



---

**2016-2017**

**Cheerleader and Drill Team Guidelines  
Zapata County Independent School District**



Revised on 9-01-2016

*Zapata Co. ISD does not discriminate on the base of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including athletic programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.*

**ZAPATA CO. ISD  
CHEERLEADER AND DRILL TEAM GUIDELINES**

**I. Name**

The name of the high school dance organization shall be the **Zapata High School Strutters**.  
The name of the middle school dance organization shall be the **Zapata Middle School Dazzlers**.

The name of the high school organization shall be the **Zapata High School Cheerleaders**.  
The name of the middle school organization shall be the **Zapata Middle School Cheerleaders**.

The name of the organization shall be the **Zapata High School Spinners**.

**II. Purpose**

- a. The purpose of these organizations is to promote and maintain school spirit and sportsmanship; to provide entertainment whenever necessary in cooperation with the school and civic activities; and to develop character, leadership, and individual responsibility while maintaining high moral standards.
- b. Cheerleaders and Drill teams shall represent the school well both in and out of uniform at all times.
- c. For the purposes of this manual, "ZCISD Cheerleader and Drill Teams" refers to the Zapata High School Strutters, Zapata Middle School Dazzlers, Zapata High School Cheerleaders, Zapata Middle School Cheerleaders and Zapata High School Spinners.

**III. Responsibility**

The following are the primary responsibilities of the organizations:

- a. to attend all performances set forth by the sponsor(s) which include, but is not limited to football games parades and community functions;
- b. to follow all school rules / regulations set forth by the Cheerleader and Drill Team Guidelines, Zapata County I.S.D. Student Code of Conduct, and sponsor(s) at all performances; and
- c. to promote school spirit and pride.

**IV. Membership**

- a. The Zapata High School Strutters membership is open to any student in grades eight through twelve. Students will specialize in jazz, pom, kick, prop, lyrical, and military routines.
- b. The Zapata Middle School Dazzlers membership is open to any student in grades sixth through eighth. Students will specialize in jazz, pom, kick, prop, lyrical, and military routines.
- c. The Zapata High School Cheerleaders membership is open to any student in grades nine through twelve.
- d. The Zapata Middle School Cheerleaders membership is open to any student in grades six through eight.
- e. The Zapata High School Spinners membership is open to any student in grades eight through twelve.
- f. The minimum size of the ZCISD Cheerleader and Drill Teams may vary from year to year depending on the number of qualified members and chosen routines.
- g. Membership to the ZCISD Cheerleader and Drill Teams are from the date of try-outs to the last day of school. Membership numbers are subject to change based upon gaps between the resulting high, middle, and low scores, provided that any such change in numbers shall be approved by the principal prior to try-outs.
- h. Membership may be terminated at any time for failure to comply with the standards of conduct and procedure outlined herein.

## V. PROCEDURES AND ELIGIBILITY FOR TRY-OUTS

### a. Eligibility for Try-outs

1. Try-outs will be held during the spring of each year.
2. Try-outs are open to candidates who will be eligible in the upcoming school year according to section IV of this manual.
3. Each candidate will be required to have a passing grade by the end of the year and through out membership. Student must be passing the current grading period of every class at the time of try-outs to be eligible.
4. Parents or Custodial Parents and students shall attend an orientation with the purpose of reading and explaining the use of these guidelines. Failure to attend this orientation may result in their child being excluded from participating in the team.
5. Candidates will be required to submit eligibility forms and parent permission forms to the sponsor by the second day of practice.
6. Any student who has been dismissed or has quit from any Friday Night extracurricular activity during the current school year is ineligible for team try-outs for the following year unless otherwise approved by the campus principal.
7. Candidates will be required to clear any outstanding financial debts to their school and organization to be eligible to tryout. This includes incoming sixth graders who have not cleared debts incurred at the elementary school and incoming ninth graders who have not cleared debts incurred at the middle school unless otherwise approved by the campus principal.
8. Any student who has been expelled from school during the current school year will be ineligible to tryout.
9. Every member will be required to pay a deposit if selected as a member the day following try-outs. Payment plans may be approved by the campus principal.
10. Students currently suspended must be cleared by the campus principal to tryout.
11. Candidates who have been in ISS or suspended from school during the current school year are ineligible to tryout for any officer position. If a student has been removed from team during current year, they will be ineligible to try out for a line member unless otherwise approved by the campus principal.

