



# 2021 SPIRIT STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS RULES AND REGULATIONS

## A. GAME DAY FORMAT

The total number of participants for a school team is determined by counting all spirit-leading participants including cheerleaders, dancers, mascots, and flag runners. The use of live band and/or drum line to supplement the Game Day environment is not permitted.

Schools are responsible for registering their squad in the appropriate division based on conference classification and (when applicable) school enrollment. All teams consisting of four (4) or more male cheerleaders will participate in the coed division rather than their conference classification. Only the number of male cheerleaders is considered when determining a coed team. Mascots are not considered in coed determination and they cannot be involved in the execution of stunts. Mascots executing any jumps or tumbling must be in accordance with NFHS Spirit rules for mascots. Flag runners and/or mascots are not considered in coed determination and they cannot be involved in the execution of stunts, tumbling, or jumps.

Each school team will be allowed to enter one (1) school team division determined by the school enrollment reported for the 2020-2022 UIL Conference School Alignment. The following conference divisions have been identified in which schools must participate in their appropriate division. For the purposes of the UIL Spirit State Championships, 5A Division 2 schools are identified with 1,230-1,853 students and 5A Division 1 schools 1,854-2,219 students. The 6A Division 2 schools consist of 2,220-2,779 and 6A Division I with 2,780 students and above.

### **TEAM DIVISIONS:**

	<b><u>FEE:</u></b>
1A – Maximum of 12 participants (3 or fewer males)	\$275.00
2A – Maximum of 12 participants (3 or fewer males)	\$350.00
3A – Maximum of 20 participants (3 or fewer males)	\$425.00
4A – Maximum of 20 participants (3 or fewer males)	\$500.00
5A D 1 – Maximum of 30 participants (3 or fewer males)	\$575.00
5A D 2 - Maximum of 30 participants (3 or fewer males)	\$575.00
6A D 1 – Maximum of 30 participants (3 or fewer males)	\$625.00
6A D 2 – Maximum of 30 participants (3 or fewer males)	\$625.00
Coed – Maximum of 30 participants (4 or more males)	\$625.00

## B. SCHOOL REPRESENTATION AND TEAM PARTICIPATION

The school team will consist of students that meet the requirements according to the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules, [Section 400: STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY FOR ALL UIL CONTESTS](#). Additionally:

1. One team per school will be allowed to enter the UIL Spirit State Championships.
2. The Team Fee covers participants (up to the maximum amounts allotted per classification) and up to four school personnel, which includes Coaches, Administration and any other team representative(s). To best manage the warm-up and other designated team-only areas, each team will be provided **TWO** "full-access" Coaches wristbands and two spectator passes in the on-site check-in team packet. All four of the school personnel should be indicated on the team registration. While additional passes will be available for ADMIN upon request and verification, no additional COACHES passes will be available.
3. All participants must be academically eligible students of the school in which they represent and must be designated by school officials as spirit representatives for participation purposes.



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4. For teams advancing to the State Championships round, participants that enter the floor must remain the entire length of the final performance. Substituting individuals on and off the floor for the different sections of the final round is not permitted.
5. **It is the responsibility of the school coach that each team member, coaches, parents, and other persons affiliated with the school conduct themselves in the appropriate manner. Violation of this rule could result in team disqualification.**
6. School teams must refrain from taunting, bragging, or suggestive expressions or gestures as well as discrimination of any nature.

## C. UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES

1. Traditional game day uniform is required.
2. All National Federation of State High Schools (NFHS) uniform rules apply.
3. The covered midriff requirement does include flesh or nude colored body suits and liners; however, fringe would not count as a cover.
4. School teams must display an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school in regards to grooming, traditional and appropriate attire, conservative make-up, and uniformity.
5. The use of signs, poms, flags, and megaphones are allowed and encouraged for performances. The use of additional props is not permitted. **The use of flags on poles by top persons while in stunts is not permitted.**

## D. COMPETITION PERFORMANCE AREA

1. Approximate floor size will be 54 feet wide by 42 feet deep (9 strips).
2. The UIL Spirit State Championship will comply with the NFHS competition surface rule.
3. Signs or props may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member who must remain inside the competition area. See Section IV, E for deduction for out of bounds.

