



## Frequently Asked Questions – Cheer

- 1) *Who must comply with the cheerleading safety requirements pursuant to the revised UIL Constitution and Contest Rules section 1208 (y) and (z)?*

The rule change applies to any person designated by the school as a cheer coach or sponsor.

- 2) *When is the safety and concussion training required to be in place?*

The rule has been effective since August 1, 2013 and the rule applies to all coaches and sponsors prior to contact with cheerleading participants following the effective date.

- 3) *How does a cheer sponsor/coach meet the requirements for concussion education and cheer risk minimization training?*

A cheer sponsor or coach must complete the described training and education and must provide written documentation to be filed with school district personnel annually. Additional information in this regard is provided below.

- 4) *How often will cheer sponsors/coaches be required to complete the required risk minimization cheer specific safety training?*

This will vary depending on the provider of the training. A risk minimization course will have requirements that vary from course to course for completion and certification. Documentation must be submitted and kept on file by the school administration.

The concussion education requirements include completion of two hours of concussion education every two years. Documentation must be submitted and kept on file by the school administration.

- 5) *Do cheerleaders and a parent/guardian need to sign the UIL Concussion Acknowledgement Form?*

Yes. All cheerleading program participants must complete the UIL Concussion Acknowledgement Form and file it with school district personnel for the current school year.

- 6) *Will a cheerleader, who is believed to have a sustained concussion, be required to complete a return-to-play protocol?*

Yes. Under the revised UIL rule, cheer participants will follow the same concussion rules as athletes. Any student participating in a 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 districts COT return-to-play.

- 7) *What is the penalty for a school that does not comply with the UIL C & CR section 1208(y)(z) and/or the TEC Section 38.158?*

The range of penalties as described under the UIL C & CR section 29 that the District Executive Committee can impose.

- 8) *Where do staff members locate a qualified training course for concussion education or safety/risk minimization for cheerleading?*

For purposes of compliance with the TEC section 38.158, the UIL authorizes all Continuing Professional Education (CPE) providers that are approved and registered by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) as approved individuals and organization to provide education training.

A current list of providers are found on the TEA website and the TEA link can be found on the UIL website: [Continuing Professional Education](#)

Concussion training can also be located online through either:  
Texas High School Coaches Association - [www.thsca.com](http://www.thsca.com)  
Texas Girls Coaches Association - [www.austintgca.com](http://www.austintgca.com)

Cheer safety and risk minimization courses are available through the National Federation of High Schools website and other various cheer specific organizations. NFHS has two specific online courses available to meet the UIL requirement prescribed for cheer safety:

**The Cheer and Dance: Fundamentals of Coaching Cheer and Dance (\$50)**  
**AACCA Spirit Safety Certification (\$75) [NFHS Coaching Cheer](#)**

Texas Girls Coaches Association may offer a conference or online training course at [www.austintgca.com](http://www.austintgca.com).

- 9) *Are teacher or other school personnel comments that may be used as a part the selection process of cheerleaders and drill team members subject to disclosure if a parent requests to review the comments?*

Yes. Under the Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA), an educational agency or institution shall give full rights under the Act to review the educational records of a child to either parent unless circumstances exist that revoke these



rights (such as a court order related to divorce, separation, or custody issues). An educational record is defined under FERPA as “...those records that are directly related to a student; and maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.” Parents have the right to review records that only pertain to their child, not the children of other parents. Furthermore, as a general rule under state law, parents are “...entitled to full information regarding the school activities of a parent’s child...”. See Sec. 26008 (a), *Texas Education Code*.

*10) Are cheerleaders allowed to schedule school practice on a Sunday?*

Yes. The local school district may allow a cheerleading practice session on a Sunday. State law limits schools to no more than eight hours of practice outside of the school day during the school week, per activity. School week is defined as Monday to the end of school on the last instructional day of the week (usually Friday).

*11) Can an ineligible student who has failed a class try out for cheerleading squad?*

If the actual participation does not occur until the next school year, it would not be considered violation if the district chooses to permit currently ineligible students to participate in the tryout performance. This response does not require schools to allow academically ineligible students to try out for cheerleaders, but it permits schools to do so.

*12) How does the one contest per school week apply to cheerleaders?*

It would not be a violation for cheerleaders to cheer at a double header (two contests at same site on one school night) or to participate in a pep rally prior to a contest and also lead cheers at the contest even though both occur during the school week. However, cheerleaders are not permitted to lead cheers for contests held on separate school nights during the school week unless an exception allowed under §76.1001 (cited above) applies to one or both of the contests.

*13) How are cheerleaders selected for the school squads?*

UIL does not set tryout procedures for cheerleading or any extracurricular activity. The local school district determines the parameters for selections of all squads and participation level.

*14) May practice for drill team and cheerleading be conducted during tutorial time, study hall time, or during homeroom time? No.*

*15) May a cheerleader enroll in an athletics class and a cheerleading during a school day?*



Yes. The Texas Administrative Code does not prohibit a student from enrolling in any number of state approved courses. However, UIL rules specifically prohibit students from being enrolled in more than one physical education and/or athletic class that is considered an activity class. The cheerleading activity period is an exception and may occur with local school approval.

See Section 1206 (e), *UIL Constitution & Contest Rules*:

ATHLETIC/PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES. Student-athletes shall not be enrolled in more than one physical education and/or athletic class whether or not they are receiving credit. Exceptions (with local school approval): PE Class: adventure/outdoor education; PE substitutes; JROTC, cheerleading, drill team, marching band.

*16) May ineligible students attend pep rallies?*

All students may attend. Only eligible students may be in uniform and actually take part in pep rally performances to include leading cheers, participating in dance routines, playing in the band, giving speeches or other types of participation.

*17) May ineligible drill team members and cheerleaders travel with their group to a competitive activity? No.*

*18) May ineligible drill team members and cheerleaders travel on educational field trips?*

Yes, but they may not participate or assist with a public performance.

*19) When will the cheerleading programs be able to compete in a UIL state championship?*

The UIL Legislative Council has currently approved a one-time pilot program to host a Championship Game Day Cheer Competition for the 2015-16 school year. The program continues to be developed and additional information will be presented as it becomes available.



## Additional Cheerleading Resources

The list of additional cheerleading information resources is not exhaustive and it is provided below:

TEA-UIL Side-by-Side Manual (p. 17-18)

<http://www.uiltexas.org/files/tea-uil-side-by-side.pdf>

The America Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators

[www.acca.org](http://www.acca.org)

Universal Cheerleaders Association

[www.uca.varsity.com](http://www.uca.varsity.com)

National Cheerleaders Association

[www.nca.varsity.com](http://www.nca.varsity.com)

United States Cheer

[www.usacheer.net](http://www.usacheer.net)

United Spirit Association

[www.varsity.com](http://www.varsity.com)

United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

National Cheer Safety Foundation

[www.nationalcheersafety.com](http://www.nationalcheersafety.com)

Texas Girls Coaches Association

[www.austintgca.com](http://www.austintgca.com)