**2020-2021 Cheer Contract & Expectations**

**Philosophy/Purpose |**

The purpose of the cheer team is to support the curricular and extracurricular activities of Kennedy Catholic High School. Being a cheerleader is an honor and privilege. Cheerleaders exist to promote good sportsmanship, good citizenship, and wholesome and enthusiastic school spirit. Cheerleaders are first and foremost representatives of the school. Cheerleaders should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their position and in accordance with the rules as stated in the Kennedy Catholic Student Handbook. Members of this group have a fundamental responsibility to play a leadership role in school activities, and because of these expectations, members are expected to maintain a higher standard of academic achievement and behavior both on and off campus.

**Objectives |**

Cheerleaders are expected to be skilled in learning and remembering cheers/dances. They are also expected to be able to publicly demonstrate a skill level suitable for the team position and timing necessary for group performance. Outside of performances, they are to enthusiastically support all school-sponsored activities/programs and various volunteer opportunities where they are asked to be present.

The Kennedy Catholic team will cheer and perform at halftime for home football games, basketball games, wrestling matches, parades and school pep assemblies. The team will take part in fundraising events and be expected to participate in select community service events. They will also represent Kennedy Catholic at different school events throughout the school year.

**Tryout Guidelines |**

Coaches will be responsible for the preparation and distribution of a packet of information to be made available to all candidates. This information will include specific clinic and tryout dates, times, and expectations.

Candidates and parents must sign a form stating that they understand and will comply with all information in the packet, including but not limited to responsibilities, rules and expectations before the student is allowed to participate in the tryout process. All paperwork must be returned to the coach, fully completed and signed, by Friday, June 19 (jandusayl@kennedyhs.org).

Each tryout season, there will be a Prospective Parent Meeting that at least one parent/guardian is required to attend. This year’s mandatory meeting will be held via Zoom.
Eligibility At Tryouts |
Candidates must be a current registered student or enrolled as a new student at Kennedy Catholic for the 2020-2021 school year in order to participate in the tryouts. All tryout participants will be held to the same academic and conduct standards as a student-athlete.

Judging Criteria |
Prospective student-athletes will be evaluated using a rubric that considers the following factors. A cumulative score is derived from adding up all categories.

- Performance skills (75%):
  - Jumps
  - Cheer – motion technique
  - Spirit/Voice
  - Dance
- General impact (25%):
  - Attendance at clinic
  - Grades/discipline
  - Coachability
  - Overall impression

Judges |
There will be a minimum of three judges on the panel. Judges have been selected for their range of experience. Judges are instructed to evaluate the candidates based on the mastery of skills over a 3-day period.

Tryout Requirements |
All participants must complete and submit an application and signed contract before taking part in the tryout process. During tryouts, all prospective cheerleaders must perform all the basic skills taught at clinic day, including:

- A :30 second advanced dance with the last two eight counts choreographed by participant (this can be any skills that you would like to show the judges)
- One advanced cheer
- Two consecutive technical jumps

Panel tryouts will be closed to everyone except judges and 2019-2020 captains. No other person will be allowed in the judging area. There will be no other students or parents in the tryout area, nor will they be involved in the collection or tabulation of scores. All tryout results are final.

Notification Following Tryouts |
Each candidate will be assigned a number on the first day of tryouts. After all tryout scores have been tabulated and the team has been chosen, the candidates will be notified via email whether they have been selected for the 2020-2021 Varsity Cheer Team.

**Emails will be sent to the candidate no later than 8pm on Thursday, July 9. If you are offered a spot on the team, please respond to coach as soon as possible with a YES or NO response.**

**Academic Requirements |**

Members of the Kennedy Catholic team will be held to the standards of all student-athletes. It is the priority of the coaches and the Kennedy Catholic High School administration to put school studies before extracurricular activities. Cheerleaders will be held subject to the same grade-check calendar used for our fall and winter sports programs. This calendar is developed by the Athletic Director. At the time of grade checks, members of the team must meet or exceed standard. Initial athletic eligibility is determined by the previously completed semester. In order to be academically eligible for athletic participation, all students-athletes must have a previous semester GPA of 2.0 or greater AND have passing marks in ALL classes.