## VI. RESPONSIBILITIES/ DUTIES OF MEMBERS

### a. Responsibilities

1. Each member will be required to be available for all performances and practices scheduled throughout the year. Punctuality is imperative and tardiness will NOT be tolerated.
2. Students who need to be excused from a performance will be required to bring a written excuse from parent or custodial parent stating the reason for absence prior to performance date.
3. Members are required to attend all practices. Failure to do so may accumulate demerits that can result in removal from the team. Unforeseen circumstances, such as emergencies, that resulted in a team member not attending practice will be excused at the discretion of the sponsor(s).
  - a. Excused absences include:
    - a. Personal illness or accident. (Must present a doctor's excuse).
    - b. Funeral or death in the immediate family.
    - c. School activities that are approved by the campus Principal
4. An absence will be excused once the member presents a written notice from a parent/ guardian, to the sponsor(s) the day of return to school. The written notice must include the date of absence, the reason for absence, a phone number and a signature from the parent/guardian.
5. When a member is absent, it is the member's responsibility to call the sponsor(s) or assigned leader to let them know they will be out prior to the event.

6. When a member is absent, it is the student's responsibility to call a fellow member or assigned leader and find out what was missed, and what is required of them upon their return.
7. Any member who misses a practice before a performance (unexcused) will forfeit performing in the next day of events.
8. Any member who misses a Routine Tryout automatically forfeits performing in that routine. Exceptions based on an excused absence will be reviewed by the Sponsor(s).
9. Any member, who misses rehearsal when choreography is being set will be left out of that dance. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the sponsor(s) and shall be documented by the sponsor(s).
10. An unexcused absence from a performance or game may result in demerits, sit out and/or replaced in the choreography on next performance.
11. All members are required to attend their respective summer practices and camps. Missing either dance camp will forfeit membership in the Drill Team organization for that school year.
12. All members are expected to maintain eligibility. Grades will be reviewed each grading period. Members must be passing all classes in order to participate in any performances or activities.
13. Members of this organization are representatives of the school and must display appropriate behavior in or out of uniform (including team jackets). Any member's misuse of any form of technology (internet) will result in demerits (Twitter, Facebook, SnapChat etc). The Zapata Student Code of Conduct and Dress Code will be enforced. Failure to comply will result in the accumulation of demerits which SHALL result in removal from the organization.
14. Every member must ride to and from scheduled performances on school sponsored transportation unless there is written approval by the Sponsor(s). Only group members will be allowed on the bus.
15. All members are required to be picked up on time or they will receive a demerit.
16. Members will not be able to participate or attend a game the same night of a full day's absence.
17. All members must submit a physical examination to sponsor(s) before summer camp.
18. Stealing, drinking, smoking or using drugs while in or out of uniform and/ or representing the team will result in automatic removal from the team.
19. Any member participating in other school sponsored activities that conflicts with practices or performances of the team shall advise sponsors of both teams immediately. If the conflict shall be resolved between the sponsors of both teams.

**b. Financial Obligation**

1. The parents and members are responsible for completion of all balances owed to the organization by (June 15th).
2. Each member must participate in all assigned fundraising activities. Failure to do so may result with demerits being issued to that member. Deadlines set by the sponsor are required to be met. If parent does not agree to fundraise, they will be responsible to pay all dues.
3. Any member who drops out or is removed from the organization is financially obligated for all orders placed while they were an active member.
4. There are no refunds.
5. The campus principal shall be notified, in an itemized, written format, of the expenses that a parent/guardian will be expected to pay for their child to participate.

c. **Student Responsibility of Uniform**

1. A member is financially obligated to pay for all personal uniforms that have been ordered by that individual regardless of standing on the team.
2. Any member who drops out or is removed from the organization will be required to return all items which belong to the school in good condition. It is the responsibility of the member to reimburse the school for any lost or damaged dance team items that are the property of the school.
3. Team uniforms are to be worn only when prior approval is given by the sponsor(s).

