



# Cheerleader, Football Player and Parent Handbook

## Welcome Letter

Welcome to the KINGSWOOD LANCERS YOUTH FOOTBALL AND SPIRIT CONFERENCE. The Lancers coaching staff stresses the value of honesty, hard work, courtesy, respect, diligence and consideration. We encourage each cheerleader and football player (and their parents) to work in cooperation with one another and to strive for excellence at all times.

The commitment necessary to have a successful program is unlike any other organized sport your child has participated in. It is essential that you and your child understand this level of commitment as you consider registering your child to play football or to cheer this coming fall.

This is not a “recreational” program. Beginning on the first of August and ending in late October or early November, your child will practice approximately 52 times and play in a minimum of 8 games. This equates to around 110 hours of football or cheering, not including travel time and other organizational functions. Football and cheering require a lot of hard work and discipline, and your child’s coach will expect 100 percent participation **no matter the inconvenience**. Each family that wishes to participate in this program must understand and accept this commitment.

Our goal is for every team to have a successful season. This success will be measured to the extent that the children have fun, their team improves, they remain healthy and decide to continue playing football or cheering next year. Winning will be an added bonus.

We have found that some children have high expectations for themselves when they begin their participation in our program. These expectations can be tempered into more rational goals with encouragement from the coaching staff and parents. Sadly, some parents may hold even higher (and unrealistic) expectations which place even greater pressures on their child. We want your child to succeed and enjoy his/her experience with us. However, please be aware . . . we will not force any child to practice or participate if that child clearly and continually indicates to a Coach or Board Member that he/she does not want to. A consistent and persistent unwillingness to participate mandates that that child be removed from the team.

The purpose of this Handbook is to help inform cheerleaders, football players and their parents/guardians about the Kingswood Lancers Youth Football and Spirit Conference. Hopefully this booklet will help to answer some of the more frequently asked questions. Should you have further questions or concerns about anything in this Handbook, please see your league President or Cheering Coordinator.

Remember, ALL COACHES and TEAM PARENTS are VOLUNTEERS and deserve the respect of not only the football players and cheerleaders, but their parents, too. These volunteers put in many hours of their own time to ensure that your child has a positive and safe experience. Therefore, the Lancers Board asks that all participants and their parents and/or guardians adhere to all of the rules that are set forth.

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As cheerleading and football are team sports, it is important that your child attend all practices, scrimmages, competitions, games and playoff games. Teams perform at their best when team members can rely on their teammates to “hold up their end”. Of course, illness and certain major obligations may result in absenteeism. However, casual absenteeism makes it difficult for individuals to learn their specific responsibilities and for the team to form as one unit. Teamwork is a major component of cheerleading and football.

#### **ABSENCES AND TARDINESS:**

- 1 **Any participant (football or cheerleader) who misses more than fifty percent (50%) of regularly scheduled practices during the week shall be declared ineligible to participate in that week’s game.** You will be informed of this decision prior to the game. As part of a team, you should still plan on attending the game and supporting your teammates.
- 2 All cheerleaders and football players must be ready to practice by the designated start time. This means you are dressed appropriately and ready to begin at the start of practice.
- 3 If you do not come to practice fully dressed and fully prepared, and are therefore unable to practice, this is an unexcused absence (i.e.: forgot helmet, sneakers, cleats, etc.).
4. Unless prior arrangements have been made **with the head coach**, any child arriving late (15 minutes past the designated start time) for practice or a game three (3) times during the season, will result in an unexcused absence. It is very important that your child be at all practices and games on time to allow for proper warm up to prevent

an injury. It is your responsibility as a parent/guardian to ensure that timeliness is adhered to. An unexcused absence is defined as a parent/guardian who does not call their child's head coach or League President/Cheering Coordinator within an hour of practice or game time to indicate the reason for absenteeism or tardiness. You will receive a list of phone numbers for this purpose at the beginning of the season.

4 Three (3) unexcused absences during the season will result in a one (1) game suspension. Continued unexcused absences after said suspension may result in dismissal from the squad or team.

5 As important as it is to bring your child to practice and games on time, it is just as important to pick up your child on time. You must pick up your child at the designated time set by their head coach. Again, you will receive a list of people at the field that carry cell phones in case of an emergency and you will be late picking up your child. Should you continually pick your child up more than 15 minutes late; a conference will be held with League officials, your child's head coach, and you to discuss this issue. Please be advised that chronic lateness may result in an unexcused absence.

6 During August, football teams and cheerleaders are required to participate in conditioning exercises and will start practice for games and (cheering) competitions. It is imperative that your child be at every practice.

