**CONNORS STATE COLLEGE**  
**SPIRIT PROGRAM INFO/RULES**

**Philosophy & Purpose:**
The CSC SPIRIT PROGRAM is a student activity. As a student activity, its first and foremost responsibility to the student is to support the student's academic career. The primary purpose of the SPIRIT PROGRAM ATHLETE is to be a member of the team, which has as its goal the support of intercollegiate athletics and Connors State College. That support is directed into three major areas: (1) to lead the crowd, solicit vocal support from Cowboy fans, and project that support to the college and its teams; (2) to participate in the athletic activity known as cheer and/or dance by performing technical movements and perfecting this athletic activity for keeping the crowd's attention/direction focused on the field/floor where the intercollegiate activity is taking place, and for entertainment and competitive purposes; and (3) to serve as public relations ambassadors of intercollegiate athletics and Connors State College and to appear at college activities, functions and programs, at charitable and public causes (not commercial/business purposes) to promote intercollegiate athletics and the college.

**Practices:**
1. The coach will determine the practice schedule. Practices will be held two to four times per week.
2. The coach plans the agenda for each practice session. Cheerleaders/Dancers will adhere to the coach’s agenda. Failure to cooperate with the agenda will result in disciplinary action.
3. Cheerleaders/Dancers must arrive appropriately dressed and ready to begin practice at the scheduled time.
4. See Section on Absences, Late Arrivals, and Early Departures.
5. Summer practices will be mandatory and will be scheduled by the coach just prior to departing to camp.
6. Semester break practices may be necessary. Should the coach determine it necessary to practice over semester break, he/she will schedule the practices and these practices will be mandatory.
7. See section on Expected Behaviors and Standards.

**Games:**
1. Cheerleaders/Dancers will arrive at least 30 minutes before basketball game time, dressed in uniform, to begin stretching and warming up.
2. Immediately prior to the game the cheerleaders/dancers will be in their appropriate place on the court, standing for the National Anthem. The stance will be with feet shoulder width apart, right hand over heart with left arm behind back, poms behind the back.
3. See section on Absences, Late Arrivals and Early Departures.
4. Abusive language or criticism of officials, coaches, fans, etc., is prohibited and will result in immediate benching. The benched cheerleader/dancer will sit on the bleachers in close proximity to the squad.
5. Cheerleaders/Dancers must stay off the court when the ball is in play.
6. During games the lane must remain clear during free throws.
7. Upon advancing to post season play, additional restrictions may be implemented by the NJCAA. The coach will inform the team of these restrictions.

8. The coach determines attendance at away games. If it is determined that the squad will attend an away game, transportation will be provided. If a member of the team rides the school vehicle to an away game the must ride it back home.

9. Cheerleaders/Dancers must be on the bus and ready to depart at the designated departure time.

10. See section on Expected Behaviors and Standards.

Absences, Late Arrivals and Early Departures:
1. Excused absences from practice, a game or a performance are permitted and shall include sickness and death in the immediate family. The cheerleader/dancer must submit to the coach a doctor’s excuse for absences due to sickness

2. A tardy system will be adhered to by the captains/coach:
   - 3 tardies = 1 missed game
   - Late to practice (unexcused) = 1 tardy
   - Missed practice = 2 tardies
   - Late to game (unexcused) = 1 tardy
   - Missed game (unexcused) = 3 tardies/ automatic bench for 1 game
   - Wrong uniform to game or practice = 1 tardy

Tardies will start over every semester. After a member has been benched resulting from tardies, each tardy will equal a benched game. See section on Benching, Suspension and Expulsion.

Expected Behaviors and Standards:
1. Each cheerleader/dancer is expected to follow the College’s Regulations/Policies which are published in the Student Handbook. Violations of the Regulations/Policies may result in, but are not limited to, disciplinary reprimand, probation, and expulsion from the squad/College.

2. Uniforms must be kept neat and clean. Any damage must be reported so it may be repaired. All uniforms will be washed by the Coach, unless otherwise stated. Cheerleaders/Dancers must return uniforms and equipment, clean and in good condition either 1) immediately at the end of your eligibility, 2) after basketball season is over prior to the next year’s squad being announced, or 3) immediately after expulsion from the squad. Failure to return uniforms will result in a forfeit of the $50.00 deposit.

