



TCSAAL Competitive Cheer Performance Rules 2026-2027

We will offer competition in 2 age categories, 6-8 Grade (Middle School) and Varsity (High School) and in multiple competition levels. The novice and intermediate levels in the Performance Category of NCA Cheer will be offered for 6-8 Grade. We will offer the novice, intermediate and advanced levels for Varsity.

Team entries are \$500 a team.

The School Team Cheer Competition will be 1 state tournament.

We will follow the National Cheerleaders Association rules for the Performance category. Please note we will follow Performance and not Game Day or Crowd Performance competition rules.

We are offering all competitions in small group (5-16 members) and large group (17-30 members). We will not have a cap for the number of males.

Please note that we will establish a competition grouping when at least 3 teams sign up for the specific size, age and experience level. If a grouping does not make you will be notified and teams will be placed in the next best fit.

We will be following the National Cheer Association (NCA) rulebook for school teams:

[2026-2027 NCA Rules and Regulations](#)

Note that Junior High Competitions in the novice level have additional restrictions.

PERFORMANCE COMPETITION OVERVIEW

These routines are entertaining, visual and showcase athleticism. Each routine must not exceed 2:30 (150 seconds) in length and include both a cheer and dance portion.

PERFORMANCE ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

1. All cheerleading skills including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps must follow the NFHS Safety Guidelines. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult coach. See specific skill restrictions for each category.
2. Each team will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed 2 minutes and 30 seconds (150 seconds).
3. Up to 1 minute and 45 seconds (105 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. No voice-overs or words may be recorded to make the team's vocal projection sound louder.

4. Organized, formal entrances or exits that involve organized walk out lines, cheers or run-ons with jumps, tumbling or stunts are not permitted. Cheerleaders must enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
5. Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement or note of music by the team after they are officially announced and have taken the floor. This includes any formal, organized entrances mentioned in Article 4. Cheerleaders must have at least one foot on the performing surface when the routine starts.
6. Cheer words should be practical, and the flow of words should be easy to understand by the crowd and judges.
7. In Performance Divisions, mascots will not count towards participant count. Mascots must be appropriately attired so their mobility, vision, etc are not impaired. Mascots cannot participate in stunts, pyramids, or tumbling skills in any division.
8. Novice Junior High Divisions will be restricted from performing any type of toss or waist level cradles. See usacheer.org for more information on these additional skill restrictions.
9. For additional division explanations, including an in-depth breakdown of each score sheet, be sure to check out our Judges training courses available to coaches through Varsity University (<https://www.varsity.com/nca/school/competitions/rules-scoring>).
10. Participants in the 8th Grade are allowed to participate on a Varsity team in the UCA Cheer program, provided their school is under the direct supervision of the same school board as the Varsity team. Participants 7th Grade and below are strictly prohibited from Varsity competition.

PERFORMANCE AREA

NCA Competitions comply with the NFHS and AACCA surface ruling that school-based programs may not compete on a spring floor. Most NCA Competitions will have a Competition Area measuring 42' deep by 54' wide carpet-bonded foam floor. See each event for confirmation of the floor type and size.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

[2026-2027 NCA Rules and Regulations](#)

[2026-2027 NCA Rules and Restrictions](#)

[2026-2027 NCA Overall Guidelines](#)

[2026-2027 NCA Updates](#)

[2026-2027 NCA Deductions & Violations](#)

[2026-2027 Performance Score Sheet](#)

TCSAAL JUDGING PANEL (Note we will use a 3 or 4 person panel)

SKILL PANEL JUDGE - Responsible for scoring each team's performance based on the NCA Score Sheet. The Skill Judge will also serve as the Head Judge (if using a 3-person panel). The Panel Judge

scores technical ability and the overall routine, but they do not determine or score deductions or safety violations.

SAFETY JUDGE - The Safety Judge is responsible for administering all safety violations, time violations, and boundary violations.

POINT DEDUCTION JUDGE - The Point Deduction Judge is responsible for assessing deductions in each routine mistakes in technical skills.

ALL JUDGES' DECISIONS ARE FINAL

IMPORTANT REFERENCES

NCA School Competition Rules:

Please note that the TCSAAL competition is following the NCA School Performance guidelines for the Novice and Intermediate category (except for specifically outlined exceptions in this document). Our rules are just an outline. Please follow the NCA rules.

**NCA & TCSAAL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND
INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.**

**These rules are based on and adopted from the NCA rule
document.**