7 For clarification, excused absences include: Absence from school due to illness, school functions (open house, field trips, etc), mandatory family functions. Unexcused absences include: the fair (Deerfield, Fryeburg, Rochester, etc.), homework (plan accordingly), extra curricular/non-mandatory school activities (dance class, gymnastics, boy/girl scouts, etc.), school dances, birthday parties, inability to get a ride (call a friend!), school or other team sports (baseball, soccer, hockey, etc.)

## **INJURIES:**

Football is a contact sport. Cheerleaders get thrown in the air. Due to the competitive and hard-hitting nature of these sports, your child may experience an injury during the course of the season. Please keep the following in mind:

1 Please do not run onto the field if your child gets injured. If it is necessary, you will be summoned onto the field. We will have at least one CPR-Certified person at every practice and at least one EMT at every game immediately available to attend to any injury.

2 If you do not attend your child's practices and/or games, please be sure that we have an emergency contact number for you and/or an alternate person in case you cannot be located.

3 If your child sees a doctor for a football or cheering-related injury or cannot participate because of an injury, he or she shall not be allowed to return to practice or games without providing a signed note from his/her Doctor/Attending Physician. This note must specify the participant's name, description of injury, an expression such as "is cleared to play football or participate in cheerleading", the date and the office stamp and signature of the Doctor. Copies of this note are not acceptable, only the original shall be accepted for consideration. Until this note is provided, your child will not be allowed to participate.

4 If your child is removed from a practice or game due to injury, he/she is not eligible to resume playing until he/she is cleared by medical personnel. This determination is made solely by that medical representative.

## **WEATHER:**

Please be advised that we will practice under some of the most severe weather conditions. Practices will only be discontinued if there is lightning present. Practice will happen in the rain, in the snow, in severe heat/humidity. **Unless you are called, assume there is practice.** This goes for games, as well. Accordingly, please have your child dress appropriately and be prepared for changes in the weather.

## **TEAM ASSIGNMENT:**

There are no “tryouts” and there are no “first string or second string” teams. Registration is on a “first come first serve” basis. Your football player will be placed on his/her team based on the following chart according to their age and weight.

<b>Division</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>Weight Range</b>
<b>Mitey Mite</b> (older/lighter)	7-8-9 N/A	45-85 N/A
<b>Junior Pee Wee</b> (older/lighter)	8-9-10 11*	55-95 55-75
<b>Pee Wee</b> (older/lighter)	9-10-11 12*	70-110 70-90
<b>Junior Midget</b> (older/lighter)	10-11-12 13*	80-125 80-105
<b>Midget</b> (older/lighter)	11-12-13-14 15*	95-145 95-125

The asterisked (\*) provisions in each division allow the so-called “older but lighter” player to also qualify.

The weight range adds 1 pound per week after the second game, up to a maximum of 9 pounds. For example, a Junior Midget player could weigh 126 at the second game, 127 at the third game, etc.

A cheerleader is placed on a team based on age only. Every effort will be made to place a cheerleader and a sibling football player at the same playing level. However, cheerleaders are placed on teams from oldest to youngest and still have to fall into the above age ranges. Therefore, it may not be possible.

A child’s age on July 31 is his/her age for the season.

## **PRACTICE TIMES:**

1. Please be advised that your child will have practice Monday through Thursday

in August. Practice times will be from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. We have arranged this schedule for the month of August in an attempt to allow for 3 day weekends. Please

do not plan family vacations or camp during the month of August if at all possible.

2 Once school starts, or after the first game, practices will be held Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and Saturday from either 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. or 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. We will make every attempt to coordinate with coaches from different teams in order to have Saturday practices consistent with the other teams/squads. However, please realize that some of your coaches work on Saturdays and need to alternate practice times for this reason. Therefore, if you have children on more than one team, their Saturday practices may not be at the same times.

3 According to New Hampshire Youth Football and Spirit Rules, **only Board Members, Coaches, and Players are allowed on the field**, or if inside, in the designated practice area, during practices or games. Indoor practices are closed to parents due to safety issues.

4 Cheerleading squads that place in the top two (2) levels at State Competition will be performing at Regional Competition on Thanksgiving weekend. Therefore, practices will continue until the date of competition. Please note that the location and times of practices may change.

5 Football teams that advance to the State Playoff Games will continue to practice until the date of Playoffs. Practice times may change. Both the football team and cheerleading squad will participate in these games which may be held during the week and could be held anywhere in the State. These games may not occur on a Sunday. Should the team advance to the Regional Playoff Games, these games could be held out of State.

6 If your child's squad or team wins at Regional Competition or Playoffs, they will go to the Super Bowl at Disney World in Florida. Generally, this event is held the first or second week of December.

## **PRACTICE RULES:**

1 **Clothing for Cheerleaders:** Your child should wear shorts and/or sweatpants and an appropriate shirt. **No jeans, silky shorts or pants are allowed.** Socks are required and supporting sneakers should be worn at all times. Hair is not allowed to fall into your cheerleader's face. If her hair is long enough, it **needs** to be pulled back into a ponytail.

