



**Jr. Golden Eagles
Cheerleading
2019
Handbook**

WELCOME TO L.A. JR. GOLDEN EAGLES CHEERLEADING

L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Cheerleading is a not-for-profit; youth recreational cheer program intended for children grades K-8 living in Lake in the Hills, Algonquin and the surrounding communities within school District 300. There are no tryouts or special requirements and any child may participate. Our main focus is to introduce and teach the sport of cheer, while teaching the importance of physical fitness, teamwork, respect, community service and good sportsmanship. Together we will enjoy working with your children as they build lasting friendships in a fun, safe environment.

All cheerleaders will cheer for and support the L.A. Jr. Eagles Football Organization. Competitive squads will also be competing in at least four local IRCA Cheerleading competitions.

Please read this Handbook in its entirety. Each cheerleader and his/her parents will be asked to sign our Code of Conduct/Rules and Ethics agreement which is outlined in the back of this handbook. A copy will be provided with the 2018 registration packet.

We welcome your suggestions and participation at our monthly board meetings, held the first Monday of each month at the LITH Village Hall. Please visit our website for possible date and/or locations changes. If you are unable to attend, feel free to contact one of our Board Members via email by visiting our website at: www.jreaglescheer.com.

L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Cheerleading is run strictly by volunteers. Any time or service you can contribute would benefit our organization greatly. We look forward to a successful season!

Jr. Eagles Cheerleading 2019 Cheer Board of Directors:

Kelly McElhose, President
Michele Sanabria, VP of the Organization
Jennie Kozlowski, VP of Cheer
Dawn Martinko, Director of Cheer
Diane Merlin, Asst. Director of Cheer
Erica Reining, Director of Organization
Susan Sindles, Asst. Director of Org.
Jessica Clark, Secretary
Jessica Stratejcruk- Director at Large/Football Liaison/Sprit wear

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INTRODUCTION TO CHEERLEADING SQUADS:

We have three different levels or types of cheerleading squads to accommodate your family's schedule and commitment.

COMPETITIVE SQUADS:

These squads are competitive and will cheer for the L.A. Jr. Eagles Football teams. They will also participate in at least four cheer competitions. Their season begins in July and will end in late November.* The practice schedule will begin at 3 days a week to learn the cheers and halftime routines. When school begins, they will continue to practice 3 days a week to prepare for the competitions. ***Mandatory attendance*** is expected for these squads. A strong commitment is necessary for the success of the team. These squads will generally cheer on Sundays. ****Please refer to your Competitive Cheer Program form signed at registration.***

** If the squad qualifies for the State Competition, the entire squad will be expected to practice through and participate in the State Competition, which will be held in early December.

Please Note: Cheerleaders on the Competition Squads will be required to compete in 4 competitions during the season (3 for intro to comp squads). Competitions come first, regardless of pre scheduled games, playoff games and/or events.

RECREATIONAL (NON COMPETITIVE) SQUADS:

These squads are strictly recreational and will cheer for the L.A. Jr. Eagles Football teams. They do not participate in competitions. Their season begins July and will end in November. Their practice schedule will begin at 3 days a week to learn the cheers and halftime routines. Coaches of each squad may adjust the schedule to accommodate the individual squads needs. When school starts, Rec. squad practices will drop to one day a week with the location and times TBA. Generally, these squads will cheer on Saturdays.

FLAG CHEER SQUADS:

Our Flag squads are recreational, and are for our youngest cheerleaders in grades Kindergarten and first grades who would like to participate in cheerleading.

The Flag cheer squads will cheer on Saturdays for the Jr. Eagles Flag football teams at Sunset Park. The Flag squads will begin practices at 3 days a week in July to learn cheers and chants for the parades and games, their practices then will lessen to one practice per week.

CHEERS AND CHANTS:

The words to most of our chants and cheers will be available on our website. We encourage you to print a copy for your cheerleader to reference when he/she is at home practicing. All squads will learn many of the same cheers. Specific halftime or mini performances will be taught for sideline cheer as instructed by the coaches and Jr. Coaches at squad practices.

PRACTICE DRESS CODE:

Cheerleaders should come dressed in athletic shorts; cheer shoes w/socks and t-shirt. *No skirts, jean shorts, sandals, or hooded sweatshirts please.* All hair should be worn off the face, preferably in a ponytail. Please have your cheerleader bring a water bottle with their name on it. We recommend spraying for mosquitoes as well while practicing outdoors.

For safety reasons, no earrings, necklaces, or jewelry of any kind should be worn. Fingernails must be cut short, and no acrylic or fake nails are allowed.

