



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.

2026-2027 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.

LHSAA Competitive Cheer

SECTION I: SCHOOL REPRESENTATION

1.1 PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS

1.1.1 Entry/Registration:

LHSAA Member Schools will be allowed to enter one team per school. Individual athletes may only participate on a single school team. Schools are responsible for registering teams in the appropriate division according to LHSAA classification guidelines. The total number of participants for a Game Day team is determined by the division in which a school is a LHSAA member. Mascots may participate but may not execute stunts and do not count towards total allowable athletes on the mat.

1.1.2 Divisions:

- Game Day: All-Girl Division 1
- Game Day: All-Girl Division 2
- Game Day: All-Girl Division 3
- Co Ed

1.2 SCHOOL REPRESENTATION AND TEAM PARTICIPATION

All participants must be academically eligible students at the school they represent and official members of the school spirit squad. Each athlete must comply with having a minimum of 1.5 GPA in accordance with standard LHSAA practices. Coaches and administrators are responsible for turning in a roster of participants which signifies that each athlete on the roster meets this requirement.

1.2.1 Participation

Each All-Girl division can have 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. Co-ed division has no minimum or maximum number of males but is limited to 30 athletes on the floor.

1.3 UNIFORMS

All uniforms shall be uniform.

1.3.1 Uniforms

1. Uniforms must be school appropriate and consistent in appearance. Must provide adequate coverage. No intentional midriff showing.
 - a. Alternates and Managers must wear matching uniforms or official team warmups.
2. All uniforms must be the same, differing slightly for Co Ed. All males shall be the same. All females shall be the same.
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. Approved props include signs, poms, flags, rally towels, and megaphones.
2. Props may not create safety hazards or distract from crowd-leading efforts.

SECTION II: COMPETITION PERFORMANCE AREA

2.1 PERFORMANCE FLOOR

1. Approximate floor size shall be 54 feet wide by 42 feet deep. (typical 9 panel floor.)
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 required to complete annual safety training.
3. Any participant suspected of concussion must follow established concussion protocol.
4. All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, music selection, outfitting (cheerleading), and cheer words should be suitable for family viewing and listening.

SECTION III: ROUTINE CRITERIA

3.1 GAME DAY FORMAT

The Game Day competition shall consist of:

1. Band Chant
2. Situational/Cheer (Crowd Leading)
3. Fight Song

The maximum performance time for Game Day shall be three (3) minutes. For Game Day routines, timing of the routine will NOT include the team spiring, rallying, or individuals performing jumps, kicks, tumbling or single-based lifts but will begin with the first group movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first.

3.2. SKILL RESTRICTIONS

1. No basket tosses or sponge tosses shall be permitted in Game Day divisions.
2. No inversions shall be allowed.
3. No twisting dismounts from stunts.
4. Standing tumbling is limited to one skill at a time.
5. Running tumbling shall not be permitted in Game Day routines.
6. Single leg stunts are limited to liberty and liberty hitches.

3.3. SCORES AND RANKINGS

1. Judges' decisions shall be final
2. Score sheets will be made available to coaches following awards ceremonies.
3. Teams shall be ranked according to official judging criteria.

SECTION IV: COMPETITION FORMAT

4.1. DAYS OF COMPETITION

1. Competition will be broken into Semi-Finals and Finals with Semi-Finals having two rounds, Round 1 and Round 2.
2. Both Semi-Finals Round 1 and Semi-Finals Round 2 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.

4.2. ROUND SCORING

1. Semi-Finals Round 1 will be worth 25% of Semi-Final score and Semi-Finals Round 2 will be worth 75% of Semi-Final score.

2. The top 10 (ten) teams in each division with the highest Semi-Final Score will move onto Finals.
3. 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 IV, Part 4.3.

4.3 TIES

1. In the event of a tie, the first tie-break will be the highest score from Semi-Finals Round 2.
2. If after the first tie-break a tie still remains, the second tie-break will be the highest score from Semi-Finals Round 1.

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.
3. Competition officials shall determine whether a routine may be reperformed.

SECTION VI: INTERPRETATIONS AND RULINGS

6.1 RULES AND PROCEDURES

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

6.2 AWARDS

1. Division Champion shall receive the Championship trophy.
2. Division Runner-Up shall receive Runner-Up trophy.

6.3 JUDGING PANELS

Judging panels may include:

- Head Judge
- Panel Judges
- Safety Judge
- Deduction Judge

All judging decisions are final.

6.4 DISQUALIFICATION

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

6.5 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 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.

6. A maximum of 4 adults (Coaches, Sponsors, etc.) are allowed with each team during the entry process, backstage, warm-up areas, and any/all other areas designated by the LHSAA. These adults will receive credentials.
7. All adults as described above with any team must have a USA Cheer Membership (coach or professional membership) with at least one adult maintaining a coach membership.
8. Proof of membership for each coach must be provided during the check-in process.

7.2 ATHLETES

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

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.