2 **Clothing for Football Players:** Your child should wear shorts and/or sweatpants during the conditioning period. **No jeans are allowed, nor are wind pants that are longer than the top of the player's cleats.** Socks and **rubber soled cleats** are required at all practices. No metal cleats are allowed at any time. Once conditioning is over (First 10 hours of practice), you are required to wear full equipment (all pads, helmet, etc.).

3 **Jewelry:** All jewelry must be removed prior to every practice and game. This includes earrings, nose rings, belly rings, etc. Please plan accordingly when having a new piercing – we strongly suggest that you do not allow your child to have a new piercing after June 1st. Earrings that cannot be removed must be taped. The only jewelry that can be worn is Medic Alert bracelets and these must be taped. If your child wears eyeglasses, they must be secured with a headband.

4 **Absolutely no glitter, artificial nails or nail polish is allowed.** Fingernails cannot be long enough to be seen when looking at a child's palm.

5 **Absolutely no gum chewing is allowed.**

6 **Parents are not allowed to be on the field or in the practice area at any time**

during practice or play, with the exception of an injury situation only, and then not until after the Head Coach requests the parent/guardian to come onto the field or practice area. Coaches are encouraged to invite parents onto the field only after practices are complete.

7. A brief squad/team meeting is usually held after practice. At these meetings, the cheerleaders and football players will receive handouts regarding stunts, plays, practice or game schedules and any other pertinent material that your child might need. **Parents are invited to join these meetings**, should they choose. Coaches will dismiss your child. Please do not sit at the end of the driveway and beckon your child to leave, unless it is an emergency. Your child may miss important information.

**GAME DAY:**

1 On game day, squads and teams are to meet **one hour and fifteen minutes** before game time. We begin warming up one hour prior to our scheduled game time. This extra fifteen minutes allows teams to meet up and get dressed in order to properly warm up and be weighed before games. Weigh in times are scheduled to begin at half time of the preceding game. If your child misses weigh in, please be advised that **he/she will not be allowed to play that day's game.**

2 Please be certain that your child has the proper uniform and all equipment. Should your child come to a game without the proper uniform and all equipment, she or he **will not be allowed** to play in the game.

3 Game schedules are tentative. Game time and location are subject to last-minute changes. This means that should you have children on different squads and/or teams, they may have different games at different locations during the same timeframe (for example, a Mitey Mite may play in Laconia while a Junior Pee Wee team may play at home).

4 There is to be no eating on the sidelines, other than half-time snacks. We know that it gets cold, but please do not bring your child a hot chocolate or hot dog while they are playing/cheering. Any additional food, other than the half time snack, will be given back to the parent. Water, Gatorade-type drinks, and juice are acceptable. Please, no soda. If your child must eat something due to a medical condition, please make arrangements with your child's coach.

5 **No jewelry, no glitter, artificial nails or nail polish, no gum chewing (see above).**

**REGISTRATION:**

1 The registration fee for the program is \$145 for football players and \$75 for cheerleaders. This fee can be cut in half if you volunteer an additional four (4) hours. Sibling discounts are available. A limited number of scholarships are available, as well. See the League President or Cheering Coordinator for more information.

2 Registration is on a first come, first serve basis. Your child's spot is held by completing the registration forms and paying your registration fee. **No spot on a roster is guaranteed without all completed paperwork being completed and turned in by the**

**designated dates, including payment in full or acceptable**

**payment arrangements.**

1 No child will be allowed to register unless their uniform and/or equipment from the previous year has been returned. Any family with an outstanding financial obligation to this League will not be able to register their child for the upcoming season until said obligation is paid in full.

2 Be advised that there are no refunds given after May 1<sup>st</sup>. Refunds will only be given in case of medical issues, the child moving, or a team not being available to you. There is no refund if your child is asked to or personally decides to leave the squad or team.

3 **All of the following paperwork must be received on the designated dates. required paperwork is not complete, your child will not be able to participate – NO EXCEPTIONS!**

**If**

<b>What</b>	<b>When Needed By</b>	<b>Misc. Info</b>
Birth Certificate	At time of registration	If you have played/cheered before, we should already have a copy
Physical – Signed by Doctor	Prior to August 1 – your child cannot practice without this info	Must be signed and dated by physician after Jan. 1, 2011. Plan accordingly!
Medical Release Form	At time of registration	On registration form.
Final Report Card for 2010/2011 school year		All 4 quarters must be legible
Equipment Agreement	Prior to receiving equipment/uniforms	
Code of Conducts	Prior to August 1	Parent and Player must sign
Parent/Player Handbook	Prior to August 1	Page in back of book must be signed and returned
Parental Consent	Prior to August 1 – your child cannot practice without this info	

**EQUIPMENT/UNIFORMS:**

**FOOTBALL:** Football players will be provided with a helmet, mouth guard, shoulder pads, 2 hip pads, 2 thigh pads, 2 knee pads, a tail pad, girdle, game pants, a game shirt, and practice pants. Parents will sign an Equipment/Uniform Agreement when this equipment is handed out. You are responsible for the replacement cost of said items should they be lost, stolen, ruined, etc. Football players are required to wear rubber soled cleat and an athletic supporter with a cup. You are responsible for the cost associated with these two items. No metal cleats are allowed at any time.

