



## 2026 LHSAA Spirit Championships

Participation in LHSAA Spirit does not restrict students from participating in non-LHSAA competitions or from participating on non-school teams at any time. For LHSAA competition, however, student participants must be part of a LHSAA member school team.

### 2026 LHSAA Spirit Competition Rules and Regulations:

1. INTERPRETATION & ENFORCEMENT • These rules will remain unchanged during the 2026-2027 school year. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules will be left exclusively to the LHSAA and the Director of Spirit.

2. PARTICIPATION & ELIGIBILITY • Participation is open to 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade students. Additionally, a 7th and/or 8th grade student is also eligible, if he/she is under the official jurisdiction of the principal of the member high school as recognized by the State Department of Education. A student repeating a high school grade (ninth through 12th) for any reason is ineligible to participate during the second year in that grade. To participate on a LHSAA member school team, a student must be in good standing with the LHSAA member school he or she desires to represent.

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## LHSAA Competitive Dance

### **SECTION I: SCHOOL REPRESENTATION**

#### **1.1 PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS**

##### **1.1.1 Entry/Registration:**

1. LHSAA Member Schools will be allowed to enter ONE team per school per category (max 2 categories).
2. Individual athletes may participate in both categories but only with one single school.
3. Schools are responsible for registering teams in the appropriate category and division according to LHSAA classification guidelines. The total number of participants cannot exceed 30.

### **1.1.2 Divisions:**

Category 1 - Hip Hop - Division I and Division II (DI and DII will be determined by school enrollment.)

Category 2 - Jazz - Division I and Division II (DI and DII will be determined by school enrollment.)

Category 3 - Game Day (Fight Song, Sideline Chant/Dance, Performance Routine) - Division I and Division II (DI and DII will be determined by school enrollment.)

## **1.2 SCHOOL REPRESENTATION AND TEAM PARTICIPATION**

1. All participants must be academically eligible students at the school they represent.
2. All participants must maintain a minimum of a 1.5 GPA and be in good standing with their school's standards.
3. All participants must be official members of the school spirit squad.
4. Schools are responsible for sportsmanship and conduct of all participants and spectators.
5. Teams shall refrain from taunting, inappropriate gestures, or unsportsmanlike behavior.

### **1.2.1 Participation**

- Game Day: Division I (Minimum 5, Maximum of 30 participants)
  - Game Day: Division II (Minimum 5, Maximum of 30 participants)
  - Hip Hop: Division I (Minimum 5, Maximum of 30 participants)
  - Hip Hop: Division II (Minimum 5, Maximum of 30 participants)
  - Jazz: Division I (Minimum 5, Maximum of 30 participants)
  - Jazz: Division II (Minimum 5, Maximum of 30 participants)
1. Teams may enter no more than 2 events.
  2. Each division can have no less than 5 team members and up to 30 team members on the floor for their performance. All 30 members must remain on the floor throughout and can not switch off for members not on the floor.

## **1.3 UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES**

All uniforms shall be uniform.

### **1.3.1 Uniforms**

1. Uniforms must be school appropriate and consistent in appearance. Must provide adequate coverage.
  - a. Alternates and Managers must wear matching uniforms or official team warmups.
2. Undergarments must be worn, provide adequate support and be covered; the undergarments must not be visible.
3. School district administration and the head coach are responsible to ensure that uniforms and footwear are age appropriate and suitable for an educational environment. Coaches are responsible for style of uniforms, fit, and making sure that uniforms are compliant with rules.

### **1.3.2 Props and Supplemental Equipment**

1. Props - no props will be allowed, outside of the Game Day category

- a. Any piece of uniform removed during the routine becomes a prop. A uniform piece that is moved during the performance, must be permanently attached to the uniform to not be considered a prop.
- b. Poms used in a performance are not considered a prop

2. Supplemental Equipment

- a. No loose glitter, glitter gels, glitter sprays or any glitter product that sheds may be used or added to the uniform or dancer. Glitter slinky material is allowed if loose glitter has been shaken out and no longer sheds
- b. Other substances including but not limited to rhinestones, sequins, feathers, fringe, artificial eyelashes, bobby pins, etc., must be secured as to not fall off or shed on the performance floor. Uniforms and hairpieces that have jewels, rhinestones, sequins or other substances must be permanently attached.

## **SECTION II: COMPETITION PERFORMANCE AREA**

### **2.1 PERFORMANCE FLOOR**

1. Approximate floor size shall be 53.5 feet wide by 53.5 feet deep (typical 10 panel Marley floor) or a smooth surface of 84' x 50' (a full sized basketball court) is recommended.
2. Competition surfaces shall comply with NFHS regulations.
3. Props may be placed outside the competition area only if participants remain inside the performance boundary.

