



Granite Bay Jr. Grizzlies Cheer Program

Parent/Cheerleader Handbook

Welcome to the Jr. Grizzlies Family

The Granite Bay Jr. Grizzlies is a member of the Sierra Athletic Conference (SAC) league and is an organization dedicated to serving youth ages 5–14 in cheerleading. We are excited to have your family participate in our program.

Cheerleading squad members will:

- Cheer and perform sideline chants at football games
- Jump, stunt, tumble, and perform routines
- Perform halftime routines during games
- Participate in team performances
- Compete in two cheerleading competitions during the season

Cheerleaders will help lead the crowd in supporting their football teams while learning choreographed routines and safely performing partner stunts.

Cheerleading is a **team sport**, and each member's participation is essential to the success of the entire squad.

Team Placement

Before we begin evaluations, I want to take a few minutes to explain how teams are formed, because this is something parents often have questions about.

First and most importantly, our teams are organized by age and grade according to SAC league rules. Those rules require us to place athletes in divisions based on their grade level first.

Divisions:

- **Mascot – K-2nd**
- **JPW – 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade**
- **Pee Wee – 4th, 5th, and 6th grade**
- **Junior Midgets – 7th grade**
- **Midgets – 8th grade**

During evaluations, our coaches look at each athlete's skills so we can determine team sizes and what each team needs. For example, we evaluate things like stunting ability, tumbling, strength, and overall performance.

Some seasons we may combine Junior Midgets and Midgets into one team, usually competing under the Midget team name, depending on the number of athletes we have.

After we establish the age and grade placements, coaches look at what each team needs to be successful. That might mean needing more flyers, bases, back spots, or tumblers.

In some cases, we may look at the oldest athletes in the younger division to see if they can help strengthen an older team. However, it's important to understand that moving up is not guaranteed based on skill alone, because we are required to follow age and grade guidelines first.

When teams are finalized, please know that coaches have carefully evaluated every athlete and placed them where their skills will best help the team succeed.

Our goal is to build safe, balanced, and competitive teams while helping every athlete grow and have a great season.

Practices

All practices, camps, and stunt clinics are mandatory.

Each team will attend pre-season and regular-season camps and clinics to learn:

- Cheer fundamentals
- Safety procedures
- Proper stunt technique
- Choreography

Pre-Season Cheer Camp

Dates: July 17–19, 2026

Time: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Pre-Season Practices

Beginning July 20, 2026, practices will be held:

- **Monday – Thursday**
- **Location:** Ronald L. Feist Park
- Until the first season game

In-Season Practices

After the first season game, practices will transition to:

- **3 days per week - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday** (Excluding 14U Midgets on Freshman Thursday Gamedays)
- **5:30 PM – 7:30 PM**
- **Location:** Scheduled gym facility

Mandatory 2026 Cheer Camps and Clinics

Halftime Routine & Stunt Clinic

Dates: July 17–19, 2026

Participating Divisions:

- Junior Pee Wee
- Pee Wee
- Junior Midget
- Midget

Games

League play runs from **August through November**, beginning with **Jamboree**.

Following the regular season:

- 1st Round Playoffs
- 2nd Round Playoffs
- Championship games

If a football team advances into postseason play, the cheer squad will **continue supporting their team at all playoffs and championship games**.

No exceptions.

Typical Saturday Game Schedule

| Division | Game Time |
|-------------|-----------|
| Jr. Pee Wee | 10:00 AM |
| Pee Wee | 12:00 PM |
| Jr. Midget | 2:00 PM |
| Midget | 4:00 PM |

Mascots

Mascots will cheer for half of the game (**Released to parents at halftime**)

Game Arrival Time

- All cheerleaders must arrive **1 hour prior to game start** for warm-ups.
- Parents are not permitted on the playing field.

Competitions

JAMZ Reload

Date: **Sunday, October 18**

This is an **all-day event**. Additional details will be provided once the season begins.

Sierra Athletic Conference Capital City Championship (TOC)

Date: **Sunday, November 8, 2026**

Hosted by **JAMZ**.

Complete event details will be distributed during the season.

Attendance

Because routines and stunts are built based on the number and formation of athletes, attendance is extremely important.