**CHEERLEADERS:** Cheerleaders will be provided with a uniform, hair piece, bloomers and socks. Parents will sign an Equipment/Uniform Agreement when this equipment is handed out. You are responsible for the replacement cost of said items should they be lost, stolen, ruined, etc. Cheerleaders are required to purchase sneakers (sized/chosen as a group) and bodysuits, if requested.

**BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDE:**

For any team to succeed, it is important that teammates treat each other with courtesy and respect. With this in mind, the Kingswood Lancers have established an acceptable CODE OF ETHICS that we expect each cheerleader, football player and parent/guardian to abide by. All members and parents/guardians must sign these forms. In a nutshell, these rules are as follows:

- 1 Any child that attempts to intimidate fellow teammates by word and/or physical deed will be immediately cut from the squad or team. There is no refund given for this action per New Hampshire Official Rules.
- 2 Any child who is an extreme discipline problem will, with the concurrence of the League, be immediately cut from the squad or team. There is no refund given for this action per New Hampshire Official Rules.
- 3 Physical abuse (by a player or parent) towards teammates, volunteers and/or coaching staff will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the squad or team. There is no refund given for this action per New Hampshire Official Rules.
- 4 Any adult who uses profanity, abusiveness or aggressiveness aimed toward a coach, player, referee, another parent, Board and/or Association Member will be asked to leave the area immediately. If this problem persists, further action may result and is grounds for immediate dismissal from practices and/or games, which follows the “Zero Tolerance” rules of the New Hampshire Official Rules. For more information, see the Parent Code of Ethics. There is no refund for this action.

**VOLUNTEERING:**

Part of your registration includes an initial requirement of two (2) hours of volunteer participation per child. In order to make the Lancers Organization successful, we need the participation of one or both parents to help run various parts of this Program. Please remember that if you have paid a reduced registration fee you are required to perform four (4) **additional** hours of volunteer participation. If you have received a scholarship, you are required to perform an **additional** eight (8) hours of volunteer participation.

Volunteering can be done by assisting in the concession stand, helping with fundraising, monitoring minimum play requirements and chain movement, field set up or clean up, to name a few. Volunteer sign up sheets will be available shortly after the current season starts. **If you do not complete the volunteer hours that are required, please be advised that you will be billed for these hours.**

**PARENT MEETING:**

There will be a mandatory Parent Meeting in August, time and place to be announced .

One parent/guardian per child **must** be in attendance. Your League President will review pertinent information concerning rules and try to answer any questions you may have.

**must**

after

### **CONCERNS:**

If you have concerns or other issues regarding your child's practice and game participation, please communicate those concerns directly to your child's head coach. Please remember to be constructive, not destructive. These concerns should be addressed before or after a practice or game, not in the middle. You should not discuss concerns in front of the children. If, after discussing your concerns with the coach, you still have concerns, please see either the League President or the Cheering Coordinator.

Please also remember that this is not the NFL. Some rules are different. If you have questions on a certain call or non-call, please approach the Coach or League President after the game is over.

Every child cannot be quarterback or a running back. Your child's position will be determined by the coaching staff. One of the primary goals of our league is to teach your child skills which give him/her and their team the best chance for success and to learn to be a team player. Your football player is entitled to a minimum number of plays, per game, and this information is monitored to ensure that your child receives these plays. The minimum number varies from 8 to 12, depending on team size.

Please do not yell instructions to your child from the sidelines. Your child has a lot to remember and the coaching staff provides instructions on a play by play basis. Any additional instructions will be confusing to your child.

If you are not part of the field crew or coaching staff, you are not allowed on the field. This includes the practice and game fields and the sidelines. This rule will be strictly enforced.

### **MISCELLANEOUS:**

Alcohol and smoking are prohibited at all Lancer functions.

If your child is taking any medication or uses an inhaler, please notify the Coach before the first practice. An inhaler and/or other medication, if properly labeled with the child's name and administration instructions, can be placed in the team's first aid kit. If your child has any medical conditions or learning disabilities (i.e.: asthma, bleeding disorders,