PRACTICES & GAMES SCHEDULES:

All of our cheer squad practices will begin on Monday, July 15th, 2019. Summer practices for all squads will be held **Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays** from **6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.** The summer outdoor practices will take place at the **Lake in the Hills Village Hall.**

Recreational Squads may reduce practice dates and times, beginning the first week of August (based on individual squad needs), outside at the LITH Village Hall. **When D300 classes start**, the recreational squad practices will decrease to one day a week, indoors, with the location and days and times TBA.

Flag squad practices are usually 1 hour each. They will start the practice season at 3 days a week, and then will decrease to 1 day per week as designated per the organization. Practice dates and times TBA.

Competition squads will have one indoor practice per week starting in the first week of August at 6:00-8:00pm (day TBD) with the remaining 2 days of practice outdoors at the LITH Village Hall. **When D300 classes start**, all 3 practices will be moved indoors on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

Cheer practices *do* take place rain or shine. It might be raining in one town, but not at our practice site. Always assume there is practice unless other information is received from the organization. In the event of inclement weather that starts during outdoor practices, the cheerleaders will be moved indoors to the LITH Village Hall. Phone calls to parents will be made to make arrangements for pickup.

Please review our Attendance policy for absences and tardiness to practices and football games on Page 8-9 of this handbook.

FOOTBALL GAME/ SIDELINE CHEERING:

Jr. Eagles Football games are every weekend starting the last weekend in August, either on Saturday or Sunday, depending on your squad assignment. There are home games, which are held at Sunset Field, and some traveling to away games during the regular season and playoff games. We are solely dependent on the schedule information that is given to us by The Chicago Youth Football League (TCYFL) in conjunction with the L.A. Jr. Eagles Football Organization.

Game Schedules, as provided to us by the TCYFL football league, will be distributed as follows:

Recreational Squad game schedules are generally given out 1-3 wks. at a time, with the first game's time/location becoming available sometime in late August. The entire game schedule will not be available all at one time. You can expect to have a game every Saturday, with your game occasionally scheduled on a Sunday, occasional travel to away games will be required.

Competition Squad game schedules will also be given out 1-3 weeks at a time. You can expect to have games on either Saturday or Sunday. We plan to cover all of the Sunday football team home games. If they are away we will attempt to cheer at the Saturday team home games, but occasional travel may be required. We will know by mid-August which days you will be cheering when the Sunday teams' schedules come out.

Flag Squad game and practice schedules will be available at the beginning of the season, generally for a few weeks in advance. Flag football teams play on Saturdays at the Sunset Park football fields. Game times may vary weekly.

ABSENTEE POLICY:

The organization expects attendance at all practices, games and/or competitions. In order to practice or perform certain cheers and routines, total squad attendance is necessary, especially when executing stunts. It is the responsibility of each cheerleader (and his/her parent) to inform the Squad Parent or Coach if he/she will not be able to attend. If the cheerleader or parent does not notify either party, the absence will be considered *unexcused*. **Any cheerleader with an unexcused absence during the two weeks prior to a competition will not be allowed to compete.**

Please read and discuss this section with your child so they fully understand L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Cheerleading expectations and consequences.

Only those cheerleaders who are present for **every practice and game** (incl. playoff and Super bowl) will receive a Perfect Attendance award at the end of the year.

VACATIONS: Any vacations that will take place after the season has started must be submitted in writing to the Director of Cheer for approval prior to the season starting. We require complete squad attendance once games begin in late August. Vacations are not allowed once competition routines are being learned. Special requests must be submitted in writing prior to the season starting. Thank you for your cooperation.

MISSING A PRACTICE: A Squad Parent or Coach must be notified 30 min. prior to the beginning of practice. If this is not done, the absence will automatically be considered unexcused. **Recreational squad members that miss their 1 scheduled practice per week will not be allowed to perform in the next game's halftime routine.*

MISSING A GAME: If you know in advance that you will be missing a game, please notify your Squad Parent or Coach one week prior to that game. This will allow adequate time for the coaches to adjust halftime routines as needed.

TARDINESS:

Tardiness to practice and games negatively impacts your squad. Out of respect for your coaches and teammates, please arrive at practice 10-15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Repetitive tardiness to practices or games is unacceptable, and can result in suspension or removal from the cheer squad.

GAME DAY ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY: Please notify your Squad Parent or Coach 2 hours prior to your cheerleader's expected arrival time if he/she will not be able to attend.