3. Hair must be neatly styled

4. During practice and performances, jewelry must be limited to stud earrings and nothing else, and tattoos should be covered.

5. Uniform shoes will be worn for performance. These shoes are to be worn for cheer/dance performances and are to be kept clean.

6. Cheerleaders/Dancers must remain in good academic standing by maintaining a 2.0 cumulative grade point average and carry at least 12 credit hours per semester. Should a cheerleader/dancer drop below 12 credit hours or should their cumulative GPA drop below 2.0, they will not be eligible for scholarship, and will be put on probation. Probation is granted to first semester freshman only. If a minimum of 2.0 is not reached by mid-term of the following semester, the squad member will be
expelled. Zero level classes will be factored in the following way to determine eligibility: Pass=C.

7. Wearing uniforms and or warm-ups off of college grounds unless participating in College athletics and/or promotional events is prohibited.

8. If a cheerleader/dancer smells of alcohol or appears to be physically or mentally unprepared to practice or perform at a game or function in the judgment of any athletics administrator or the coach, immediate suspension will result. See section on Benching, Suspension, and Expulsion.

9. Smoking while in uniform or warm-up is prohibited.

10. Cheerleaders/Dancers are expected to remain in good physical condition. In addition to scheduled practices, they are expected to engage in cardiovascular/aerobic conditioning and weight training at the direction of the coach. Excessive weight loss or weight gain will be closely monitored by the coach or athletic trainer.

**Physicals, Insurance, and Injuries:**

Each cheerleader/dancers is expected to have her own primary health insurance to cover her for the entire school year. Each cheerleader/dancer must complete a physical. Should you become injured during practice or a game, you must be seen by one of the athletic trainers. If you are able to go to the training room nearest you do so. If you are not able to physically take yourself to the training room, you must have another member of the squad or coaches go to the training room to have the athletic trainer come to you. The athletic trainer will determine if you need to be seen by a local doctor. If an athletic trainer determines you should be seen by a local doctor, the trainer will give you an injury report form to take to the doctor’s office with you. You are to return the injury report form to the athletic trainer after your doctor visit.

Should you become injured and the athletic trainer sends you for local medical attention, your primary insurance will pay their allowable amount. Connors State College is the secondary insurance and will pay the remaining balance provided you have valid insurance with complete information and proper physical information. In order for Connors to pay your remaining medical costs, you will need to bring all bills and accurate insurance information.

**Spirit Award/Scholarship:**

To receive this scholarship you must not drop below a 2.0 cumulative grade point average and carry 12 or more semester hours each semester. If you drop below the standards set by the scholarship, you’ll be given until midterm of the following semester to raise your GPA. If you fail to complete the academic year, you will be required to pay back the scholarship amount per each semester not completed.

**Summer Camp:**

The cheerleaders/dancers will attend some sort of camp during the summer. Each squad member is expected to attend camp. Should you not be able to attend camp the coach will determine whether or not you will be excused. If the coach determines your excuse is not valid you will be expelled from the squad.

The coach determines where and when the squad will attend camp. Camp is an opportunity for squad members to improve skills and techniques. The use of alcohol and illegal drugs is prohibited while traveling to and from camp and while attending camp. Failure to abide by this rule, regardless of age, will result in expulsion from the squad.
**Benching, Suspension, and Expulsion:**

Failure to comply with the rules set forth in this handbook and the College’s policies will result in benching, suspension or expulsion. Once a member of the squad is benched or suspended, benching and suspensions continue until the coach determines whether to continue benching or suspending or cancel benching or suspension or expel the squad member from the squad. The squad member will not be allowed to discuss with the coach the situation while final action is being determined. The squad member has a right to appeal the decision made by the coach to the Vice President of Student Services.

The benched squad member will sit in the bleachers in close proximity to the squad. The suspended squad member will not participate in practices or games until a decision on their situation has been reached. Expulsion from the squad prohibits the student from future participation in the spirit program at Connors.

Benching, suspension and/or expulsion from the squad may result from but is not limited to, the following:

1. Unexcused or abusive tardiness; unexcused absences from practices or games
2. Behavior inappropriate for a representative of Connors State College
3. Missing the van for an away game
4. Violating policies set by Connors State College and Connors’s student handbook, and the coach
5. Alcohol/tobacco/drug use which impairs the squad members ability to practice or perform safely
6. Use of tobacco while wearing uniform and/or warm-up