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Congratulations...you're a Klein Cheerleader! It is a position that will allow you to use your skills to support your school, meet new friends, and have a lot of fun along the way. Being new to the program might seem confusing at times, but hopefully for only a short while. Since you are all "Klein" cheerleaders now, it is important that you leave your middle school traditions and cheers behind and work together with all the squads to learn and execute the Klein cheers and traditions that have been in place for many years.

This handbook is intended to give you a short overview of some of the rules, traditions, events, etc. It is by no means all inclusive, so remember, if in doubt, always ask for help. Your sponsors, head cheerleaders, and Varsity and Junior Varsity cheerleaders are always ready and willing to help answer your questions. Enjoy your year as a Klein cheerleader!

## **CONTACTS:**

Remember to always contact your head cheerleaders/mom first and then sponsors and with any questions or concerns.

## **UNIFORM 101:**

Your uniforms are the property of KISD so please care for them well. Uniforms may be altered for proper fitting, but never cut. They must be used for several years so please take proper care of them. Your skirt length must be at least 4 fingers below your bottom.

Most of you are familiar with how to launder them, but the washing instructions are:

- Wash uniforms in cold water and hang to dry or place in the dryer on "air" dry.
- Do not use a dryer sheet or fabric softener; it causes the colors to fade.
- Never dry clean.
- Your Klein warm-ups need special care: cold water wash only and do not place in the dryer.

Some commonly asked questions and answers regarding uniforms are as follows:

### **Is there a difference in the Varsity, JV, and Freshmen uniforms, bows, etc.?**

Varsity is the only one with the privilege of wearing white. They have a white uniform, white top for the "Klein" uniform, white bow, white nylon pullover, and white polo shirt. JV and Freshmen wear blue bows only.

### **Do I have to wear the bloomers that I ordered or can I wear some that I have?**

Everyone must wear the blue boy-cut bloomers; plain with no paw print. Demerits will be given if this rule is not followed.

### **Can I wear jewelry with my uniform?**

The only jewelry that can be worn during school with your uniform is a watch and senior ring. NO JEWELRY may be worn during games. Demerits will be given if either of the above rules is not followed. No cartilage piercings or belly-button rings are allowed during the games.

### **Can I wear my uniform in public when not at school or games?**

You are allowed to wear your uniform after a game to dinner, as long as a parent or adult is with you. You may NOT wear your uniform at any other time...parties, shopping, etc. No other person can wear ANY part of your uniform, including your warm up jacket.

### **Can I wear any sweatshirt, jacket, or cover-up during school with my uniform?**

The only jacket that can be worn with your uniform is the nylon sweatshirt, Klein Nationals Jacket or your warm-up jacket. It is a personal decision which one you prefer. You may not wear any "Nationals" jacket unless it was won for Klein High School. No exceptions.

### **Should I wear the nylon pullover or warm-up jacket to the games?**

When the weather turns cooler, the squad may need to use the pullover or jacket to keep warm. In addition, the squad may wear their white crop top under their uniform. The ENTIRE squad must wear the same thing. The head cheerleader(s) will inform the squad which cover-up to bring to the game. If needed, the ENTIRE squad may put on the cover-up during the game. This cannot be on an individual basis. If one girl forgets her cover-up, then the whole squad will do without.

### **When do we wear the warm-up pants?**

The entire squad may choose to bring the pants to the games when the weather is cooler, and will decide as a squad when to put them on. Again, the squad must do this entirely, not individually.

For school, the squad may decide to wear the warm up pants and jacket with a designated shirt, but this must be as a squad. Do not individually wear your warm-up pants to school with a shirt, or under your cheer skirt.

There are no rules about wearing your warm-up outfit after school hours and when you are not in uniform.

### **How should I wear my hair to school and while cheering at the games?**

Hair is always in a high ponytail with the bow assigned by squad. This applies to school as well as the games. If there is any change to this, perhaps pigtail braids, your sponsor will let you know when you will be required to wear your hair differently.

### **On the occasions when the Varsity, JV, and Freshmen squads are all together (homecoming and meet the Bearkats), will we all wear the same uniform?**

Yes, you will all wear the "Klein" uniform.

### **Are there other "uniform" items I should be aware of?**

Make sure the cheer shoes you wear to school are clean and white and not "dingy". During the games, your shoes may become dirty, especially with rainy weather. Some girls choose to have 2 pair; 1 for school and 1 to change into for games. One last item...absolutely, NO bra straps should be visible. T-back or racer back bras are mandatory to avoid this problem.

## **Do I have to be on the Nationals team to go to the National Competition?**

NO. We encourage all of the girls to travel to Kentucky with the team for the National Competition. We need all of the support we can get! The date is March 5.

## **MEET THE BEARKATS:**

This is an event held one evening during the beginning of the school year. It will be in the Klein Memorial Stadium and is an opportunity to introduce the football players for Varsity, JV, and Freshmen.

The cheerleaders will be in uniform and will do a short cheer for the players on their team. Details on the time will be given later.