ATTENDANCE POLICY/SUSPENSION: As in any sport, we must limit the number of absences to provide a more beneficial and consistent experience for our cheerleaders. We will enforce and follow these guidelines:

	Competition Squads	Recreational Squads
Unexcused absence from a game	1 game suspension	½ game suspension
Unexcused absence from a practice	½ game suspension	½ game suspension
3 excused absences	1 game suspension	½ game suspension
4 excused absences	Discussion w/parents	1 game suspension
3 unexcused absences		Discussion with parents/ With possible removal from squad

Excused Absences: Any illness, family emergency, school related function (music programs, etc.) or church obligation will be considered an excused absence.

Unexcused Absences: All others. Please refer to the guidelines above for reporting an excused absence. If these are not followed, the absence will be considered unexcused.

If a cheerleader is serving a suspension, he/she must attend the game and sit on the sidelines with their Squad Parent or Coach until their suspension is complete.

UNIFORMS:

The cheerleading uniform consists of skirt and jersey for games, tank top or long sleeve liner will be needed underneath the jersey, boy shorts, no show socks, cheer shoes, hair bow, and Jr. Eagle's warm-ups. (For cold weather only)

Competition Uniforms consists of a long sleeve body suit, and skirt.

All makeup should be used minimally. No hair, face, or body glitter/paint will be tolerated. Nails should be trimmed and free of polish at all times. No henna allowed. Tattoos are not allowed unless provided by the coach for the squad.

Uniforms are the property of L.A. Jr. Eagles Cheerleading. The game skirt, and the entire competition uniform must be cared for and returned at the end of the season. Sizing is done to the best of our ability, based on current available stock.

Uniforms are not special ordered to fit each cheerleader. Uniforms cannot be altered in any way; which includes marking or removal of tags. Our uniforms are very durable. To keep them looking their best, please wash them routinely. They can be washed in a normal machine cycle. Please turn them inside out and do not wash with any other items. Please hang to air dry....do not machine dry. Thank you for your understanding in this matter. Please contact us at jreaglescheer@yahoo.com if you have any questions.

Please review the "How to care for your uniform" info sheet on our website for printable instructions. Please take care of your uniforms properly during the season.

Uniform Deposit

Recreational and competitive cheerleaders are required to submit a refundable deposit check of \$200.00 at registration. (\$100 for recreational girls). Uniforms will not be issued if you have an outstanding balance, or your uniform deposit check is not received.

The deposit check must be postdated for December 1st 2019. One check will be required per cheerleader. Deposit checks will be cashed for any uniforms that have not been returned or are returned damaged.

COACHES AND SQUAD PARENTS:

Whenever possible, each squad will be assigned 1-head coach, 1-2 assistant coaches and 1-2 volunteer Squad Moms or Dads.

Each squad requires at least one coach present at every practice to be CPR/AED certified. Our coaches attend the IRCA Coach Education courses to learn to instruct and teach cheer safely.

Our coaching staff consists of volunteers. While having a cheer background is helpful, it is not necessary. We do require that all coaching applicants enjoy working with children and will take their volunteer responsibility seriously. All coaches will be interviewed prior to being selected to coach and will be required to submit to a background check prior to the season starting.

If you are interested in applying to be a coach, please contact us at jreaglescheer@yahoo.com if you have questions. Applications will be completed via our website at www.jreaglescheer.com

The Squad Parent's main responsibilities are to support the coaches of their particular squad and to ensure open communication with the cheerleaders and their parents. Duties may include helping coaches spot stunt groups, being at each practice/game, taking practice and game attendance, maintaining emergency contact information, and coordinating all squad activities, including homecoming.

The Squad Mom or Dad for the Competition Squads will also be required to attend competition practices, meetings, competition events, and be in charge of competition activities. **If you are interested in volunteering to be a Squad Mom or Dad, please contact VP of Organization at jreaglescheer@yahoo.com.**

VOLUNTEERS:

Our registration form requires each cheer family a choice of 2 events to volunteer during the season. Please choose which would be a better fit for your schedule. You will be notified of the opportunities to fulfill your volunteer time.

We have been very fortunate in past years to have some incredible support from the families involved and we have every hope that the years to come will be no different. However, with each year that passes, the number of children enrolled in our program grows and therefore, your support becomes more important than ever before.

What Can You Do?

- Be a Coach or Assistant Coach for a Squad
- Be a Squad Mom or Dad
- Be a “Spirit Booster” at the Games/Competitions
- Volunteer to assist for any of the Scheduled Events
- Are You a Photographer? We Would Welcome You at Games and Events
- Encourage Your Child to Follow-through with Practice at Home
- Encourage Your Child to do her or his best!!!
- Donate snacks, water, or items for the cheerleaders. Nothing you can offer is too small!

