



2021 OHSAA SPIRIT STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. SCHOOL REPRESENTATION

A. TEAM PARTICIPATION

Each OHSAA member school will be allowed to enter one team and is responsible for registering its team in the appropriate division based on OHSAA Divisions. Division placement is based on the school enrollment reported (EMIS) and used for classifying the seven (7) OHSAA Football Divisions. Teams participating in the Junior High Division, must be comprised of 7th and/or 8th graders. *Note: The OHSAA reserves the right to combine or add high school divisions at the Spirit State Championships based on actual participation.*

Initial divisions, participation number allowances, and team fees are as follows:

<u>SPIRIT STATE CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISIONS:</u>	<u>FEE:</u>
Division I Maximum of 30 participants	\$350.00
Division II Maximum of 30 participants	\$350.00
Division III Maximum of 20 participants	\$350.00
Division IV Maximum of 20 participants	\$350.00
Division V Maximum of 20 participants	\$350.00
Division VI Maximum of 20 participants	\$350.00
Division VII Maximum of 20 participants	\$350.00
Junior High Maximum of 30 participants	\$350.00

The total number of participants for a school team is determined by counting all spirit-leading participants involved in the performance. The use of live band, drum line or twirlers to supplement the Game Day environment is not permitted. **Mascots** may participate but cannot be involved in the execution of stunts. Mascots executing any jumps or tumbling must do so in accordance with the National Federation of State High School (NFHS) Spirit rules for mascots. **Flag Runners** may not perform cheerleading “technical” skills including stunts, jumps and tumbling.

The school team will consist of students that meet participation requirements:

1. One team per member school will be allowed to enter the OHSAA Spirit State Championships.
2. All participants must meet eligibility requirements as determined by their respective school and must be designated by school officials as spirit representatives for participation purposes.
3. To maximize opportunities for participation, substitution of athletes is permitted in the Qualifying Round. (Different spirit leaders may be used in each of the individual performances: Band Chant, Crowd Leading and Fight Song.) However, teams advancing to the State Championship round, participants that enter the floor must remain for the entire length of the final performance. Substituting individuals on and off the floor for the different sections of the final round is not permitted.
4. **It is the responsibility of the school coach that each team member, coaches, parents, and other persons affiliated with the school conduct themselves in the appropriate manner.**
5. School teams must refrain from taunting, bragging, or suggestive expressions or gestures as well as discrimination of any nature.

B. UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES

1. Traditional game day uniform is required.
2. All NFHS uniform rules apply.



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3. The covered midriff requirement does include flesh or nude colored body suits and liners; however, fringe would not count as a cover.
4. School teams must display an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school regarding grooming, traditional and appropriate attire, make-up, and uniformity.
5. The use of signs, poms, flags, and megaphones are allowed and encouraged for performances. The use of additional props is not permitted. The use of flags on poles is not permitted by top persons while in stunts.

C. COMPETITION PERFORMANCE AREA

1. Approximate floor size will be 54 feet wide by 42 feet deep (9 strips).
2. The OHSAA Spirit State Championship will comply with the NFHS competition surface rule.
3. Signs or props may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member who must remain inside the competition area. See **Section IV, E** for deduction for out of bounds.

D. MUSIC

1. Schools must use recorded marching band music for the Fight Song and Band Chant categories.
2. All use of music must be compliant with U.S. Copyright Laws.
3. **Neither the Ohio High School Athletic Association nor Varsity Spirit is responsible for obtaining any necessary permission or licensing of the recorded music used by a school team while the OHSAA Spirit State Championships.**
4. Fight Song /Band Chant Music
 - a. If a high school marching band records their school's **original** fight song, they will need to show the school's written permission to use the song and recording
 - b. If a team legally acquires a recording of a band playing a popular recording from an authorized provider (iTunes, Amazon, etc.), the song can be used if **no edits** are made to the music (other than for timing purposes—beginning or end).
 - c. Music from streaming sites does not meet licensing requirement and cannot be used for the purposes of this competition.
 - d. A team cannot use a recording of their band playing a popular song (a cover) or other music without the proper permissions (such as a compulsory license).

E. HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

1. OHSAA rules require cheer and spirit performances shall be in accordance with safety standards prescribed by the NFHS Spirit Rules.

F. ADDITIONAL SAFETY PROCEDURES

To promote a higher level of safety for competing participants, spotters will be provided on the performance floor (only) at the competition. If desired, schools may provide additional spotters in warm up areas only.

OHSAA Spirit State Championships will provide additional spotters that follow the listed guidelines:

Additional spotters will be distinguishable from the performing athletes and will be used during the stunting sections only. Additional spotters are present for added safety and will stand at the back of the floor when not spotting stunts. They will not touch, assist, or “save” skills being performed. Additional spotters will only be used to prevent a fall to the competition floor.