## E. MUSIC

1. Schools must use recorded marching band music for the Fight Song and Band Chant categories.
2. All use of music must be compliant with U.S. Copyright Laws.
3. *Neither the University Interscholastic League nor Varsity Spirit is responsible for obtaining any necessary permission or licensing of the recorded music used by a school team during the course of the UIL Spirit State Championships.*
4. Fight Song /Band Music
  - a. If a high school marching band records their school's **original** fight song, they will need to get the school's permission to use the song and recording
  - b. If a team legally acquires a recording of a band playing a popular recording from an authorized provider (iTunes, Amazon, etc.), the song can be used if no edits are made to the music (other than for timing purposes).
  - c. **Music from streaming sites does not meet licensing requirement and cannot be used for the purposes of this competition.**
  - d. A team cannot use a recording of their band playing a popular song (a cover) or other music without the proper permissions (such as a compulsory license) or the band becoming a preferred provider. See [Varsity.com/music](http://Varsity.com/music) for more information about preferred providers.



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## F. HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

1. UIL rules require cheer and spirit performances shall be in accordance with safety standards prescribed by the National Federation High School Spirit Rules.
2. The UIL Constitution and Contest Rules section 1503(a-d) required annual education and training applies to any person designated by the school as a cheerleading coach, supervisor or sponsor.
3. School participants must comply with the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules section 1503(b)(6). All participants must complete a [UIL Concussion Acknowledgment Form](#) and file it with the school district personnel for the current school year.
4. Any student participating in a UIL member school cheerleading program, suspected of having a concussion, must be evaluated by his or her treating physician. The participant's treating physician must provide a written statement that in his or her professional judgment it is safe for the student to return-to-play before the participant may begin the school district's COT return-to-play designated protocol.

## G. ADDITIONAL SAFETY PROCEDURES

To promote a higher level of safety for competing participants, the UIL will provide additional spotters only on the performance floor at the state competition. Schools may also provide additional spotters in warm up areas only.

Definition of Additional Spotter: Individuals on the competition floor provided as a safety precaution to spot specific elements of a routine. To provide the safest competitive environment, teams should not attempt skills beyond their ability level.

UIL competition will provide additional spotters that follow the listed guidelines:

1. Will be used during the stunt or pyramid sections only. Additional spotters are present for added safety and will stand at the back of the floor when not spotting those sections.
2. Will not touch, assist, or save skills being performed. Additional spotters will only be used to prevent a fall to the competition floor.
3. Will be dressed so that they are presentable, professional, and distinguishable from the performing athletes.
4. Will be identified by experience and be familiar with spotting cheerleader skills.

## H. COVID-19 COMPETITION RULES

Safety is our priority for your competition experience. We are deeply committed to the safety and well-being of athletes, coaches and spectators. We are prepared to administer a competition that will meet the state, local and facility guidelines related to COVID-19 at the time of the event. While the final details and schedule of any competition could require up to the day adjustments, and all guidelines are subject to change based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"), federal, state and local guidance, please be assured that UIL is committed to delivering the same quality of competition experience for which we are known. We appreciate your understanding of the flexibility this will require.

## II. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Teams will be evaluated on game day practicality, the ability to effectively lead a crowd, proper skill incorporations, performance, motions, dance and overall routine. Game Day practicality is heavily emphasized. Game Day category routines should be prepared as they would for sideline leading at a school sporting event.