We know the pressures and time constraints families have today and that’s why we truly appreciate your gift of time to this organization!!!

ANNUAL CHEER SEASON EVENTS:

Parades

Our annual parades are filled with excitement and fun for all that participate. We will walk and perform in the Algonquin Founder's Day Parade in late July and the LITH Sunset Fest Parade in early September. Participation details for our organization will be provided close to the parade date. Attendance is not mandatory, but is highly encouraged.

Parent Showcase

As our full squad outdoor practices come to an end, the organization will host an all squad showcase of cheer skills learned at practices to date. We will also have a raffle for cash prizes and free registration for our cheer families.

Picture Day

Picture Day will be held in mid-August. Information regarding exact time and location will be distributed as soon as it becomes available. Your cheerleader will be photographed with his/her squad and individually, and in our full organization group photo. Order forms are sent home with your child before the scheduled event. We encourage all cheerleaders to attend picture day.

Homecoming Weekend

The L.A. Jr. Eagles cheerleaders will host a Homecoming Weekend. We will help to "Spirit" the L.A. Jr. Eagles football teams to victory and celebrate together with our families. Pre-game festivities will be planned and fun is sure to be had by all. We will be asking for 2 volunteers per squad to help run this event. Please speak to your cheerleader's Squad Parent if you are interested in helping. The exact weekend for this event will be announced once the football schedule is finalized.

Competitions

At least four IRCA competitions are scheduled per year for our Competition Squads (3 for intro to comp squads). Members of the Recreational Squads do not compete. Competitions are held locally, so please show your support by attending these events.

End of Year Banquet and Awards

Each year the Jr. Eagles host our End of the Year banquet. It will be held in December or January. The banquet includes dinner, distribution of participation trophies, and squad awards presentation. The cost for the banquet is included in registration fees for all rec or comp cheerleaders (excluding flag). There will be a cost for family members to attend the banquet. We encourage at least one parent to attend with their cheerleader.

Fundraisers

The organization's board will decide on the fundraisers that we participate in each year to keep the organization successful. A mandatory Fundraising Fee is collected at registration for our "Fundraiser Value Cards" that families can sell to recoup their fee. We also offer a pre-season fundraiser to help offset the cost of our cheer warm up fees.

We have other opportunities to fundraise throughout the season; Car Wash, dinners at local restaurants, Affy Tapples, etc. Our qualifying competition squads will do additional fundraisers to help offset the cost of the IRCA State Competition fees.

Community Service Events

Throughout the cheer season we will participate in 3 Community Service events to give back to our community for their support of our organization. These events have been very successful in past years. We will have 2 food drives and a book drive each season. Dates of these events will be determined each season and parents will be notified of the collection dates for your squad's donations.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING:

The Director of Fundraising and Marketing is responsible for the advertisement or marketing of the L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Cheerleaders. Any newsworthy stories or photos should be brought to the attention of the Director of Marketing. The general public does not have the right to advertise or print any media relating to L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Cheer without the consent of the Executive Board.

You have the right to deny the use of your child's picture or name in any print or advertising media. A release will be part of the registration packet to approve the use of photos or video of your cheerleader for use in organization advertising or social media posts.

The use of mass e-mails obtained through the organization is strictly prohibited. Any email notifications are for the sole use of this organization.

ORGANIZATION SPONSORSHIPS:

We welcome local businesses to participate in our sponsorship program. The L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Cheer organization will use 100% of all sponsorship donations towards organizational expenses.

Please visit our website www.jreaglescheer.com for our 2019 sponsorship information and forms. Donations can be tax deductible.

We are very fortunate to have had returning local sponsors throughout the years. If you would like to recommend a business or other entity for sponsorship, please send all inquiries to jreaglescheer@yahoo.com.

Sponsorship packets with details are available on our website for review and print.

COMPETITION SQUADS EXPECTATIONS AND IRCA RULE AGREEMENT:

L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Cheerleading abides by the rules set forth by the American Recreational Cheer Association (ARCA). The following rule took effect with the 2010 Cheer Season. It states:

Athletes are NOT allowed to participate, practice or perform with an All-Star team during the Recreational Cheer Season. This rule is concurrent with those established with the Illinois High School Association rules.

Any violation of this rule could put an entire cheerleading squad at risk of disqualification. If a cheerleader is found in violation of this rule by the L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Board of Directors it will result in immediate dismissal from his/her cheerleading squad.