Parents are welcome to attend, and it is a good opportunity to get some good photos of the cheerleaders. Sometimes we are also asked to attend Meet the Bearkats for other sports too.

## **FOOTBALL GAMES:**

The freshmen & JV football games are played on the practice field south of the Klein Memorial Stadium. All games are home, unless specified on the cheer calendar. The sponsor may choose to have the girls cheer at an away game.

The freshmen & JV squads will also attend the Varsity Homecoming and Senior Night games. These will usually fall on Friday or Saturday nights.

## **DINNERS BEFORE GAMES:**

It has been a tradition for all the squads to provide dinner and transportation to the games. This will allow the cheerleaders to have some time together as a squad, make sure they eat before the game, and arrive at the game all together.

Parents usually pair up and work together in teams of 2 to plan dinner and transportation until they can drive themselves. They will be picked up at school at the end of the day, driven to a designated house for the meal, and then transported back to the football field for the game. These dinners are done only for football games, not for volleyball or basketball.

Usually, they have a total of 5-7 dinners. The cheer sponsor will attempt to make all of the dinners, but will always arrive before it is time to transport the cheerleaders to the game. The dinner before the homecoming game is provided to the cheerleaders by the Standleaders in the Commons area. The cheerleaders are often asked to prepare desserts for this dinner.

Dinners do not have to be elaborate. Some choose to cook while others may get take-out, (chicken nugget trays, etc.) It is your choice. Your head cheer mom will work out the dinner responsibility schedule.

The girls will be driven to the football games and it is the responsibility of each parent to pick up their cheerleader from the game or arrange for transportation home.

## **WATER FOR GAMES:**

It is each cheerleader's responsibility to bring their own water to the games. It can get quite warm on the field, especially at the beginning of the season, so please do not forget this. A suggestion might be to bring your water jug in your cheer bag on game days. You can fill it up at the house where you will be having dinner so you'll have it full for the game.

## **7<sup>th</sup> PERIOD PRACTICES:**

These are held each day during the first semester of school and are run by Mrs. Winship and the rest of the sponsors. Varsity, JV, and Freshmen all attend. You may wear any t-shirt and shorts. The only warm-up permitted is the Klein issued warm-up.

Please be prompt in dressing out and getting ready for these practice sessions. Try and avoid scheduling doctor or dentist appointments during 7<sup>th</sup> period, if possible. If you know you will not be able to make a practice, notify Mrs. Winship.

All cheers, chants, stunts, band chants and other game information will be learned and practiced during 7<sup>th</sup> period. Additional practices may be added if determined necessary by the head cheerleader(s). He/she will notify the sponsors so that extra practices can be planned.

On game days (football only), 7<sup>th</sup> period will be a study hall instead of a practice session.

**You MUST be at 7<sup>th</sup> period to be able to cheer at a game that day.**

## **FUNDRAISERS:**

Several fundraisers will be held throughout the year to support the squads. These fundraisers are mandatory for both cheerleaders & parents. A number of girls have activities outside of school (competition cheer, NCL, etc.) which might pose conflicts. Please notify your sponsor as soon as possible with any potential conflicts and every effort will be made to schedule the fundraisers for the benefit of everyone's schedules. There are typically 3 fundraisers throughout the cheer season, from tryout to tryout. They are organized and run by the parents. We have some fundraisers that are held each year, such as the car wash, because they work well, are fun, and provide a good income, but we are always looking for new ideas. Please feel free to share any fundraising ideas with the sponsors.

## **PARENT MEETINGS:**

These meetings are held monthly (or as often as needed) in Ms. Winship's classroom, room 135. These meetings are an excellent form of communication for monetary needs, upcoming events and fundraisers, so please try and be there. If you cannot attend, make sure you get the information from the head cheerleader's parent.

These meetings are for the parents (the cheerleaders do not attend). An exception might be when the sponsors request the head cheerleaders to be present.

## **CHALLENGE COURSE & POOL PARTY:**

The breakfast/challenge course/pool party is scheduled in April or May of the new cheerleading year. This is a fun event for all the squads to get the opportunity to get together for some team bonding, getting to know each other, and have a blast! The squads usually meet at a Varsity cheerleader's house for breakfast, then head to a designated challenge course location. After lots of fun and competition, everyone will head to another house for an afternoon of fun and swimming. The details will be given at a later date.

## **CHRISTMAS PARTY:**

The Christmas Party is a wonderful event where all squads get together and for a festive evening. The date will be announced so you can mark your calendar. In past years, it has been held during a weekday evening, from 6:00pm – 9:00pm.

It begins at a Freshmen house where all cheerleaders (Varsity, JV, and Freshmen) meet for appetizers. Only the Freshmen parents will be present for this portion. The Freshmen girls will exchange a \$15.00 secret Santa gift at this time.

Next, the girls will move to a JV designated house and will be driven by the Varsity cheerleaders. They will have the main course at the JV house and only JV parents will attend. JV will then open their gifts.

Finally, the girls will move a Varsity designated house and will again be driven by the Varsity cheerleaders. Dessert will be served, the Varsity parents will attend and the Varsity girls will exchange gifts.