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## A. GAME DAY ROUTINES

The competition will consist of three Game Day categories. There should be no “organized” entrances when taking the floor for any of the performances. **Teams cannot build stunts or execute skills off the performance floor prior to the beginning of the routine—all skills must be executed DURING the routine and on the mat.**

### 1 - Band Chant:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- Marching band music or drum cadence performance that encourages crowd interaction
- **QUALIFYING ROUND:** Teams will be announced then take the competition floor. Timing will begin with the first beat of music or any organized movement. To clearly mark the end of the Band Chant, music should end, then teams should show spirit. Teams are discouraged from adding any words or organized movement following the end of the Band Chant music.
- No stunts or tumbling are permitted in this section. Jumps and kicks are allowed

### 2 - Crowd Leading:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- Sideline leadership that engages crowd response
- **QUALIFYING ROUND:** Within 10 seconds of the completion of the Band Chant and while the team is spiriting on the floor, a buzzer will sound signifying the beginning of the Crowd Leading section. Crowd Leading timing begins when the buzzer sounds, and the team should then execute its Crowd Leading performance.
- There will **not** be a buzzer to signify the end of this section
- Skill restrictions:
  - No basket, sponge or elevator tosses allowed (cradles are considered dismounts, not tosses). Coed and “quick” tosses are permitted.
  - No inversions
  - No twisting dismounts from stunts
  - Single-leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches
  - No running tumbling
  - Standing tumbling is limited to one tumbling skill at a time. A back tuck is the most elite standing tumbling skill allowed.

### 3 - Fight Song:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- Traditional school fight song performed to recorded marching band music
- **QUALIFYING ROUND:** Within 10 seconds of the completion of the Crowd Leading Section and while the team is spiriting on the floor, the coach or team representative will be responsible for starting the Fight Song music. Timing for Fight Song will begin with the first beat of music or organized movement.
- Added or “Incorporated” skills (stunts, jumps and/or tumbling) are a component of the fight song score sheet. Up to three **CONSECUTIVE** eight-counts may be incorporated with stunts, tumbling and/or jumps. The three 8 counts of added skills (incorporation) can occur at any point in the routine. Because many fight songs repeat, the incorporated skills can be also be repeated but **IF** repeated (does not have to be), the incorporation must repeat **exactly as initially performed**. To properly count any



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incorporation, start counting the 8-counts with the “dips” of the added skill(s)—the dip to jump, dip to tumble, dip of top person to load stunt, etc.). **REGARDLESS OF WHEN THE MUSIC ENDS**, counting of incorporated skills will continue until the routine is complete or the skills are completed and back on the ground.

- Skill restrictions:
  - No basket, sponge or elevator tosses allowed (cradles are considered dismounts, not tosses)
  - No inversions
  - No twisting dismounts from stunts
  - Single-leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches
  - No running tumbling
  - Standing tumbling is limited to one skill at a time. A back tuck is the most elite standing tumbling skill allowed

**STATE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND** - Teams with the highest cumulative scores from the qualifying round will advance to finals. The number of teams advancing to the State Championships will be determined based on the number of teams participating in the qualifying round in each conference, with a maximum of 20 teams per conference. The final performance will be preceded by a designated warm-up session.

Each STATE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND performance will have an overall maximum performance time limit of three (3) minutes and will be performed in the following order:

1. Band Chant
2. Situational Response (see description below)
3. Crowd Leading
4. Fight Song

The entire performance will be executed in a continuous order. To continue the feel of a Game Day environment, **spirited crowd-leading interaction between each section is encouraged.**

**SITUATIONAL RESPONSE:** Each team will respond to an audio cue by the announcer, as heard at football game or, by request only, a basketball game. 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. A general response would not meet the criteria.

## **B. SCORES AND RANKINGS**

1. Each team will be scored by multiple judges in each round. The judges will score teams using the criteria listed on the UIL Spirit State Championships score sheets.
2. The State Championship results, and team placements will be determined by the cumulative scores from the State Championship round only. Qualifying round scores will not carry over to determine final team standings. However, if a tie occurs in the final round, the cumulative total of the qualifying score will be utilized to break any ties.
3. Scores and rankings will be available only to head coaches who are official school employees of the school they represent as follows:
  - Qualifying Round - score sheets will be made available to all teams following the qualifying round.
  - State Championship Round -score sheets will be made available to all teams following the State Championship Round. Comprehensive scores and rankings will be posted on the UIL website following the conclusion of the competition.



