RIDGELAND HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADING CONSTITUTION

Article I. Purpose

Ridgeland Cheerleaders will be held to a high standard of sportsmanship, dedication, and character. They will maintain school spirit at all athletic events and represent Ridgeland High School in a positive manner. Cheerleaders will promote good sportsmanship and cooperation among all opponents and opposing fans. They will set good examples of conduct and leadership and will represent their school and program on the field, in the classroom, at school events, and in the community.

Article II. Eligibility

All candidates must be eligible according to GHSA and Walker County Athletic guidelines. Candidates must have a current physical on file with the Walker County School system for the current year. Candidates must have a signed understanding of Constitution form.

Article III. Selection & Squads

During the spring of the prior year, tryouts will be held. The **Varsity Football/Competition** will be made up of a maximum of 20 persons, only 10-16 of which will be competitive. All grades will be eligible for this squad. The highest tryout scores will be selected for this squad and tumbling is a requirement. The **Varsity Basketball Squad** will be made up of a maximum of 16 persons. All grades will be eligible for this squad. There will be tumbling requirements for the competitive squad, which will be determined by the coaching staff prior to tryouts each year. A panel of judges, which may or may not be limited to the coaching staff, will choose teams. Candidates will be judged on the following criteria: Cheer, Dance, Jumps, Appearance, Conduct, Tumbling & an Interview. All selections will be at the discretion of the coaching staff.

Article IV. Grade Requirements

In order to tryout, a candidate in 10^{th}, 11^{th}, or 12^{th} grade must meet academic eligibility requirements set by GHSA, which means pass at least 5 courses and be on track for graduation. Rising freshmen are exempt from this rule for 1 semester. At each progress period participants will be required to provide a copy of their progress report to their Coach. Each cheerleader is expected to remain in good academic standing in current classes and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action until such time that grades are improved.

Article V. Conduct

Conduct is of utmost importance within the program. Improper conduct WILL NOT BE TOLERATED in the RHS Cheerleading Program. As we strive to promote character and integrity among student athletes, no form of misconduct will misrepresent our team, school, or purpose. **Cheerleading is a privilege and not a right**. Cheerleaders represent the high school and program in the class, at games, and in the community. Be proud of yourself and your school and show the respect each of them deserves.

A. **DISMISSAL FROM THE TEAM:** Any item listed below may be grounds for dismissal from the program

- ❖ Suspension from school
- ❖ Fighting
- ❖ Any act that harms the reputation of the school or squad
- ❖ Disrespect to any coach, teacher, administrator, or teammate
- ❖ Smoking, drinking, use or possession of illegal drugs
- ❖ "U" in conduct on progress report or report card
- ❖ Any criminal act

B. **POINTS SYSTEM:** Each cheerleader will be given 25 points at the beginning of the season. The following Consequence System will be used as cheerleaders lose points.

- Lose 3 points: sit out one quarter of **game in full uniforms, must sit next to the coach; no talking to friends, parents, or on cell phone(This applies for each time a cheerleader sits out a game or portion thereof.)**
- 4-6 points: sit out 2 quarters
- 7-12 points: sit out 1 full game
- 13-18 points: sit out 2 full games; if on Varsity loses letter.
- 19 points: sit out the remainder of the season; if on Varsity loses letter.
- 25 points: DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR.

TARDIES & ABSENCES

1. Skipping class	5
2. Unexcused absence from game	5
3. ISS for 1 day	5
4. Unexcused absence from practice	4
5. Late to practice (more than 15 minutes is 3)	1
6. Late to game (more than 15 minutes is 5)	3
7. Failure to attend any scheduled event (pep rallies, fundraisers, camp, etc)	5
8. Late to chant line at beginning of quarter or game (must be in line 2 minutes before clock starts back)	2
9. Leaving early during a practice or game unless pre-approved by coach in advance.	3
10. Failure to participate in spirit activities (signs, banners, decorating locker room, etc.)	2
11. Leaving a game with a parent if not approved	3
12. Parent not picking cheerleader up on time (points/ 15 minutes)	2

BEHAVIOR

1. Disrespect to coaches, teachers, administrators, or teammates	5
2. Receiving a "U" in conduct	3
3. Not following directions of coach or captain at practice	3
4. Chewing gum at a game	1
5. Unnecessary conversation with crowd or team during games, this includes Parents.	2
6. Eating or drinking during a game (halftime is your break)	2
7. Talking or not standing at attention during the national anthem	3
8. Uncooperative attitude	3
9. *PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION* (in uniform or not in uniform)	2

