The cheerleaders of Fossil Ridge High School are the athletic spirit leaders of the school. The cheerleading organization includes Varsity, Junior Varsity, and a Unified team. A director, coaches, some consult(s), and a Boosters club support this student organization. The Cheerleading Handbook has been designed to clearly outline the policies and procedures that will guide the organization during the year. Please note that although the most common kinds of situations have been identified in this handbook, the list is not comprehensive. It is the responsibility for every member of the cheerleading program to be familiar with this handbook. A copy will be given to each parent upon request. In addition to being held responsible for the policies and procedures identified in this handbook, the members of the FRHS Cheerleading organization are also responsible for abiding by the FRHS/PSD Student Code of Conduct and the Athletics Code of Conduct. It is an honor and privilege, not a right, to be a FRHS cheerleader; therefore, excellence is expected and required. It is important for each applicant to fully understand that cheerleading is a time consuming activity and must be a priority. It is a yearlong season; therefore, a yearlong commitment is absolutely necessary.

**Why we do what we do:**
We believe cheerleading should teach teamwork, discipline, setting and reaching goals, hard work, sacrifice, and determination. We believe those who have character, work hard, and have a good attitude are the most successful in whatever they do. We believe learning these qualities in high school prepare you to succeed later in life. These rules are made so we can have fun, be safe, work hard, and develop character qualities that make us successful.

1. **We have discipline so everyone will be safe.**
   For example, we require that your hair is pinned back and tightly secured at all times. This is not an appearance/vanity issue; it is unsafe to stunt, tumble, or do other cheer activities if your hair is obstructing your vision. It is also important that everyone is quiet and attentive while coaches/captains are talking. Everyone must hear instructions and counts so we’re all on the same page and no one is hurt by a mistake.

2. **We have discipline to maximize the use of team time and create a team atmosphere.**
   We expect you to be on time and ready for every practice and event. We want to start practices on time so we can be productive, get the job finished, and go home. We respect YOUR time, please respect OURS.

3. **We have discipline to foster respect and build character.**
   Many decisions made by the coaches are in response to desires voiced by cheerleaders, parents, and/or administration. The rest of our decisions are made from our years of experience. We want to hear your input and we promise to listen. Sometimes we will compromise on a situation, and other times we will “stick to our guns” and make the best decision for the program. We respect and trust you enough to let you have a say in this program; you should respect us enough to follow our leadership even if you don’t agree.

**ACADEMICS**
1. Because cheerleaders are students first and athletes second, weekly progress reports will be turned in so the coach can monitor academic progress.
2. An athlete must be passing 5 classes plus advisory at all times to be eligible.
3. If you have two F’s, you are not eligible to cheer. Coach Nikki receives progress reports on Thursday afternoons.
4. Cheerleaders who are ineligible (not passing 5 classes) have until noon the following Monday to have raised a grade to passing and must have it cleared by Brandon Carlucci, the Athletic Director, who will give the coach permission to allow the athlete to cheer. A written note from the teacher to Brandon with the % the child has the class is required before he will allow them to become eligible by noon on Monday.
5. Cheerleaders must attend at least half of the school day to attend practice, a game, or a competition that day or the next day.
6. The coaches reserve the right to remove athletes from play for tardiness and unexcused absences from classes during the school day. The coaches pull attendance reports each week.
7. A coach reserves the right to pull an athlete from cheering or from the competition team based on attendance in school and grades.

**FUND RAISING**
1. Every cheerleader will be expected to support all fundraising events which support the team. We will be doing a lot of fundraising this year and each team fundraiser should be treated as a practice.
2. Failure to participate and meet your quota of fundraising can result in punishment or dismissal from the squad.
3. Turning in fundraising money after the due date could result in repercussion, including but not limited to being financially obligated to your portion of the fundraising dollars if applicable, being benched, etc.

