

# **PAFA Spirit Frequently Asked Questions**

## **GENERAL**

### **Who are we?**

- A cheer sports program open to athletes in Grades 1-8. We cheer or perform at football games in support of PAFA Football and support our athletes by teaching skills, sportsmanship, and teamwork.
- We have offered the sport of poms and flags in the past. When offered, they are open to athletes in grades 6-8.

### **Is this a competitive cheerleading organization?**

- We are a recreational sports league for cheer. This means we accept all levels of athletes and help them grow in sideline cheers, stunting, motions, jumps, and halftime routines within our community.

### **At what age can my athlete participate in PAFA Spirit?**

- PAFA Cheer is for athletes going into grades 1-2 for our Mini Cheer program and 3-8 for our regular season program.

### **When does the PAFA Spirit season begin?**

- Our regular season begins in July. Practices are held two to three times a week in July and August and once a week once school starts. Regular season football games begin in late August and go into late October. Post season games go through the beginning of November, but are not guaranteed. Our regular season squads cheer the whole season.
- The Mini Cheer season has 2 sessions: session one from August-September and session 2 from September-October. Practices are held once a week during their session and each session will typically cheer at 2-3 games.

## **UNIFORM SIZING**

### **When is my athlete sized for the uniform?**

- Uniforms are available for sideline athletes in 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade. Athletes are fitted during the first week of practice. A uniform deposit check of \$125 must be received in order to receive uniform.

### **What should my athlete wear for sizing?**

- Cheer shorts and a tank top or sports bra under their practice tshirt.

## **SUPPLIES**

### **How much do supplies cost?**

- Expect to order about \$140 of supplies for your athlete's first season. Cheer shoes are also required and purchased separately. Subsequent seasons may require less supply purchases if items can be reused from previous seasons. The jackets are the highest cost and can usually be reused for multiple seasons.

### **When do I purchase my athletes' supplies?**

- Supplies are purchased online. A link will be provided in May or June.

### **When do I receive the supplies?**

- Supplies are usually received during the first week of practice.

## **PICTURE DAY**

### **When is picture day?**

- Picture day is scheduled for early in the season. Information will be provided via email. Make ups are not available.

### **What does my athlete wear?**

- Your athlete will wear PAFA shell, PAFA skirt, black boy shorts, white no-show socks, and cheer shoes.
- Hair may be worn any way for pictures.

## UNIFORMS

### What makes up the uniform?

The complete uniform is:

- The PAFA skirt
- PAFA shell
- PAFA hair bow
- White no show socks
- White cheer shoes.
- Black boy shorts

At colder games, a PAFA turtle neck crop top is worn under the shell as well as PAFA leggings, PAFA jacket, optional black ear warmer headband, and optional black gloves.

### When does my athlete receive the uniform?

- Uniforms are handed out during practice sometime before the first game.

### How should the uniform be washed and dried?

- Uniforms can be washed in the washing machine in cold water, on the gentle setting. To preserve the uniform, **DO NOT PUT IN DRYER**. Please lay both the shell and the skirt out flat to dry. Do NOT dry clean, spot treat, or iron.

### When should the uniform be worn?

- Your athlete should always and only wear the uniform while cheering during PAFA football games.

### What should I do if my cheerleader's skirt does not fit right?

- The skirts are designed to sit at the waist, and this means at the belly button. Please make sure the skirt is pulled up to the belly button and then assess the fit. You should be able to put two fingers into the waist band.

### The shell does not cover the stomach, should we have a larger size?

- Shells get wider, not longer, as you go up a size. Please make sure the skirt is pulled up to the belly button and this should alleviate the problem.
- We recommend a black camisole for all girls so that the stomach does not show.

### What should I do if the uniform still doesn't fit right?

- Please notify your squad's team parent

## SQUAD ASSIGNMENTS

### Do you put multiple grade levels on the same cheer squad?

- Based on registrations, multi-age squads may be formed. However, this is not always possible.

### Do you honor special requests?

- There is a place on the registration to note special requests. We try to honor special requests whenever possible however there are many other factors that determine squad placement, and this may not always be possible.
- If someone would like to be on a squad with someone of a different grade level but no multi-age squads are available, the older participant may possibly be able to move to a younger squad. A younger participant may not move to an older squad.

### How and when do I find out what squad my athlete is on?

- Squad assignments are usually emailed in July.

## **PRACTICES**

### **How are the teams coached?**

- The teams are coached by high school cheerleaders under the supervision of a PAFA Team Parent. All practices are attended by PAFA Team Parents (volunteers from each grade level) to ensure the safety of all participants.

### **How many times per week will my athlete practice?**

- Teams will practice 2-3 times a week until school starts. Squads will practice 1 day a week once school starts.

### **When will I know what day(s) my athlete will practice?**

- Practice days are usually announced in July with your squad assignment email. They are subject to change in late August/early September depending on space availability and coaches' schedules (although we try not to do this).

### **What should my athlete wear to practice?**

- Your cheerleader should wear the PAFA t-shirt or another close-fitting t-shirt, cheer shoes, and cheer shorts. Tank tops, loose fitting shorts, and denim are not recommended.
- Long shorts are a safety hazard for stunting and are not allowed. Jewelry and earrings are not allowed.

### **How should hair be worn?**

- All hair is to be tied back securely in a ponytail. Fly aways and bangs are not allowed. Please use flat push clips or bobby pins.

## **COACHES**

### **How do I communicate with my athletes coach?**

- All communication with the squad coaches is to be done through the Team Parent or the PAFA Spirit Supervisor.

## **BANQUET (when offered) What is the banquet?**

- The banquet is an annual event that is held to celebrate the successful completion of the season.

### **When is the banquet?**

- The banquet is held in November or January. Please see our calendar for exact date.

### **Why don't we have a banquet this year?**

- Banquets are a team effort between parent volunteers and the PAFA Spirit Supervisor. If you are interested in helping to plan a PAFA Spirit Banquet, please contact the PAFA Spirit Supervisor.

### **Is there a dress code?**

- There is not a dress code however the banquet is a celebration so participants normally wear party attire dresses, skirts, slacks, etc.

### **Are there assigned seats?**

- Tables are assigned by squad. Each squad will sit together and the parents of each squad will sit together.

### **Can more than one parent attend the PAFA banquet?**

- Possibly, but only one parent may be asked to attend depending on numbers.
- If more than one child is participating in PAFA then both parents can definitely attend. The parents will be split up and each parent will sit at the table that represents each child's squad

## **PARADE**

### **Does PAFA Spirit participate in any Palatine parades?**

- We have participated in the St. Patrick's Day Parade and in the 4th of July Parade. Participation is determined each year and is largely dependent on parent volunteer participation. If you are interested in helping coordinate participation in a Palatine parade, please contact the PAFA Spirit Supervisor. Information about participation will be provided via email to parents.