VII. **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS/ DEMERITS**

a. **Actions Due to Non- Compliance**

1. Failure to comply with any part of the guidelines will result in demerits by the Sponsor(s).
2. An accumulation of ten (10) demerits will result in the member being removed from the team for the current year and will be ineligible to try out for the following year.
3. If a question of conduct in behavior arises, principal or assistant principal shall investigate the allegation or conduct.
4. Remaining ineligible (failing) for two grading periods in a row in any combination or in a particular class will result in removal.
5. If deemed necessary by the sponsor(s), due to noncompliance with expectations stated in this manual, a team member may be asked to sit out the following performance.
6. If a team member is caught skipping classes by any school personnel, the student will not be allowed to practice that day and will be benched for the week's game/event. Parents will be notified immediately of the infraction and consequence by the campus principal or assistant principal as per Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code.
7. The captain/co-captain/officer(s) and sponsor(s) will keep a record of each member's actions, participation, etc.

b. **Demerits**

1. All demerits shall be issued by the Sponsor(s).
2. The sponsor(s) will document and inform the campus principal of each demerit cited.
3. Demerits are issued for improper conduct. Demerits will affect the active status of a member in the organization. Once a demerit is issued it remains there for the one semester. Three warnings will constitute as one demerit.
4. Consequences of the demerit system are as follows:
  - a. **3 demerits-** A meeting between student and the sponsor(s) will take place and a phone call will be made to parents. Forfeit one performance and must attend practice.
  - b. **5 demerits-** A meeting between student, parent and sponsor(s) will take place. A letter will be sent home with the student and must be returned the next school day with the parent's signature. Forfeit two performances and student must attend practices.
  - c. **7 demerits-** A meeting between student, parent, campus principal and sponsor will take place. Forfeit one six week period of performances and must attend all practices.
  - d. **10 demerits-** Removal from Team for the remainder of the current school year and will be ineligible to tryout the following year.
5. Any violation of the Student Code of Conduct may result in a demerit(s) at the discretion of the campus sponsor(s) or campus principal.
6. The following is a non-exhaustive list of Demerits that will be assigned to a member. A member will sign a Demerit Form each time a demerit is issued.
7. The team's lead sponsor shall inform the student's parent or guardian of the infraction by the next school business day verbally or in writing.

## VIII. OFFICER MEMBERSHIP

### a. Names of Officers

1. The names of the officers will be Captain(s), Co-Captain(s) and Officers.
2. The Sponsor(s), with the Principal's approval, reserves the right to increase or decrease the officer line according to the number of qualified candidates.

### b. Eligibility for Officer Try-outs

1. Captain candidates must have served in the organization for 2 years.
2. Must have been a member in good standing for one year in the drill team organization; the Captain position will require two years of good standing in the respective organization.
3. Members who have been suspended during the current school year from any organization are ineligible to try out for any officer position.
4. Each candidate will be required to have a passing grade by the end of the year in all classes and throughout membership. The student must be passing the current grading period of every class at time of try-outs to be eligible.

### c. Officer Try-outs

1. Officer Try-outs will be held in the same manner as the line try-outs.
2. The candidates will be judged based on criteria selected by the Sponsor.
3. The composite scores will be tallied and the candidate with the highest score will be captain. In case of a tie candidates would both become Captains for the year.

### d. Officer's Responsibilities

1. All officers shall offer and accept constructive criticism concerning the routines and have the ability to learn and teach routines.
2. Repeated failure of an officer to fulfill their responsibilities may result in the removal as officer.
3. Individual officer duties will be determined by the sponsor(s) from year to year.
4. Officers will not be in the front at all times due to the transitions in the routines.
5. Officers can recommend demerits, but do not have the authority to issue demerits. The team sponsor(s) issues.
6. Only the team's head sponsor recommends the removal of an officer.