## **YARD SIGNS:**

Yard signs are the property of the school and are “passed down” year after year. Obviously, wear and tear takes its toll and you may need to do some repair work or paint on your own. Please try and take good care of these so they can be used for many years. If yours is stolen, or otherwise lost, the charge is \$50.00.

A few unwritten rules apply:

- Varsity is the only squad allowed to have their name on the sign.
- Varsity is the only squad allowed to have “white” on the sign; the ‘K’ is usually painted white on the edges.
- The JV sign reads “JV” only (no name).
- The Freshmen sign reads “Freshmen” only (no name).
- Members on the Nationals Team receive one star for each year on the team.

## **FRIDAY DRESS-CODE:**

Every Friday the cheerleaders will wear jeans or jean capri's and a spirit shirt to school. Each cheerleader is required to purchase the spirit shirt. These are on sale at the freshmen orientation and will be sold every lunch period from the second week of school until homecoming.

From the first Friday of school until homecoming, the cheerleaders will wear the new spirit shirt and jeans. After homecoming, each squad can decide which shirt to wear, but the entire squad must wear the same shirt. This will be a chance to wear a different spirit shirt.

Another unwritten rule: **ONLY VARSITY** may wear jean skirts with boots on Fridays with their designated spirit shirt. Freshmen and JV will be in jeans or jean capri's.

## **ABSENCES/LATENESS:**

Always call your sponsor in advance to let her know about any absences or lateness. It is your responsibility to do this. Remember, demerits apply for unexcused absences, being late or not calling ahead of time to report an absence or late arrival. Make sure that you do not have excessive absences (excused or unexcused) or it will merit a meeting with the Principal where you could be removed from the squad (see constitution for more details).

## **EMAIL/COMMUNICATION:**

Email is used consistently as a communication tool between sponsors, squad members, and parents. It is your responsibility to provide the correct email address(es) so you can receive important information. If you do not have access to email, please notify your head cheerleader so other arrangements can be made to get the information to you.

Ms. Winship will send emails frequently to make sure everyone has the latest information. The high school schedule moves quickly and with 3 squads, game schedules, pep rallies, and the Nationals team, there is a lot of information to keep sorted and changes always arise. Some of these changes are able to be made in advance and other are "on the fly". Please note that your sponsors do everything they can to make decisions and get the information to you as soon as possible. On some occasions, there will be short notice for a schedule change. Try not to get frustrated with these, and do your best to make adjustments quickly.

Ms. Winship has her conference time during 5<sup>th</sup> period and 7<sup>th</sup> period is cheer practice, from approximately 1:30 – 2:30. If you have access to email during the day, you might want to make a habit of checking your email after 1:30 each day to see if there are any updates from the Varsity Sponsor. Please make note that Ms. Winship will not have access to her KISD email after 1:30pm. Therefore, any email sent to her after 1:30pm will not be opened until the following day. The updated calendar will be on the [website at kleincheer@cal.net](mailto:kleincheer@cal.net).

## **OPEN HOUSE:**

Every cheerleader will be required to attend the scheduled fall open house as a “host”. All squads will wear the “Klein” uniform. You will be given your posting assignments by school administrators. You may NOT switch your post.

Open House is run similarly to the way it was done in middle school. Parents and students will follow the bell schedule to each period to have a chance to meet the student’s teachers. Since parents have monthly meetings with Ms. Winship, cheerleaders and their parents will not need to meet in Ms. Winship’s room for the 7<sup>th</sup> period bell schedule during Open House. You are free to go after 6<sup>th</sup> period.

## **BEHAVIOR**

It cannot be stressed enough that as a Klein Cheerleader, you have been selected to be a representative of your school. You may not realize it, but students and administrators will look to you at all times for leadership. Your conduct is ALWAYS being monitored, even when not in uniform. Be responsible, courteous, helpful, and respectful. Any actions involving misconduct is hurtful to the entire cheerleading organization and the school as well. Make sure you read and understand the rules and guidelines in your cheerleading constitution.

While in uniform, it is imperative that you are on your best behavior AT ALL TIMES...NO EXCEPTIONS. Be a role model for good behavior and provide the best reputation as a representative for our school.

Some suggestions are:

- Always be properly groomed; hair pulled back in a ponytail, uniform and shoes clean.
- Watch the gum chewing; certainly no gum during games.
- NEVER be involved in displays of public affection with boys; even hand holding is not allowed.
- Be here for classes and games; do not have excessive absences or tardies from school or games.
- Be respectful of your sponsors. They are always willing to work with you on ideas, schedules, conflicts, etc.
- Use your head cheerleaders – ask questions, offer suggestions, work as a team.
- Remember that Varsity has earned the right to have certain privileges that only Varsity will have. They may choose a different dress-code or wear their hair differently. Freshmen and JV must follow the rules and schedules given to them by their sponsors and head cheerleaders.

Enjoy your time as a cheerleader and a representative for Klein High School. You’ll have a demanding schedule and will work hard, but the effort will be very rewarding.