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II. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Teams will be evaluated on the practicality of Game Day material, the ability to lead and engage the crowd, proper skill incorporations and performance, motions, movement, and overall routine. Game Day practicality is heavily emphasized. Performances should be prepared as they would for sideline leading at a school sporting event.

A. GAME DAY ELEMENTS

The competition will consist of the following Game Day elements. There should be no “organized” entrances when taking the floor for any of the performances. Teams cannot build stunts or execute skills off the performance floor prior to the beginning of the routine—all skills must be executed DURING the routine and on the mat.

1 - Band Chant:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- QUALIFYING competition - teams will be announced, take the floor, and timing will begin with the first beat of music or organized movement
- Marching band music or drum cadence performance that encourages crowd interaction
- No stunts or tumbling are permitted in this section. Jumps and kicks are allowed

2 - Crowd Leading:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- Sideline cheerleading that engages crowd response
- QUALIFYING competition: Timing begins with the sound of a buzzer, which will occur approximately 10 seconds following the completion of the team’s BAND CHANT routine.
- Skill restrictions:
 - No basket, sponge or elevator tosses allowed (cradles are considered dismounts, not tosses). Coed and “quick” tosses are permitted.
 - No inversions
 - No twisting release dismounts from stunts
 - Single-leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches
 - No running tumbling
 - Standing tumbling is limited to one tumbling skill at a time. A back tuck is the most elite standing tumbling skill allowed.

3 - Fight Song:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- Traditional school fight song performed to recorded marching band music
- QUALIFYING competition – Time will begin with the first beat of music or organized movement
- Added skill (stunts, jumps and/or tumbling) is a component of the fight song score sheet. Up to three **CONSECUTIVE** eight-counts may be incorporated with stunts, tumbling and/or jumps. The three 8 counts of added skills (incorporation) can at any point in the routine. Because many fight songs repeat, the incorporated skills can be repeated but **IF** repeated, the incorporation must repeat **exactly as initially performed**. To properly count your incorporation, start counting the 8-counts with the “dips” of the added skill(s)—the dip to jump, dip to tumble, dip of top person to load stunt, etc.). **REGARDLESS**



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OF WHEN THE MUSIC ENDS, counting of incorporated skills will continue until the **routine** is complete or the skills are completed and back on the ground.

- Skill restrictions:
 - No basket, sponge or elevator tosses allowed (cradles are considered dismounts, not tosses)
 - No inversions
 - No twisting dismounts from stunts
 - Single-leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches
 - No running tumbling
 - Standing tumbling is limited to one skill at a time. A back tuck is the most elite standing tumbling skill allowed

QUALIFYING ROUND - Each performance will consist of one qualifying round of each of the three identified categories above. Each element will have a time limit of one (1) minute. Each of the three category prelim performance rounds will be preceded by a designated warm-up session. **NOTE for 2021 Event: It has been determined by competition officials that it will be necessary that the three qualifying round performances (Band Chant, Crowd Leading, and Fight Song) will be completed by an individual team in a SINGLE trip to the performance floor (as opposed to three rotations). Each Game Day element will still follow the same guidelines as described above and will be timed and scored as individual performances. Teams will be announced and take the floor, then execute the BAND CHANT performance first. Following the Band Chant, the team will STAY on the floor, show spirit and within 10 seconds the BUZZER sound will be heard, which will indicate the time has started for the CROWD LEADING section. Following completion of the Crowd Leading performance, the team will STAY on the floor, show spirit then get set for their FIGHT SONG. Timing for the Fight Song will begin with the first beat of music or organized movement.**

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND - Teams with the highest cumulative scores from the three qualifying categories will advance to finals. The number of teams advancing to finals will be determined based on the number of teams participating in the qualifying round in each division. The final performance will be preceded by a designated warm-up session.

Each STATE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND performance will have an overall maximum performance time limit of three (3) minutes and will be performed in the following order:

1. Band Chant
2. Situational Response (see description below)
3. Crowd Leading
4. Fight Song

The entire performance will be executed in a continuous order. To continue the feel of a Game Day environment, **spirited crowd-leading interaction between each section is encouraged.**

SITUATIONAL RESPONSE: Each team will respond to an audio cue by a game announcer, as heard at football game or, by request only, a basketball game. To imitate the Game Day environment, audio cues will include an announcer-lead situational cue to which the team will show a definitive OFFENSE or DEFENSE response. A general response would not meet the criteria.