### **2.2 MUSIC**

1. Teams may use recorded marching band style music for the Fight Song section. (schools are encouraged to use their own Fight Song but it is not a requirement.)
2. All music usage must comply with United States Copyright Laws.
3. Coaches shall provide proof of music licensing at registration.
4. Music from streaming platforms does not satisfy licensing requirements.
5. Deductions will be given for music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes, but is not limited to: swearwords and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, mention of specific parts of the body and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing them with sound effects or other words constitutes inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.
6. A coach or representative must remain at the music table during performances.
7. Teams may not perform a choreographed entrance. PENALTY: delay of competition penalty—2 points

### **2.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

1. All performances shall follow current NFHS Spirit Rules.
2. Coaches are strongly encouraged to complete annual safety training.
3. Any participant suspected of concussion must follow established concussion protocol.

## **SECTION III: ROUTINE CRITERIA**

### **3.1 GAME DAY FORMAT**

The Game Day competition shall consist of:

1. Fight Song
2. Sideline/Chant Performance
3. Routine Performance

The maximum performance time for Game Day shall be three minutes and thirty seconds (3:30) .

Game Day performances will be judged on a team's ability to entertain the crowd as they would for a school event. This will consist of three components performed in order: 1) Fight song, 2) Spirit Performance such as sideline routine, stand routine, or drum cadence, and 3) Performance Routine for crowd appeal. Teams will be permitted to use poms, signs, and rally towels in their routine. The entire Game Day performance should not exceed 3:30 total, including transitioning from section to section.

- a. Voice-overs and words recorded or overlayed on the music tracks are NOT allowed in the Fight Song and/or Spirit Raising sections and/or any transitions.
4. Teams may not perform a choreographed entrance. PENALTY: delay of meet penalty—2 points
5. Teams may use poms, signs and/or rally towels, but they are not required. No other props are allowed.
  - a. Signs are allowed for fight song and spirit raising sections only.
  - b. Signs must be made of poster board, corrugated plastic or fabric.
  - c. Flags are not allowed.
  - d. Signs may not be larger than 3 feet in any direction.
  - e. Signs may not be affixed to a pole, stick or other similar device that extends the sign past 3 feet.
  - f. Signs and/or rally towels cannot be tossed or thrown off the stage or into the crowd, and must be safely placed away from performing athletes.
  - g. Hip over-head rotation skills (with or without hand support) may not be done with signs in hand.
7. There will be two rounds for Game Day divisions; semifinals and finals.

### **3.2 JAZZ FORMAT**

1. A jazz routine includes a combination of rhythmic creative body movements which interpret and emphasize a music selection
2. There will be two rounds for Jazz division; semifinals and finals.

### **3.3 HIP HOP FORMAT**

1. A Hip Hop routine is any routine with a variety of street dance styles, abstract movements, and body isolations. Movements should be tight and upbeat with style, control, rhythm, and uniformity. Use of costume (shirts, hoodie pants, glasses, etc.) to enhance a routine is allowed.
2. There will be two rounds for Hip Hop division; semifinals and finals.

### **3.4 ADVANCING TO FINALS**

1. The number of teams advancing from semifinals to finals in each category/division will be based on the number of entrants, not to exceed 50% of the entire field.

## **Section IV: Choreography/Skill Restrictions**

#### **4.1 CHOREOGRAPHY**

1. Deductions will be given for vulgar or suggestive choreography, which includes but is not limited to, movements such as hip thrusting and inappropriate touching, gestures, hand/arm movements and signals, slapping, positioning of body parts and positioning to one another. Deductions will be given for music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes, but is not limited to: swearwords and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, mention of specific parts of the body and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words constitutes inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.
2. Routines must be appropriate for family viewing. Suggestive, offensive, or vulgar choreography, costuming and/or music is inappropriate for family audiences and therefore lacks audience appeal. Any vulgar or suggestive movements (hip thrusting, inappropriate touching/slapping/positioning to one another, etc.), words, costuming or music will result in a .5 deduction per violation.
3. Routine choreography should be appropriate and entertaining for all audience members. Vulgar or suggestive material is defined as any movement or choreography implying something improper or indecent, appearing offensive or sexual content and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures or implications. Inappropriate choreography, costuming and/or music may affect the judges' overall impression and/or score of the routine.
4. All choreography should be age appropriate.

#### **4.2 TECHNICAL SKILL/ELEMENT RESTRICTIONS**

1. The following skills are allowed:

- forward and back rolls
- walkovers
- headsprings
- one or two-handed cartwheels
- round off front and back walkovers
- aerial cartwheels \*(cannot be executed while holding poms in both hands, unless using hands free poms)
- front/back aerials \*(cannot be executed while holding poms in both hands, unless using hands free poms)
- running/standing back and front headsprings\*
- round off and back handspring\* (limited to one connected)

\*Multiple consecutive airborne skills without hand support are not allowed. Skills such as, but not limited to, front and back tucks, layout, and all tumbling passes, are strictly prohibited. All tumbling skills should be evaluated for safety by the coach prior to competition.

