

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 14, 2026

LHSAA Announces Return of Cheer & Dance as a Non-Sanctioned Sport After More Than a Decade

BATON ROUGE — The Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) is excited to announce the return of Cheer & Dance to the LHSAA championship calendar as a non-sanctioned activity, marking the first time in more than a decade that Louisiana high school cheer and dance programs will have an LHSAA championship event.

The 2026 Louisiana High School Cheer & Dance Championships will be held November 30–December 1 at the Lake Charles Event Center in Lake Charles, Louisiana, featuring competitions in cheer and dance across multiple styles.

The return of the championship follows years of interest from LHSAA member schools and the Louisiana cheer and dance community. In response, the LHSAA worked with a steering committee led by Louisiana High School Coaches Association Director Jessica Barber to develop a pathway for the championship event to return.

“This has been a long time coming, and I am excited that we are finally able to bring Cheer & Dance back to the championship calendar,” said LHSAA Executive Director Eddie Bonine. “We listened to our schools and the spirit community, and we believe this championship provides an opportunity to recognize the tremendous work and dedication of these student-athletes. We are grateful to everyone who helped make this return possible.”

While Cheer & Dance will return to the LHSAA championship calendar, it will remain a non-sanctioned activity of the LHSAA. As a result, Cheer & Dance will not operate under the same eligibility requirements, scheduling regulations, competition guidelines or other rules that apply to LHSAA-sanctioned sports. The championship event also does not carry the same official classification as an LHSAA-sanctioned state championship.

“Competitive cheer and dance are back, and I’m excited for these athletes to have the opportunity to compete on a championship stage,” said Jessica Barber, Director of the Louisiana High School Coaches Association. “I want to thank the LHSAA and the spirit community for helping bring this event back and providing these student-athletes with an opportunity to showcase their hard work.”

Visit Lake Charles, in partnership with the City of Lake Charles, will host the 2026 and 2027 championships. The event previously took place in Lake Charles in 2011, 2012 and 2013 before returning to the championship calendar more than a decade later.

LHSAA... Beyond the Game



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The 2026 championships are expected to feature more than 100 cheer and dance teams from across Louisiana. Cheer competition will take place in Sudduth Coliseum, while dance competition will be held in the Rosa Hart Theatre at the Lake Charles Event Center.

The return of the Louisiana High School Cheer & Dance Championships reflects the LHSAA's continued commitment to listening to its member schools and creating meaningful championship experiences for Louisiana's high school student-athletes.

"We are excited to bring this event back and grateful to the schools, coaches, spirit community, steering committee and our partners who helped make it possible," Bonine said. "We look forward to celebrating the athletes and teams who will compete this year."

Tickets for the 2026 Louisiana High School Cheer & Dance Championships will be available through Ticketmaster.

2026 Louisiana High School Cheer & Dance Championships

November 30-December 1, 2026

Lake Charles Event Center | Lake Charles, Louisiana

Cheer: Sudduth Coliseum

Dance: Rosa Hart Theatre

LHSAA... Beyond the Game

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