## IX. INTERPRETATION

- a. A committee composed of the Cheerleader or Drill Team Sponsor(s), and the student's principal will act as the final authority in interpreting the Guidelines.
- b. In case an appeals process is to occur, a committee consisting of the student's, principal, sponsor(s) and a current teacher will review and decide the outcome for that student's status.

## X. AMENDMENTS TO THE GUIDELINES

### a. Amendments by the Sponsor

1. Amendments must be submitted in writing to sponsor(s) and with the sponsor's approval to be presented to the organization. Three- fourths majority vote of the organization members is needed to approve the amendment.
2. Any amendments made to the Guidelines will be done so in the best interest of the organization as a whole.
3. Any amendments approved in accordance to this section shall be shared with the campus principal before publicly announced.

## XI. REMOVAL

- a. An accumulation of 10 demerits will result in the removal of the member.
- b. Sponsor(s) may remove any member at any time with the approval of the student's principal for serious infraction in the organization or school.
- c. Appeals must be received within one week after the removal was issued or the decision will stand.
- d. An Appeals Committee consisting of 2 academic teachers, dance sponsor(s), and an administrator will hear the appeal and make the final decision.
- e. Appeal Committee's recommendation is final and may not be appealed further.



Zapata County Independent School District

**CHEERLEADER AND DRILL TEAM GUIDELINES  
NOTICE TO PARENTS / AVISO A LOS PADRES**

CHILDREN MUST BE PICKED UP ON TIME. Safety is our priority-Help us keep our children safe.

It is the team member's parents who are responsible to pickup their child. If someone other than the parent or legal guardian will be picking up your child from practices and/or performances, please advise the sponsor in writing. Late pickups may result in the team member receiving demerits.

Students who do not pay all dues by \_\_\_\_\_ will result in dismissal of the organization and will forfeit all monies paid to date.

*LOS NIÑOS DEBEN SER RECOGIDOS A TIEMPO. La seguridad es nuestra prioridad-Ayúdenos a mantener a nuestros niños seguros.*

*Son los padres de los miembros del equipo que son responsables de la recogida de su hijo/a. Si alguien que no sea el padre o tutor legal van a recoger a su hijo de las prácticas y / o actuaciones, por favor avise al sponsor por escrito. Recogiendo a su hijo tardía puede resultar en deméritos.*

*Los estudiantes que no pagan todas las cuotas para el día \_\_\_\_\_ de \_\_\_\_\_ se traducirá en el despido de la organización y perderá todo el dinero pagado hasta la fecha.*

*Thank you for your cooperation. Gracias por su cooperación.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsor Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Campus Principal Date



Zapata County Independent School District

**CHEERLEADER AND DRILL TEAM GUIDELINES  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT**

I have read the guidelines, and understand that as a member of the Zapata Co. ISD Cheerleader and Drill Team, I must follow all requirements and rules as written in the guidelines.

I also understand that if I am unable to meet any of these requirements, I may be asked to forfeit my membership as a Zapata Co. ISD Cheerleader and Drill Team member.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I have read the guidelines, and understand that as a member of the Zapata Co. ISD Cheerleader and Drill Team, my child must follow all requirements and rules as written in the guidelines.

I also understand that if my child is unable to meet any of these requirements, they may be asked to forfeit their membership as a Zapata Co. ISD Cheerleader and Drill Team member.

*He leído las instrucciones, y entender que, como miembro de la organización, mi hijo/a debe seguir todos los requisitos y normas como está escrito en las directrices.*

*También entiendo que si mi hijo/a es incapaz de cumplir alguno de estos requisitos, se les puede pedir que renunciar a su pertenencia como miembro del equipo.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/ Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





Zapata County Independent School District

**CHEERLEADER AND DRILL TEAM GUIDELINES  
TRYOUT PROCEDURES**

**Eligibility for Try-outs**

- A. Try-outs will be held during the spring.
- B. Each candidate will be required to have a passing grade by the end of the year and throughout membership. The student must be passing the current grading period of every class at the time of try-outs to be eligible.
- C. Candidates must adhere to ZCISD Student Code of Conduct and be in compliance at all times.
- D. It will be MANDATORY prior to try-outs for parents and students to attend an orientation with the purpose of reading and explaining the use of this manual. Parents and students must agree with the implementation of this manual.
- E. Candidates will be required to submit eligibility forms and parent permission forms to the sponsor by the second day of practice. Parents will be required to sign the parent permission form and agree to give the candidates permission to participate.