APPEARANCES

1. Improper attire at practice (clothes, shoes, etc.)	1
2. Improper attire to school on day of game	2
3. Improper attire at a game (uniform, bloomers, shoes, socks, etc.)	2
4. Nails: painted, long, or artificial (this is a safety hazard, no exceptions)	2
5. Jewelry of any kind at practice or at a game (GHSA RULE)	2
6. Excessive jewelry while in uniform at school (stud earrings and watches are acceptable)	2
7. Hair not worn up or out of face (GHSA rule)	2
8. Body piercing or tattoo showing	3

VI. Transportation

Transportation to and from away Varsity Football games will be by county bus. Varsity Cheerleaders will provide their own transportation to and from competitions. Coaches will provide the time frame to be adhered to for arrival times. Varsity Basketball will only attend HOME basketball games throughout the season. However, they will travel to the region tournament and ANY post-season games coaches deem necessary. This could mean traveling either by bus or on their own depend on playing times and amount of people on the bus. Coaches will provide the time frame to be adhered to for arrival times for all teams. Failure to follow this procedure is punishable by the points system and may be subject to dismissal from the program as deemed necessary by the coaching staff.

VII. Attendance

As a member of the RHS Cheerleading program this must be your first priority, above all other activities and clubs. It is a huge responsibility. When one person is absent the entire team suffers and this leads to ineffective practice time. The following rules will be enforced.

1. You must be present at all practices, performances, and other activities designated by the coach.
2. If you intend to work, you MUST schedule your work schedule around all cheerleading activities. Working is considered an unexcused absence.
3. All appointments such as doctor's, dentists, etc. must be scheduled around all cheerleading activities. Early release and late arrivals to practices and games are unacceptable.
4. Examples of excused absences are: death in the family, a signed doctor's note indicating date and time of appointment, etc. Any other excuses are at the discretion of the individual coaches and will be addressed on an individual basis.
5. Competition members will be allowed **ZERO** unexcused absences by members of the Competition Teams may result in being replaced and/or moved to alternate status.

VIII. Financial Responsibilities

We as coaches realize the costs of the program and will do our best to keep costs to a minimum. Each cheerleader is expected to pay the estimated financial costs of any personal items, either through monetary means, donations, or through fundraisers

designated for personal costs. Payment plans may be set up in the event of financial difficulty. Please understand that if a cheerleader has not paid for any items the program has bought for her personally they will not receive these items, which may result in not being permitted to cheer in a game. Cheerleaders not paying or fundraising this amount will not be permitted to try out the following year if they do not have all outstanding balances paid off 2 weeks prior to tryouts. Estimated costs will vary from year to year, but will be presented in the informational packet before tryouts each year. Cheerleaders also have an expectation set forth in regards to fundraising. Each cheerleader is expected to participate in ALL fundraisers that benefit the program. Cheerleaders are expected to make the required payments to their accounts.

IX. Uniforms

All uniforms are the property of Ridgeland High School and are to be returned at the end of each season in **ACCEPTABLE CONDITION**. **There will be a $100 uniform debt hold for each cheerleader when the uniform is not returned. This debt hold will keep the cheerleader from attending prom and/or graduating until it is paid. The coaching staff approves acceptable condition**. Uniforms must be cleaned and free of damage when returned. Uniforms will be returned at the end of the season by a date set by the coach. If the uniform is returned in unacceptable condition, there will also be a cleaning fee or damage hold on cheerleaders account.

X. Captains

The coaches will select captains each year. They will be held responsible for the phone chain, calling chants and cheers, leading teams during the games, and any other responsibilities the coach deems necessary. All selections will be at the discretion of the head coach.

XI. Training & Conditioning

All cheerleaders will be expected to condition and train inside and outside of practice. In addition, it is recommended all cheerleaders participate in tumbling class to further advance skills needed to progress in the RHS Cheerleading Program.

X. Lettering

All Varsity cheerleaders who complete their varsity season (Varsity Football/Competition, and Basketball) will receive a letter. Any varsity cheerleader who is dismissed from the squad or quits the squad will not receive a letter.

XI. Dismissal/Quitting

Any cheerleader who is dismissed from the team or quits the team is not permitted to attend the end of the year banquet. Quitting affects the entire squad and will be taken into consideration by the coaches at any future tryouts. You will not be reimbursed for quitting also, you will not receive any item that was ordered for you that the team receives from the point of quitting or being dismissed from the program.

XII. Safety

The safety of all cheerleaders is of utmost importance. Therefore, policy has been put in place to ensure coaches and team members are acting responsibly in regards to stunting and tumbling. In addition, when deemed necessary by a coach, teams may not be allowed to stunt or tumble due to surfaces, team injuries, or irresponsible actions by team members.