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## 4. All scores and judges' decisions are considered final. There is no process to protest scores.

### C. TIME LIMITATIONS

1. Acknowledging the potential variance in sound system and timing devices, judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatches show a time of three (3) seconds over the time limit.
2. It is recommended that all teams practice and time performances prior to competition to allow for variations in sound equipment.
3. Introductions and exits:
  - a. All team breaks, rituals, and traditions need to take place backstage before a team is in the "on deck" or next to perform position.
  - b. Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures i.e. teams must refrain from chest bumps, hugs, and handshakes.
  - c. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance.
  - d. There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

## III. INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

### A. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected will be directed to **STOP** the routine.
2. If directed to stop a routine, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.

### B. FAULT OF TEAM

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.

### C. INJURY

1. All participants must follow the UIL safety regulations identified in this document. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are: a) competition officials, or b) the school coach from the team performing.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless the competition officials receive clearance from the on-site medical personnel and the school head coach of the competing team.
4. Any injured participant suspected of a concussion is required to follow the UIL Concussion Policy regarding the treatment of concussions and must be removed immediately from the competition.



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## IV. INTERPRETATIONS AND RULINGS

### A. RULES & PROCEDURES

Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled **exclusively by the school-employed coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director.** Such should be made prior to the team's competition performance.

The UIL Spirit State Championship Rules Committee will consist of a designated Competition Director, Head Judge, and UIL staff. The school team and school coach must abide by all decisions made by the judges and Rules Committee. Any interpretation of the UIL Spirit State Championship rules and regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee.

### B. AWARDS

Each conference or division will receive the following:

1. A plaque will be awarded to the top team score in each of the qualifying round categories—Band Chant, Crowd Leading, and Fight Song—for each division.
2. The top three teams will be awarded and designated as a 3<sup>rd</sup> place team, 2<sup>nd</sup> place with a runner-up silver trophy and 1<sup>st</sup> place with a championship gold trophy.
3. Each team member of the top three teams and one school coach will be awarded individual medals.

### C. JUDGING PANELS

Judges will be provided by the UIL, and they will be responsible for scoring each school performance according to the UIL competition score sheets.

1. Head Judge - The Head Judge is responsible for overseeing the entire Judging Panel that consists of Panel Judges, Point Deduction Judge, and Safety Judge. The Head Judge will also fill out his/her own score sheet for each performance.
2. Panel Judge - Panel Judges are responsible for scoring each team's performance based on the UIL score sheets. Each Panel Judge will fill out a score sheet for each performance.
3. Safety Judge - The Safety Judge is responsible for administering all safety violations, time violations, and boundary violations.
4. **ALL JUDGES' DECISIONS ARE FINAL. There is no process to protest scores.**

### D. DISQUALIFICATION

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of the UIL Spirit State Championship rules and regulations defined in this document or any other UIL documents pertaining to Contest Rules will be subject to disqualification from the competition and will automatically forfeit any award.

### E. DEDUCTIONS

Deduction points will be subtracted from the final score.

Area	Specific	Deduction Points
Participant allowance (Section I, A)	Exceed maximum participants	Disqualification from contest
Music licensing (Section I, E)	Failure to meet licensing requirement	Disqualification from contest



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NFHS Spirit Rules (Section I, F, 1)	Utilization of skill or stunt not permitted by rule	5 points per rule violation
Time limit* *3 second window to allow for variance (Section II, C)	Each violation	3 points for 4-8 seconds over limit 5 points for 9-13 seconds over limit 7 points for 14 seconds or more over limit <b>*3 second window considered above</b>
Time limit (Section II, C)	Excessive celebration or organized entrance or exit	1 point
Performance floor (Section I, D, 4)	Any team member stepping with both feet outside the designated performance area	.5 Half of one point
Procedure or General Rule Violation (not a safety violation)	Team exceeds 8-count allowances in fight song Team adds stunts or tumbling in Band Chant	3 points per rule violation