COMPETITION CHEERLEADER EXPECTATIONS:

A competition cheerleading program expectation and agreement form was required to be reviewed and signed by the cheerleader and their parent at registration.

The information provided in that document details the requirements, commitment, and expectations of a Jr. Eagle competitive cheerleader for our season.

IRCA Competition schedules will be available near the end of June each season. Please note the exact dates of our schedule. **ALL scheduled competitions are mandatory.** Missing a cheer competition in lieu of extenuating circumstances (injury, severe illness, or dire family concerns) could cause removal from the competition cheer squad.

CODE OF CONDUCT/ RULE AND ETHICS PLEDGE:

As in any sport, it is important as an organization that we encourage our cheerleaders to demonstrate teamwork, respect and good sportsmanship, both on and off the field. We expect each cheerleader and parent to read, sign and abide by the following:

- ◇ I will be courteous and respectful to all of my fellow cheerleaders in the Jr. Eagles organization.
- ◇ I will encourage good sportsmanship from my fellow cheerleaders, Coaches, Jr. Coaches, Squad parents and parents at every game, practice, event, and competition by demonstrating good sportsmanship myself, and with my squad.
- ◇ I will attend every practice and game that I can, and be on time. If I do not attend practice, I understand that I will be letting my teammates down and I will not be allowed to participate in that week's halftime routine. I will notify my Coach or squad parent in advance if I am unable to attend a practice or a game. I understand that the Jr. Eagles Cheer Attendance policies will be enforced.
- ◇ I will do my best to listen, respect, and learn from my Coaches, Jr. Coaches, and squad parents at all times.
- ◇ I will follow all safety rules for stunting/tumbling when my Coaches are present. I will only practice stunting/tumbling when coaches are present, and it is deemed safe to do so.
- ◇ I will keep a positive attitude regarding stunting, cheer, and/or position in the routine as assigned on the squad.
- ◇ I will always treat my Coaches, Jr. Coaches, Squad parents, other cheerleaders and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.

- ◇ I will use appropriate language when talking to other cheerleaders, Coaches, Jr. Coaches, Squad parents, parents, fans and other team's squads and their staff. Inappropriate behavior and unsportsmanlike conduct is not allowed and will be addressed.
- ◇ I will NOT bully, bash, or use negative comments in ANY way, including text messages, e-mails, Instagram, Facebook, Snap chat, Twitter, or ANY other social websites or apps as they apply to Jr. Eagles staff, cheerleaders, and ANY other individuals while I am a Jr. Eagles Cheerleader. This behavior will/can result in possible dismissal from my squad.
- ◇ Any negative behavior, in any regard, brought to the attention of the Jr. Eagles Cheer organization while an active member will/can possibly jeopardize my participation as a cheerleader if deemed inappropriate and intolerable by the Jr. Eagles Cheer Board/Coaches.
- ◇ I will do my very best in school and remember that good grades are important while I am participating in cheer.
- ◇ I will encourage my parents to be involved with my squad in some capacity because it is important to me.
- ◇ I will use only approved cheers and chants, and remember that I represent L.A. Jr. Golden Eagles Cheerleading at all events.

Disciplinary Action:

Disciplinary action will be decided on a per occurrence basis as determined by the Board of Directors for any cheerleader, Coach, Squad parent, Jr. Coach, or board member who does not follow their designated L.A. Jr. Eagles Cheerleading Code of Conduct/Ethics Pledge, or exhibits behavior that is unbecoming or derogatory to the image of the Jr. Eagles Cheer organization.

2018 CHEER DATES TO REMEMBER:

- June 4th - Mandatory Uniform Sizing - LITH Village Hall
- June TBA - Cheer Clinic with Jacobs Cheerleaders at Jacobs High School with parent showcase on June 22nd. Must register thru Jacobs HS
- July 15th - First Day of Practice for all squads
- July TBD- D300 Food Drive
- July 27th - Algonquin Founder's Day Parade
- August 3rd - Car Wash fundraising event
- August TBD - All squad Picture Day
- August 24th-25th - Opening Weekend of football games
- August 31st - LITH Sunset Fest Parade
- October TBD- Affy Tapple Fundraiser
- October TBD- State Comp Fundraisers start
- TBD - Homecoming Weekend
- IRCA Competition Dates- posted on our website
- November TBD- Thanksgiving Food Drive
- **Follow us on Facebook for more information!**
- **Follow the web page at jreaglescheer.com for practice schedules, calendar, competitions and more!**

Notes:



L.A. Jr. Eagles Cheerleading

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