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B. SCORES AND RANKINGS

1. In the qualifying round, each team will be scored by multiple judges in each of the three categories.
2. The State Championship results and team placements will be determined by the cumulative scores from the State Championship round only. Qualifying round scores will not carry over to determine final team standings. However, if a tie occurs in the final round, the cumulative total of the qualifying score will be utilized to break any ties.
3. Scores and rankings will be available **only to the school representative designated as head coach** as follows:
 - Score Sheets – qualifying round score sheets will be made available to all teams following the qualifying round. Finals score sheets will be distributed following the completion of the State Championship round and awards.
 - Scores and rankings will be posted on the OHSAA website following the conclusion of the competition.
4. The judges will score teams using the criteria listed on the OHSAA Spirit State Championship score sheet.
5. All scores and judges' decisions are considered final. There is no process for protesting scores.

C. TIME LIMITATIONS

1. Acknowledging the potential variance in sound system and timing devices, judges will not issue a deduction until the timekeeper's stopwatches shows a time of three (3) seconds over the time limit.
2. It is recommended that all teams practice and time performances prior to competition to allow for variations in sound equipment.
3. Introductions and exits:
 - a. All team breaks, rituals, and traditions need to take place backstage before a team is in the "on deck" or next to perform position.
 - b. NO CHOREOGRAPHED or "ORGANIZED entrances or exits: Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures (i.e., teams must refrain from chest bumps, hugs, and handshakes) before or following the performances. No "tumbling" in.
 - c. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance.

III. INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

A. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected will be directed by the EVENT DIRECTOR to **STOP** the routine.
2. If directed to stop a routine, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.

B. FAULT OF TEAM

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment or team operator error, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform later. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.



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C. INJURY

1. All participants must follow the NFHS/OHSAA safety regulations identified in this document. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are a) competition officials, or b) the school coach from the team performing.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform later. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed later, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless the competition officials receive clearance from the on-site medical personnel and the school head coach of the competing team.
4. Any injured participant suspected of a concussion is required to follow the OHSAA Concussion Policy regarding the treatment of concussions and must be removed immediately from the competition.

IV. INTERPRETATIONS AND RULINGS

A. RULES & PROCEDURES

Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the school coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director. **Such inquiry should be made prior to the team's competition performance.**

The OHSAA Spirit State Championship Rules Committee will consist of a designated Competition Director, Head Judge, and designated OHSAA staff, if applicable. The school team and school coach must abide by all decisions made by the judges and Rules Committee. Any interpretation of the OHSAA Spirit State Championship Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee.

B. AWARDS

Each division will receive the following:

1. The top two teams will be awarded and designated as such with a 2nd place runner-up trophy, and a 1st place Championship trophy.
2. The top scores in each of the qualifying round categories—Band Chant, Crowd Leading, and Fight Song—will be recognized as “Best of Category”.

C. JUDGING PANELS

Judges will be provided by the OHSAA, and they will be responsible for scoring each school performance according to the OHSAA competition score sheets.

1. Quality Judge - The Quality Judge is responsible for overseeing the entire Judging Panel that consists of Head Panel Judges, Panel Judges, and Safety Judge.
2. Panel Head Judge - responsible for overseeing a designated panel of judges. The Panel Head Judge will also fill out his/her own score sheet for each performance
3. Panel Judge - Panel Judges are responsible for scoring each team's performance based on the OHSAA score sheets. Each Panel Judge will fill out a score sheet for each performance.



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4. Safety Judge - The Safety Judge is responsible for administering all safety violations, time violations, and boundary violations.
5. **ALL JUDGES' DECISIONS ARE FINAL. THERE IS NO PROCESS FOR PROTEST REGARDING SCORING, DEDUCTIONS OR JUDGES FEEDBACK.**

D. DISQUALIFICATION

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of the OHSAA Spirit State Championship rules and regulations defined in this document will be subject to disqualification from the competition and will automatically forfeit any award.

E. DEDUCTIONS

Deduction points will be subtracted from the final score.

Area	Specific	Deduction Points
Participant allowance (Section I, A)	Exceed maximum participants	Disqualification from contest
Music licensing (Section I, E)	Failure to meet licensing requirement	Disqualification from contest
NFHS Spirit Rules (Section I, F, 1)	Utilization of skill or stunt not permitted by rule	5 points per rule violation
Time limit* *3 second window to allow for variance (Section II, C)	Each violation	3 points for 4-8 seconds over limit 5 points for 9-13 seconds over limit 7 points for 14 seconds or more over limit *3 second window considered above
Time limit (Section II, C)	Excessive celebration or organized entrance or exit	1 point
Performance floor (Section I, D, 4)	Any team member stepping with both feet outside the designated performance area	.5 Half of one point
Procedure or General Rule Violation (not a safety violation)	Team exceeds 8-count allowances in fight song Team adds stunts or tumbling in Band Chant	3 points per rule violation