



Frequently Asked Questions – Competitive Cheerleading

Now that the Board of Regents has recognized Competitive Cheerleading as a sport the State Education Department and the NYSPHSAA will be finalizing the exact rules and regulations that will govern the sport of Competitive Cheerleading. The Cheerleading Committee will be meeting on May 20th to discuss many topics associated with cheerleading. Each Section will be represented on the committee. The Cheerleading Ad Hoc committee final report can be found at www.nysphsaa.org. Below are some questions we have received regarding how cheerleading may look as we move forward.

Q – What is the difference between Traditional Cheerleading and Competitive Cheerleading? Will schools be able to just have traditional cheerleading?

A – Schools will be able to just offer traditional cheerleading squads. These squads will not follow the rules and regulations of SED or the NYSPHSAA. If a traditional squad incorporates stunting/tumbling into a sideline or halftime routine they will be considered a competitive cheerleading squad and will have to follow the rules and regulations of SED and NYSPHSAA. Schools can chose to be both.

Q – Will coaches have to be certified to coach competitive cheerleading?

A – All competitive cheer squads will have to have a properly certified coach per SED regulation. All SED coaching certifications will have to be followed. Please contact your athletic administrator for the exact requirements to coach competitive cheerleading. The NYSPHSAA may also require the AACCA Safety course as well dependent upon Central Committee approval in July.

Q – Will teams be able to be selected in the Spring for the following year?

A – When fully implemented, teams will have to be selected at the beginning of the Section established season in the same manner other sports are selected. The NYSPHSAA allows out of season activities as long as it is open to all students and it is not mandated by the coaches. Some sections and leagues can be more restrictive, please check with your athletic administrator.

Q – Will teams be able to compete in both the Fall and Winter seasons?

A - The NYSPHSAA Competitive Cheerleading season will be during the Winter season. The SED and the NYSPHSAA are discussing if teams will be able to compete in the Fall season at the local and sectional level. The NYSPHSAA will NOT hold any state level events in the Fall. This topic will be discussed and examined over the course of the next few months and more information will be provided when available.

Q – Can teams bring in experts to work with the Competitive Cheerleading squads?

A – Teams can bring in clinicians to work with their teams if this is a permissible practice of the school district. Clinicians work with the teams sporadically and not on a consistent basis. Clinicians do not have to be certified to work with the teams.

Q – Can teams travel out of state or host out of state teams for competitions?

A – Any competition that our schools participate in would have to be properly sanctioned by the NYSPHSAA office. New York schools may only compete against member/approved schools.

Q – Will student athletes and teams have to have a minimum number of practices before competing in a competition?

A – Students and teams will have to have a minimum number of practices before competing. The Cheerleading Committee will make a recommendation to the Central Committee on what that number will be for the NYSPHSAA.

Q – Will there be a State Championship for Competitive Cheerleading? How will teams qualify? What will be the divisions?

A – We anticipate a possible State Championship during the winter season of the 2015-2016 school year, this will be determined in the coming months following the Cheer Committee meeting and the Central Committee approval. Each section will select the teams that will qualify for the Championship. The Cheerleading Committee will recommend what the divisions will be for the championships. NYSPHSAA sponsored invitational events could continue for the 2014-2015 school year.

Q – Will the Selection Classification process be used for Competitive Cheerleading?

A – The gymnastics standards of the Selection Classification process will be used to selectively classify 7th and 8th graders to the high school level as per SED regulations.

Q – Will Competitive Cheerleading teams be eligible for the NYSPHSAA Scholar Athlete program?

A – As a recognized sport, Competitive Cheerleading squads will be eligible for the scholar athlete program and state scholar athlete championship.

Q – When will the SED and NYSPHSAA rules and regulations be fully enforced for the schools of the NYSPHSAA?

A – The recommendation of the Cheerleading Committee will be sent to the Central Committee in July. The State Education Department will inform NYSPHSAA of the timetable for full implementation of their rules and regulations in the coming months. It is not unforeseeable to consider the 2014-2015 school year as a transition year and full implementation for the 2015-2016 school year; again this has yet to be determined.

Q – Who can I contact as a coach or athletic director to give my input on the direction of Competitive Cheerleading?

A – Coaches and athletic directors can contact their Section Executive Director, Section Cheerleading Representative, or the NYSPHSAA office staff. The NYSPHSAA is a membership led organization and the direction of Competitive Cheerleading will be determined by the membership of the NYSPHSAA.

Thank you all for your passion and commitment to the outstanding student athletes that participate in Competitive Cheerleading. We look forward to ensuring the safety of those student athletes and highlighting and promoting these student athletes. There are several items that need to be addressed and developed since SED declared competitive cheerleading a sport; please know the NYSPHSAA staff is working diligently to ensure a smooth transition for its member schools during this exciting time period.

Questions:

Robert Zayas, NYSPHSAA Executive Director

rzayas@nysphsaa.org

518.690.0771

Todd Nelson, NYSPHSAA Assistant Director

tnelson@nysphsaa.org

518.690.0771