordering information will be provided prior to the onset of the season. It will be the individual cheerleader’s option to purchase this jacket. The PAL will not collect any funds for jackets. The jacket cost is approximately $45 (youth sizes) and $50 (adult sizes). Warm-up jackets can also be ordered as an additional option. Coaches will provide squads with ordering information by July 31, 2015. No other jackets can be worn during games.**

PICTURES/OTHER PURCHASES/EVENTS

1. Team and individual pictures will be taken during the early portion of the season. Purchase of these pictures is entirely optional. **Photo envelopes with package and a la carte pricing will be distributed prior to picture day. The photographer establishes the prices, and is paid directly on “picture day”. PAL does not collect the funds.** As stated above, if you are aware your child will be missing a scheduled game or practice, please be sure to contact your child’s head coach to ensure it will not fall on “picture day”. Please be sure your child arrives fully dressed and ready in uniform and on time, otherwise she may risk not being in the team picture and/or not having her individual picture taken.
2. Other optional purchase of “cheer’ and “spirit wear” will be made available throughout the season. For example, sweatshirts, t-shirts, baseball jerseys, team bags, etc. will be made available for purchase throughout the season.
3. Should the coaching staff decide to add to the list of items required for the cheerleading season, an optional fundraiser will be offered to assist in partial or complete payment.
4. And end of season banquet may be held to celebrate the children’s accomplishments.

SUSPENSION

A cheerleader may be suspended from games/events for reasons that include but are not limited to:

* Unexcused absence
* Excessive absences or tardiness
* Failure to cooperate with coaches
* Failure to abide by squad expectations
* Failing school performance
* Other serious actions that pose danger to others or that demonstrate poor judgment and/or behavior

**IMPORTANT: By registering for SPF PAL Raiders Cheerleading, you and your child are verifying that you have read the above SPF PAL Cheerleading Expectations and Handbook; that you understand its contents and agree to abide by the guidelines contained within it. You and your child are also verifying that you understand that there are costs of participation in the cheerleading program that are not covered by the registration fee alone. Lastly, both parent/guardian and child understand that failure to follow these guidelines may result in suspension or dismissal from the team.**

**Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent Signature**

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**Print (parent) Name**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Cheerleader’s Signature**

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**Print (cheerleader’s) Name**