**ATTITUDE & BEHAVIOR**
As a FRHS Cheerleader, I will abide by these statements for the betterment of my team:
1. I will step into all cheerleading activities with a positive, encouraging attitude and a smile on my face. Even if I’ve had a horrible day, I will try my hardest to set that aside and step up for my team.
2. I will set a positive example for and be respectful to all peers, students, and parents, as well as competitors and all other affiliates. I will not be rude or disrespectful to any of these entities. I will not use foul language, show poor sportsmanship, participate in “Public Displays of Affection”, or be unprofessional at any time in public.
3. I will be dedicated, accept responsibility, and maintain good public relations with every faculty member and staff, the student body, and community to ensure success and respect of the squad.
4. I will respect my squad’s captains, the varsity captains, and my coaches. I will not argue with them, gossip about them, or disobey them. **I will listen and pay attention when one of them is speaking.**
5. I will be honest with the coaches about issues that really bother me. I will only discuss these matters with them in a calm, respectful, mature, and private way. I will wait until after practice (or set up a meeting) and meet in the coaches’ office to be heard. **I will not throw out disagreements/opinions/concerns before or during practice or another event.** I understand that the coaches will listen to me, but if they disagree with my issue, I will respect their decision as the leaders of this program. I understand that I must come to a coach prior to my parent addressing the issue with a coach.
6. I will get along with everyone that has any part in the FRHS Cheer Program. I will not intentionally exclude, be mean to, or gossip about **any** cheer team member. I will follow the guidelines in #5 and seek help if needed.
7. I will be on time and ready to all practices and other cheer events. I will hustle everywhere I go (to practice, onto the field, to the formation) and not be lazy.
8. I will put 110% effort in every motion, jump, dance, routine, workout, conditioning drill, and cheer event. I will not give up. I will be a team player. I will encourage all other team members to do the same. I will not whine or complain about workouts or coach/captain directions.
9. I will portray myself respectfully and tastefully online. I will accept requests from coaches at any time and understand that if they request access to a social media account that I must give it.
10. I will not use tobacco, marijuana, or any other type of drug. I will not drink alcohol, vape, or do anything that is illegal.
11. I will not be academically dishonest. I will not ditch class. I will not be habitually late to class.
12. I will not bully peers or treat anyone with disrespect.

**ATTIRE**

Cheerleaders will wear appropriate attire for every event:
1. Practice: designated practice outfit, cheer shoes, no jewelry, **short fingernails**, and hair completely up.
2. Games/Pep-Rallies/Events: assigned cheer uniform, bow, white socks, cheer shoes, tights, no visible undergarments (including sports bras), no jewelry, short fingernails, and hair completely up and pinned back. May include body liners, pullovers, pants, gloves, and other accessories.

**EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS**

1. Cheerleaders will be responsible for securing, storing, and maintaining all equipment before, during and after all performances and practices. They will be assigned an Athletic Locker that they should use throughout the year.
2. The only uniforms, jackets, outfits, and warm-ups approved at events are those garments required and purchased by or provided to every squad member as an official part of the uniform. Cheerleaders must wear ONLY those uniform pieces designated by the coach to events requiring uniforms. Letter jackets are NOT a part of the official cheer uniform.
3. No part of any cheerleading uniform may be given to or worn by another student or person who is not a member of the squad at ANY TIME without the coaches’ permission.
4. Uniforms will not be bought, made, or remodeled in any way without the permission of the coach. The cheerleader is responsible for the upkeep of the uniform and all materials handed out to the cheerleader. The cheerleader will replace the part or whole depending upon the damage or loss.
5. Equipment provided by the school will remain the property of the school unless the individual cheerleader elects to purchase them and only if the option is offered by the coach.
6. Equipment assigned to cheer program members is their full responsibility. If lost, stolen, or damaged in any way, the cheerleader must pay the cost of the repair or replacement. This includes, but is not limited to signs, mascot costumes, coolers, megaphones, poms, mats, etc.

**GAMES, EVENTS & PERFORMANCES**

1. At games, cheerleaders must pay attention to the game and spirit constantly.
2. During play, cheerleaders must stay in their given formation at all times.
3. If you are not performing at an event, you must not be in a cheer program uniform. If you finish performing at an event, you must immediately change out of your official cheer uniform.
4. Cheerleaders may not take a bag of any kind in to the stand during basketball/volleyball games. They must use their athletic locker. If there are items (medical, or personal) that a cheerleader must have it can be put in the community bag under a coach’s supervision.
5. Cell phones are only to be used with the coaches permission during half time of a game.
6. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum during practice, game, or a performance. The only exception is water.
7. Cheerleaders will be professional at games and other public cheer events. Cheerleaders will follow the game etiquette rules.
8. While in uniform, cheerleaders will remain with the squad during performances. Prior to taking breaks it will be the cheerleaders’ duty to meet with the coach as a squad for a report of expectations and responsibilities.
9. **If knowledge or execution of a routine is severely lacking, the coach reserves the right to remove any member from the routine or event.**

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

All members of the FRHS cheer program will be required to attend community service projects chosen by the coaches. Examples would be the Race for the Cure, March of Dimes, Special Olympics Colorado events, etc. The goal of doing community service is to build connections between the Fort Collins communities and the Fossil Ridge High School community.