If they do not raise their academic status by the end of the grading period, they may be removed from the team and may not try out again for one year. As per the contract, the member would have to release/return all uniforms and accessories and pay any funds due.

If a team member is on academic probation, their participation will be limited to practice only. They may NOT wear their uniform, cheer at games, or perform at assemblies or other events.

If a Kennedy Catholic team member quits at any time during the season or is asked to leave the team, they will not letter and may not try out the following year. They will be on a one-year probation. Per the uniform contract, the member must also release/return all uniforms and accessories and pay any funds due.

**Citizenship Requirements |**

The following are the expectations of all members of the team. These are developed under the guidance that participation is a privilege and that cheerleaders serve as some of the most visible members of the Kennedy Catholic community.

Responsibilities officially begin on the day results are announced and remain in effect until the final event of the following school year.

All cheerleaders must:
- Abide by all rules stated in the Kennedy Catholic Student Handbook.
- Be aware they are always representing the school.
- Encourage team members and others around you.
- Always display a positive attitude toward teammates, coaches, parents and school staff.
- Refrain from inappropriate postings on any social network.
- Refrain from possessing or using drugs, tobacco or alcohol – on or off campus – at any time.
Violation of the above will not be tolerated and may be considered grounds for suspension from team activities and/or removal from the team. The way participants conduct themselves, in and out of uniform, directly reflects our entire team.

Extraordinary conduct will be handled per the Student Handbook by the Discipline Office at Kennedy Catholic High School. Any rumor or suspicion the coaches have seen/heard/witnessed will be brought directly to the Campus Life Office (Vice Principal, Mr. Perry Sampley and Dean of Discipline, Mrs. Katie Burns) for further investigation.

Members must follow all rules set forth in this agreement. Dismissal from the team is at the discretion of the coaching staff, in conjunction with the Athletic Director.

**Attendance Regulations |**

Attendance is crucial to team success and members are expected to be at every practice and on time. One person being absent affects the entire team. It is important not to inconvenience the practice time of the entire team by being late or absent.

Unexcused absences, excessive tardiness, and failure to communicate scheduling issues promptly with the coaching staff is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Members of the cheer team should expect 2-5 (practices, games, assemblies, etc.) per week during the season. The schedule will be set in advance and coaches will do their best to stay to that, however it is always subject to change.

Team members are expected to attend ALL events as scheduled. Advance notice and appropriate reason(s) are expected for all missed events. Absences occurring leading up to or directly in advance of a performance (halftime dance, assembly, parade, etc.) may impact one's ability to participate.

Team members who miss a practice for any reason will be responsible to obtain the material covered on their own time.

Team members are expected to stay for the entirety of a scheduled event and should not expect to leave without authorization from a member of the coaching staff.

**Other Conflicts |**

If a team member chooses to pursue outside employment, that job should not interfere with practices, games or performances. Every attempt is made to provide a monthly schedule well in advance. Prior clearance is expected should any conflicts arise. Should work be a continuing issue, the member may be removed from the team.

Team members can play other sports while being on the cheer team. You must communicate at the beginning of each season to your cheer coach that you are playing a sport. Communication is paramount for anyone to successfully manage participation on two teams simultaneously, and arrangements will be made to ensure that conflicts are limited.

Cheer coaches will make every effort to keep practices in the morning and keep to the planned schedule to accommodate a second sport or activity. If a member reaches the post
season in that Kennedy Catholic varsity sport, the cheer team will support them missing scheduled activities and arrangements will be made to honor that achievement. Regular-season sports practices and games ARE NOT valid reasons to miss scheduled cheer events. A similar expectation is held when team members plan to participate in other school activities (for example: ASB officer duties, drama, DECA, etc.)

**Practice Information |**

Summer practices will start after the team is selected in July (calendar will be given out at first practice).

Kennedy Catholic team members will attend an off-site **mandatory** cheer/dance/stunt camp during the summer. **This will be July 30 – August 2 at the University of Puget Sound.** The camp will consist of dance training, stunt training and an intro to cheer boot camp while also serving as an important team-building experience.