2. Choreographed drops to the knee, thigh, back, front, head, shoulder, or seat onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.
3. Landing in a push-up position onto the performance surface from a jump in which the legs are in front of the body and swing behind are not allowed.
  - a. All variations of a shushunova are not allowed.
  - b. Clarification – Position must originate from the performance surface to be allowed.
4. Kip ups with hand support must initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground. Exception: A roll to the ground prior to initiating a kip up would be allowed.

### **4.3 DANCE LIFTS AND PARTNERING (Executed in pairs or groups)**

**Partner stunts are limited to two persons high.**

1. The Executing Dancer must receive support from a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the performance surface through the entire skill. (Exception: Kick Line Leaps).
2. Thigh stands, shoulder sits, and chair sits are allowed.
3. The following cheer-based stunts are not allowed:
  - a. Elevators
  - b. Extended cheer stunts (the lifted dancer is extended in an upright position over the base(s) who maintain fully extended arms and have the lifted dancers' feet in hands)
  - c. Pyramids and basket tosses.

### **4.4 RELEASE MOVES (UNASSISTED DISMOUNTS TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE)**

1. The Executing Dancer(s) may not be released or tossed.

### **4.5 ELEMENT RESTRICTIONS**

1. Kicks/Kicklines
  - a. Kicks/Kicklines are allowed and are not restricted in number.

### **4.6 DANGEROUS MOVES**

Disqualification: Flagrant violations are defined as those that intentionally or obviously and/or blatantly disregard the dangerous moves rules. The dangerous moves rule was disregarded, and a move was intentionally added to routine. A flagrant violation does not include execution errors. A majority of judges (including registered LHSAA officials) must observe and agree that a flagrant violation has occurred to disqualify a team. Ten (10) Points will be deducted from the total score when any stunt or acrobatic trick that is not allowed according to the regulations is performed. The Competition Adjudicator, Head Judge, and Event Coordinator will make this decision. The decision is final and binding.

If a majority of judges do not agree that a flagrant violation has occurred, the violation will be assessed a point deduction as determined under minor violations. All dangerous moves violations that are not flagrant (for example, an error in which the move was executed poorly and/or adrenaline caused the error) are considered minor violations. – one point deduction per judge per occurrence, with a maximum point deduction of five points per judge.

### **4.7 FALLS**

Falls: A fall is an uncontrolled or unchoreographed drop to the floor wherein any part of the dancer's body other than their hands, hit or contact the floor.

1. In the case where a fall occurs and the knee, knees, seat or thighs drop to the floor, it will not be considered a dangerous move nor will the team be disqualified.

## **SECTION V: INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE**

### **5.1 UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES**

If a routine is interrupted due to equipment malfunction or facility issues, officials may stop the routine and allow the team to perform again from the point of interruption.

### **5.2 INJURY**

1. Only competition officials or the school coach may stop a routine for injury.
2. Injured participants may not return without clearance from medical personnel.
  - a. Bleeding Injury: When it is discovered that an athlete is bleeding, has an open wound or blood on their uniform, the routine shall be terminated immediately by the coach or any meet personnel. Following proper treatment, the athlete is eligible to participate when the team re-competes. A doctor or trainer will determine if the dancer may return to competition after receiving proper treatment. If bleeding should reoccur with the same athlete or another athlete when the team recompetes, the athlete shall be removed, and the team shall re-compete immediately. The third routine shall be the final opportunity for the team to compete. If the routine is terminated, the team shall be dropped from the competition.
  - b. Bleeding prior to competing: If a dancer is bleeding while “in the hole” or “on deck”, the coach shall consult with the head judge about the injury and the team would be moved to the last position in the division. Following proper treatment, the dancer is eligible to participate when the team competes. A doctor or trainer will determine if the dancer may return to competition after receiving proper treatment.
  - c. Vomiting while performing: If an athlete vomits on the floor or otherwise causes the performance floor to become wet, the routine will be terminated immediately by the coach or any meet personnel. The team will re-compete without the athlete at the end of the division.
  - d. Concussions: Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by a licensed health care provider.
  - e. If the head judge or LHSAA Official determines there is a safety issue on the competition floor, the team will be stopped and the process for competing after any injury/incident will be followed.
  - f. In case of interference beyond the control of the competitors, the coach may address the head judge concerning a second attempt provided the request is made prior to the next routine in that event.
3. Competition officials shall determine whether a routine may be reperformed.
  - a. The process for competing after any injury/incident: The team will exit the floor. The coach will consult with the head judge about the injury and the process to follow. The next team will be brought onto the floor. No scores will be kept for the unfinished routine. The team will move to last position within the division in which they are competing. That team will then re-compete. Judging will start over with no reflection of the unfinished routine shown in the scores.