**PRACTICES**

1. After tryouts, all cheerleaders will practice after school during the months of April (two practices) and May (4 per week, 10 day break in end of May for Finals). The schedule will be given to you at the parent meeting before and after tryouts. **We practice heavily in early / mid May and in June we have ALL CLINICS AND CHOREOGRAPHY AND CAMP. We know many**
athletes are going to the Summit and wrapping up their all star cheer season so please reach out in advance for conflicts! Cheer summer break begins END OF JUNE and goes through July 15 although Cheer Central will have some tumbling classes for Fossil Cheer during the last week of cheer summer break.

2. Varsity will practice Mon, Tues, Weds, Thurs over the summer and JV will practice Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri.
3. The coaches will determine practice times and they are subject to change depending on coaching staff availability, building space availability and the needs of the team. Practice will not begin before 4pm unless we have a C team. Otherwise practice will begin at 4 or 4:30pm daily. 4pm for CCS practices is set in stone. 4:30pm will be the practice start time for practices @ Fossil for now, but this is subject to change come tryouts when the teams are built.
4. During Homecoming week and/or in competition season, extra practices may be required and are mandatory.
5. Any cheerleader who must miss a practice is required to have a parent call or email the coach ASAP, PRIOR to missing (or it’s an unexcused absence- no matter what the reason for missing). This includes any summer, weekend, before/after school, or during class period practices. Making contact does not dismiss any consequences for missing a mandatory practice/event. If a cheerleader must leave school early due to sickness, therefore missing cheer class and/or an event, the cheerleader parent must contact a coach immediately after the student checks out with the front office.
6. No excessive side talking, laughing, or goofing off during practice or performance; we will be stunting and doing potentially dangerous activities. Safety is a priority so it is imperative that everyone be serious and pay attention so no one is hurt.
7. Summer practice conflicts will need to be emailed to coach Nikki no later than May 1st. Coach Nikki understands that last minute trips over the summer happen, and would simply like notice as soon as the parent has made the decision that the athlete will not be in town.
8. JV will practice at Cheer Central Suns twice per week starting in June through the end of the cheer season. Varsity will practice at Cheer Central Suns twice per week starting in June through the end of the cheer season. The athlete must pay Cheer Central Suns regardless of summer vacations, and Cheer Central’s closures are factored in to the monthly cost.
9. Cell phones must be left in athletic lockers with the athlete’s backpack, etc. during practice.
10. Mandatory practice beings August 6th and goes through the end of February for Fall and Winter sports and cheerleading is a Fall AND Winter Sport.
11. If you miss practice for any reason three weeks prior to a competition you are subject to be pulled from the routine. Depending on when the next competition is this could mean you are out of the routine for a few competitions or permanently. This is for the safety of the team.

SPIRIT ACTIVITIES
1. Cheer program members will participate in making and hanging posters, banners, and signs as scheduled by the coach. Supplies will be provided by the school or booster club.
2. Cheer program members will participate in MANDATORY activities such as: Back to school night, homecoming bonfire, parades, PR appearances at media stations (military night), send-offs for playoff teams, and other spirit activities as assigned by the coach. These appearances are not optional and are part of the role of being a cheerleader.

SCHEDULING
1. Cheer program members will be provided a performance schedule by the coach to include all mandatory athletic events, academic functions, community events, spirit activities, fundraisers, and other functions. The schedule will be continuously updated throughout the year. Cheerleaders MUST participate in each scheduled event. The schedule will be available and updated via Google Calendar.
2. Cheer program members will be responsible for informing parents of schedule changes, extra practices, and rule changes.
3. Cheer program members will be responsible for all information given on the cheer website and through email.

COMPETITION
Cheerleaders on a FRHS squad could potentially be placed on one of two competition teams. Competitive team(s) will be chosen AT THE SOLE DISCRETION of the coaches before choreography. Competing is an expectation of the program and if chosen for a team it is not optional.

TRAVEL
All cheer program members must travel to and from all activities in transportation provided by the school or coach, unless the coach grants permission with request in writing/email from the parent 24 hours in advance of performance. Parents or approved guardian must pick up their cheerleader at the event, making sure the coach sees the contact. Requests should be limited to emergencies and limited to one game per season.