School year practices will be at 6am in the gymnasium. The week before a major performance, camp or event, the team may practice up to five times that week.

All team members are expected to show up for all practices on time and in appropriate practice attire. Cheer shoes, socks, short sleeve t-shirt/tank top are all items that should be worn. All members must wear their hair up for all practices and NO jewelry can be worn. Members may arrive in sweatshirts sweatpants, etc., but will need to have shorts on for the actual practice.

Cell phones will **not** be allowed at practices! Phones distract team members and practice time is so limited already. Phones must always be in your bag/backpack during practices. If there is a water break you will not be able to look at your phone. Coaches will collect phones during camps, games, fundraisers and events if seen as a distraction. Parents will always be able to reach team members through coaches.

Injured team members are still expected to attend practice and events and should be under the care of the Kennedy Catholic Athletic Trainer and/or family doctor. A note may be asked for at any time.

**Seasons |**

The cheer year begins the day of selection and runs throughout the summer and school year until the end of winter sports. There may be additional opportunities for practice and performance in the spring. For reference:

- Summer: First day of practice until the first day of school
- Fall/Football: First day of school until early December
- Winter/Basketball & Wrestling: Early December through early March

**Dress Code |**

For all events – unless informed otherwise by the coaching staff – team members will dress in full uniform. This includes warmup pants, skirt, liner, shell, jacket, cheer shoes, and poms.

Each team member is required to bring ALL PIECES of the uniform to all games and performances. Any team member without a required piece of their uniform may not be
able to perform at that game or performance. Members must be in full dress prior to the start of an event.

Hair will be up, presentable, and off the member’s face, neck and shoulders unless given prior approval by the coaching staff.

No jewelry can be worn during any practices or performances. Members must not get any new piercings until after the completion of the season.

Long, natural fingernails or fake nails are prohibited (they can be a safety hazard while stunting). No colored polish is allowed during performances.

Excessively tight or revealing clothing will not be permitted.

Members may not wear baggy sweats or sweatshirts with uniform (exceptions may be made to wear matching, hooded sweatshirts at select football games). No sweats other than team issued warm ups may be worn with the cheer jacket at Kennedy Catholic High School events.

Only team issued tennis shoes may be worn with cheer uniform and warm ups.

Uniforms |

The cost of a Kennedy Catholic cheer uniform (including warm ups, shoes, poms and accessories) is assumed by the members of the team (see financial responsibility section below). Following tryouts, a mandatory fitting will be required of all members. **This year’s fitting is on Friday, July 10 at 11am.**

The Kennedy Catholic cheer uniform may ONLY be worn by current members of the team in good standing. Girls may not lend or give any pieces of the uniform or warm ups to friends or family.

If placed on academic or behavior probation, members may not wear the uniform until the probation has been lifted.

If any member quits the team or is asked to leave, they must return ALL pieces (uniform, warm ups, shoes, camp clothes, poms and any other cheer items) immediately. If the uniform is not returned, a fine of $50/month will be enforced. Once the entire uniform has been turned in, it will be kept until the member has graduated. Upon graduation the uniform will be returned to the student.

If uniform cannot be altered to fit appropriately, team members will be responsible to purchase new pieces of their uniform.

Any loss or damage of the uniform will be the responsibility of the cheer team member to replace and pay for as soon as possible.

It is the responsibility of each member to take proper care of his/her uniform.

Financial Responsibility |
Starting July 1, 2020, families will have three options to pay for the uniform -
1. Add to and disperse the payment through the monthly tuition payment
2. Pay off in full with a check
3. Pay off in full with a credit card.

Payments must be made in full before the next year’s tryout or the current cheerleader will not be eligible. Outstanding balances will result in holding yearbooks, schedules, caps and gowns, transcript and diploma.

Uniforms in excellent condition can be worn for multiple years if uniform has not been changed. Replacement pieces may be required at the coach’s discretion.

A completely new uniform is being designed for the 2020-2021 school year. Therefore, please note that some team members may be required to purchase two new uniforms during their cheer career.