## **SECTION VI: INTERPRETATIONS AND RULINGS**

### **6.1 RULES AND PROCEDURES**

1. Questions regarding competition procedures shall be directed by the school-employed coach to the Competition Director prior to performance.
2. Full competition rules, competition floor size, and scoresheets will be emailed to participating schools at minimum of 3 months prior to competition.

## **6.2 SCORES AND RANKING**

1. Judges' decisions shall be final.
2. Score sheets will be made available to coaches following prelims and awards ceremonies.
3. Teams shall be ranked by score according to official judging criteria.
4. Tabulation Error: In the event a tabulation error is alleged after the completion of the tournament, a coach must notify the meet director **within one hour from the time the final results become available to the coaches**. If the tabulation error is verified, the LHSAA Tournament director, in consultation with the Head judges, will correct the error and sign off on the corrected results, which will become the official results. The LHSAA tournament director will contact those teams affected by the corrected results.

## **6.3 DAYS OF COMPETITION**

1. Competition will be broken into Semi-Finals and Finals with Semi-Finals having one round.
2. Semi-Finals will take place on the first day of the competition and Finals will take place on the second day of the competition.
3. Placement after Semi-Finals will determine teams advanced to Finals.

## **6.4 ROUND SCORING**

1. The number of teams advancing from semifinals to finals in each category/division will be based on the number of entrants, not to exceed 50% of the entire field.
2. Teams competing in the finals will receive an overall LHSAA State Championship Ranking based solely on their Finals score. Ties will be broken based on information provided in Section VI, Part 6.5.

## **6.5 TIES**

1. In the event of a tie, the first tie-break will be the highest score from Semi-Finals.

## **6.6 AWARDS**

1. Division champions shall receive championship trophies.
2. Runner-up awards shall also be presented.

## **6.5 JUDGING PANELS**

1. Judging panels may include:
  - Head Judge
  - Panel Judges
  - Safety Judge
  - Deduction Judge
2. All judging decisions are final.
3. Tabulation Error: In the event a tabulation error is alleged after the completion of the tournament, a coach must notify the meet director **within one hour from the time the final results become available to the coaches**. If the tabulation error is verified, the LHSAA Tournament director, in consultation with the Head judges, will correct the

error and sign off on the corrected results, which will become the official results. The LHSAA tournament director will contact those teams affected by the corrected results.

## **6.6 DISQUALIFICATION**

Any team failing to comply with LHSAA Dance rules and regulations may be subject to disqualification.

## **6.7 DEDUCTIONS**

Deduction points shall be subtracted from the final score according to the official deduction sheet. See our deductions and violations contained within the score sheet for a breakdown of all violations, scoring, and examples.

# **Section VII: Conduct of Coaches, School Officials, and Athletes**

## **7.1 COACHES/SCHOOL OFFICIALS**

Coaches and School officials are expected to behave in accordance with the LHSAA & NFHS guidelines. Failure to comply may result in ejection from the competition.

1. A coach or team representative must be at the coaches/sound table for a team to perform. Only coaches (maximum of 4), may actively coach the team and sit at the coaches and/or sound table.
2. Coaches, participants, and additional coaches may not sit on the competitive floor or in front of the chairs and/or coaches' table during the performance.
3. Coaches shall not use any form of alcohol, tobacco product, e-cigarette or similar items at the competition site from the time they arrive until they leave following the completion of the meet.
4. Team personnel or coaches shall not exhibit deliberate disruptive behavior including taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule, or demean others under any circumstances.
5. Team personnel or coaches shall not verbally abuse or disrespectfully address a judge/meet official, make an unauthorized approach of a judge concerning a score or rule infraction or use profanity. PENALTY: Two points per judge. If flagrant, an ejection will occur.

## **7.2 ATHLETES**

Athletes/Dancers are expected to behave in accordance with their home school and LHSAA standards. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, point deductions and ejection from the tournament.

1. In public areas, athletes wearing uniforms must have their uniforms zipped or properly attached.
2. Athletes shall not exhibit deliberate disruptive behavior including taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule, or demean others under any circumstances. Athletes may not spit on the performance floor.
3. Athletes shall not verbally abuse or disrespectfully address a judge/meet official, make an unauthorized approach of a judge concerning a score or rule infraction or use profanity. PENALTY: Two points per judge. If flagrant, an ejection will occur.