**Tryout Procedure for Membership**

- A. A panel of two or three outside judges will be used to score the candidates with the approval of principal. Judges shall **not** be affiliated with the school district, campus or candidates.
- B. The tryout location will be determined by the Sponsor(s).
- C. Only the candidate, the campus Principal, judges, and administrative designees shall be allowed in the tryout area. **Parents will not be allowed in the tryout area.**
- D. Candidates will be identified by number and/or letter only.
- E. Cellphones and devices with audio or visual recording capabilities are not allowed in the tryout location or parent holding area.
- F. Candidates can be recalled to perform routines during the tryout at the judge's discretion.
- G. Scores will be tabulated and presented to the Campus Principal or administrative designee. Results will be posted at a time and location the campus Principal designates.
- H. Judges will use the following criteria in judging the participants:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ points
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ points
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ points
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ points
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ points

The signing of this document means you agree with its contents. Please return this agreement signed to the head sponsor on the day of the tryout.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Parent/Guardian Name and Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

It is the policy of Zapata County ISD not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. See Full Notice DAA-(Legal).



Team Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Consequences of the demerit system as described under Section VII, Subsection B of the Cheerleader and Drill Team Guidelines are as follows:

	<b>Conference and other measures</b>	<b>Team Member shall forfeit...</b>
<b>3 demerits</b>	Student and the sponsor(s). Phone call to parents.	one performance and must attend practice
<b>5 demerits</b>	Student, parent and sponsor(s). Letter issued and returned the next school day with the parent's signature	two performances and student must attend practices.
<b>7 demerits</b>	Student, parent, campus principal and sponsor(s).	one six week period of performances and must attend all practices.
<b>10 demerits</b>	Parental Notice of Removal will be issued.	Removal
<i>Extreme violation of rules will result in an automatic dismissal.</i>		

**Warnings:**

- o Having a cell phone or device on during practices or performances
- o Leaving personal property or part of a uniform after being dismissed
- o Tardiness
- o Talking when the Sponsor(s) or an Officer(s) is talking

- o Failure to be cooperative with other team members or sponsor(s)
- o Lack of participation at practice or performance events
- o Wearing jewelry with uniform or for practice (no body piercing)
- o Failing to have a prop at rehearsal
- o Chewing gum
- o Talking or laughing before, during or after a performance
- o Other \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Demerit Violations:**

- o Office Referral
- o Unexcused absence from practice or meeting
- o Skipping any class
- o Abuse of authority by an officer
- o Public display of affection
- o Hickeys
- o Insubordination towards sponsor or officer.
- o Failure to assume responsibilities and carry out assignments
- o Improper conduct while representing the team
- o Not dressing out for practice
- o Not wearing assigned dancewear for that certain day

- o Failure to participate in special projects
- o Failure to be picked up on time
- o Colored nail polish
- o Improper hair style or accessories during a performance
- o Improper hair style or accessories during practice
- o Dirty or poorly kept uniform
- o Not prepared in uniform with make-up on, including red lipstick
- o Failing to have a prop at performance
- o Failure to meet deadlines set by the sponsor(s)
- o Inappropriate behavior with other "Friday Night" organization members
- o Displaying poor attitude
- o Other \_\_\_\_\_

**3 Demerit Violations:**

- o Behavior(bullying)/at school or social media
- o Inn school suspension / Out of school Suspension
- o Unexcused absence from game or scheduled performances
- o Leaving any activity or practice early without permission from the sponsor(s)
- o Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Removable Violations:**

- o Drinking, smoking, or using drugs while in uniform and / or representing the team (in or out of uniform)
- o Inappropriate pictures at school/social media (if includes any of the above mentioned)
- o Stealing
- o Other \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Action Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Team Member's Response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Team Member's Signature