**Fundraisers |**

The team will hold various fundraisers throughout the school year (up to as many as the team and their parents are willing and available to plan and attend). Mandatory fundraisers include but are not limited to: Junior Cheer Camps during fall and winter seasons and serving at various Booster Club and Parent Club dinners and events.

Members must participate in each scheduled fundraiser unless previously cleared by coaching staff. All monies raised will be for the benefit of all cheerleaders in the cheer program, and will be used for things such as camp dues, team bonding activities and more. If excess funds exist, monies raised during the 2019-2020 school year may be distributed to returning members to help cover the cost of the new uniform transition.

Additional non-fundraising school events (e.g. Back to School Night) are also part of the responsibility of the role.

**Away Events |**

Transportation to and from events will be dependent upon how far we are traveling and bus availability. We will make every attempt to travel on a school bus, but in the case that is not possible, the team will carpool from school.

Traditionally, members will not be allowed to leave the field/gym without a parent/guardian. If a parent wishes to pick-up at an away game, prior plans must be made with the coach’s approval.

**Parades | These Events Might Be Cancelled Due to COVID 19 TBD**

We will be participating in at least 2 parades this summer, including Alaska Airlines Seafair Torchlight Parade and Chinatown Seafair Parade. There will be scheduled practices with the Marching Band and Color Guard in the summer. Dates will be determined at a later date.

**General Expectations |**
The cheer year is long, and can be stressful, tiring and hard. By remembering the following tips, team members will be in a good position to succeed:

- Everyone must have self-motivation and self-discipline throughout the entire year
- There must be successful communication between team members and the coaching staff in order to have harmony and success as cheerleaders
- Members are carefully selected and therefore should take pride in their attitude, actions, dress and citizenship, and must learn from and respect each other
- Work as a team not individuals: when something goes right, it was done together. When something goes wrong, it was done together
- Do not place blame on mistakes, as mistakes happen. Playing the blame game will not help anybody
- Never stop practicing. If a team member is not currently in the stunt being practiced, they should be spotting, stretching, or perfecting other elements as directed by the coaching staff
- Work hard. Each member has earned their place on the team because they met certain ability requirements. When asked to practice an element, practice and perform to the best of your ability

**Event & Sideline Behavior |**

The following are non-negotiables when it comes to expectations during all performances:

- No talking or playing around among members
- No kicking, slapping or throwing poms
- No talking to people in the crowd
- Members must pay attention to the game
- Stand in the correct formation and stance
- Cheer/spirit, jumping, kicks, and tumbling must be exhibited the entire time as directed
- No taunting the other team
- Members will show respect during the National Anthem and school songs

**Lettering |**

Every team member finishing the year in good standing will letter. Requirements for lettering include:

- Full participation in performances and events
- Attendance at all fundraising and school events
- Regular attendance at practice, positive attitude, and being a strong team member
- Grades must meet standard and conduct must meet expectation

If any member quits the team or is released, they will not letter. Coaches reserve the right to make final determination on lettering.

**Coaches |**

The coaching staff is expected to be the leader of the team and works to represent the cheer team to the athletic director, school administration, parents and the community.
The coaching staff will act in good judgment and make decisions for the good of the team as a whole. It is not possible to please all team members all the time and have 100% agreement by everyone.

It is understood that the coaching staff has the authority to override any decision made within the team as needed in order to maintain the team’s best interest, not an individual’s best interest. The coaches will have the **final say** in all matters. Members or parents, who have questions or concerns are encouraged to discuss the matter directly with the coaches. The coaching staff will work with the Athletic Director on any issues/concerns.

The coaches reserve the right to augment these guidelines as deemed necessary and all rules are subject to change.

*Please sign the following "Signature Page."*
2020-2021 Cheer Contract & Expectations

Signature Page

I have read through and reviewed all items contained within this contract. If I find myself in violation of any of these rules or expectations, I understand that I will be held accountable by members of the coaching staff and/or school administration as outlined above.

Prospective team member name:

________________________________________

Prospective team member signature:

________________________________________

Parent/guardian signature:

________________________________________

Date:

__________________________