ATTENDANCE
1. Cheerleaders will be on time to every practice, game, pep-rally, fundraiser, and event. The time posted is the time you are to be READY, not walking in the door, starting to stretch, fixing your hair, or hanging out in the locker room. For practices you should ALWAYS be 10 minutes early to roll out the mats as a team.
2. All practices and events are mandatory and attendance is required.
3. If you are absent from practice for ANY reason, the coach reserves the right to take you out of a routine.
4. All must participate in any skills classes supported by the program/booster club during the course of the year.
5. All are required to attend at least one half day of school on the day of any cheerleading event in order to participate in that particular event. If the cheer event is on a weekend, the cheerleader must attend at least one half day of school on the preceding Friday.
6. Absences that result in missing cheerleading class, practice, or any other cheer event, require a parental contact to the coaches through email or phone call PRIOR to the class period, practice, or event. No prior contact automatically deems the absence unexcused.
7. Outside appointments are expected to be scheduled around practice times whenever possible, and notification to the coach in advance of appointments is required when conflicting with practices and/or events.
8. Any cheerleader missing a game where she is able to switch with another cheerleader must do so before the game and request approval from the coach for the switch. Switches may only be made for EXCUSED absences and with the coaches’ approval.
9. EXCUSED ABSENCES include illnesses confirmed by a parent/doctor, death in immediate family, another approved FRHS event, and all-star conflicts pre-approved during tryouts. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES include, but are not limited to, competitive cheer squad practice/events not pre-approved, jobs, tutoring, social events, vacations, trips, and/or not informing a coach about an absence before the start of a(n) practice/event. Tutoring needs to be arranged before school or before practice so as not to interfere with practices.
10. If a cheerleader has an excused absence from a FRHS event, they may not attend another FRHS event without prior approval from the coach.
11. If a cheerleader is participating in any other FRHS activity that may interfere with any cheer activity, notice must be given to the coach during tryouts or ASAP. This includes, but is not limited to, choir, StuCo, Orchestra, & Spring Sports (Winter and Fall Sports do not work with cheerleading as it is a Winter and Fall TEAM sport). FRHS Spring sports are encouraged by the FRHS cheer program and during season, are the priority over cheer until that sport has concluded.
12. The schedule for the upcoming month will always be finalized by the 20th of the current month. Last minute changes may still occur, and these events will still be considered mandatory.

PLAYING TIME & PARENT COMMUNICATION OF CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS

All official cheerleading decisions and activities will be made by the coaching staff. All coaches and captains are to be given respect and cooperation by cheerleaders and parents at all times. Lack of respect from parents or cheerleaders will not be tolerated and can be grounds for dismissal. Coaches reserve the right to make changes/additions to the rules as needed. Coaches also determine playing time, and are the sole decision makers in this per the Athletic Director AND the District Athletic Director. In addition, if you have any concerns, please respect the following chain of command:
Athlete to speak with Coach Nikki -> Parent + Athlete to speak with Coach Nikki -> Parent, Athlete, Coach Nikki + Athletic Director Brandon Carlucci to have a joint meeting -> Nikki, Parent, Athlete, Brandon, and School Principal Dr. Chaplain will have a joint meeting -> Nikki, Parent, Athlete, Brandon, Dr. Chaplain, District AD will have a joint meeting.

**No phone calls, emails or text messages with issues will be responded to and everything needs to be a face to face meeting with the chain of command listed above**

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

1. Athletes will be obligated to pay a one time summer fee for Cheer Central practices of $130 directly to Cheer Central
2. Athletes will pay Cheer Central $95/month for two practices per week in the amount of 3.5 hours of practice time per week (30 minutes more per week than our previous season)
3. All practice wear and uniforms/warm ups are the financial responsibility of the athlete.
4. All camps and choreography costs are the financial responsibility of the athlete. We plan to lessen the burden of these costs with team fundraising but expecting these costs is a good plan.
5. A deposit will be due the Monday after tryouts in the even that you make the team. This will cover your practice wear. Another payment will be due two weeks later to cover camp. We can work with you if you need to use a different payment plan as long as that payment plan is followed. We do encourage individual fundraising from all athletes if you choose to raise money for your needs!
6. Each uniform cost is around $250 and practice wear is around $250 in total but will be worn ALL YEAR LONG. Athletes have two uniforms and Varsity has two and a half uniforms (one uniform has two different tops, the other has one).
7. Camps + Choreography will be around $800 total for each athlete. This is for both routines (JV, Varsity) + Varsity Game Day by a VROC choreographer + One Stunt Clinic + 4 Day 3 Night Master’s Camp in Estes Park with the best collegiate staff in the country.
8. Some athletes not returning to the program may be willing to sell their old uniform and can do so at 50%. We will be getting new white uniforms.

ALL QUESTIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO COACH NIKKI. Nikki responds quickly to email at: nrodriguez@psdschools.org

I have read the rules and regulations thoroughly and am prepared for the financial and time commitment and will abide by the rules required by FOSSIL RIDGE CHEERLEADING for the 2018-2019 school year and I will address every scheduling conflict I am aware of as of right now during tryouts after reviewing the google calendar frhscheer.com/schedule

Parent Name ___________________________ Parent Signature ___________________________ Date ______________

Athlete Name ___________________________ Athlete Signature __________________________ Date ______________