Mandatory Attendance Includes

- Practices
- Camps
- Clinics
- Games
- Competitions

Planned Absences

Planned absences (examples include weddings, family reunions, or prepaid vacations) must be communicated **immediately** to:

- VP of Cheer vpcheer@gbjrgrizzlies.org (510) 461-8168

- Your Head Coach (TBD)
- Failure to report can result in replacement from routine

Illness or Injury

If your child becomes sick or injured:

- Notify your coach as soon as possible.

We understand that illness and injury occur, but **team positions may not be guaranteed after absences.**

Absence Policy

If a cheerleader misses three mandatory practices or games:

- Parent and cheerleader review these absences with the coach and VP of Cheer
- The cheerleader will be placed on temporary probation

Probation consequences include:

- Sitting with the coach during the first and second quarters of the next game
- Returning to sideline cheering during the third quarter

If a fourth absence occurs, the cheerleader may be removed from the performance.

Absences Before Competition

If a cheerleader misses practice within the three weeks leading up to competition, the following staff will determine consequences:

- VP of Cheer
- Cheer Coordinator
- Coaching Staff

Reporting an Absence

If you cannot reach your coach, contact:

Vinnie Esguerra – VP of Cheer

Phone: (510) 461-8168

Tardies

Tardiness disrupts practices and games.

A tardy is defined as arriving any time after the official practice start time.

Please plan for:

- Traffic
- Parking delays
- Walking time to the practice field

Tardy Policy

Three tardies = one absence

Behavior Expectations

Our coaches and student instructors are volunteers who dedicate significant time to this program.

Respectful behavior is required from both cheerleaders and parents.

Cheerleader Expectations

Cheerleaders are expected to:

- Respect teammates and coaches
- Celebrate team successes
- Encourage teammates during challenges
- Set goals and work hard
- Arrive prepared for practice and games
- Support other teams
- Respect practice facilities

Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Failure to follow directions
- Defiance
- Talking back during instruction
- Rudeness to coaches, instructors, or teammates
- Disruptive or uncooperative behavior
- Profane or inappropriate language
- Unsafe actions toward oneself or others

If unacceptable behavior occurs:

- A parent may be called to pick up the child
- The cheerleader will receive an absence for that day

Our goal is to ensure every athlete has a positive, fun, and safe experience.

Coach Office Hours

Communication with coaches is encouraged.

However, before and after practices are busy times, and extended discussions during these times are discouraged.

Parents **may not interrupt practice** while training is taking place.

If You Need to Speak with a Coach

- Request a brief meeting **before or after practice**
- Schedule a time in advance when possible

This ensures a productive conversation without disrupting practice.

Communication

The Cheer Staff communicates regularly with families through:

- **Email updates**
- **Band App (primary communication platform)**
- **WhatsApp (team-specific communication when applicable)**

Parents should **not post scheduling information** in these communication platforms to avoid confusion.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for:

- Reading all communications
- Staying informed of updates
- Avoiding non-emergency discussions during coaching time

Addressing Concerns

If you have concerns:

- Speak directly with the appropriate coach or staff member
- Do not discuss issues with other parents

This helps protect the experience for all participants.

24-Hour Rule

If frustrated, wait **24 hours before sending a message.**

The only exception is **safety concerns**, such as:

- Bullying
- Physical harm
- Threats or violence

Social Media

Social media includes platforms such as:

- Instagram
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Tik Tok
- Snap Chat
- Band
- Other online communities

Cheerleaders must remember that their online behavior reflects on the **Granite Bay Jr. Grizzlies organization**.

All athletes must follow the **GBJG Athlete/SAC Code of Conduct**.

Athletes will sign a **Social Media Agreement** acknowledging these expectations.

Certification and Jamboree

Certification is the **SAC process used to verify eligibility** for players and cheerleaders.

Certification occurs during **Jamboree**.

This Event Is Mandatory

During certification, teams must provide documentation including:

- Athlete photograph
- Certified birth certificate
- Medical release
- Player/parent contract
- Other required documents

These documents confirm eligibility to participate in the program.

The **Jamboree date, location, and schedule will be announced**.

Family Volunteer Requirements

Granite Bay Jr. Grizzlies is a **non-profit organization run entirely by volunteers.**

Program funding comes from:

- Donations
- Sponsorships
- Fundraising events

Volunteer Requirement

Each family must complete **a minimum of 10 volunteer hours per season.**

Volunteer opportunities will be coordinated by the **Volunteer Coordinator with Football.**

Granite Bay Jr. Grizzlies Cheer Staff

Vice President of Cheer

Vinnie Esguerra

Email: vpcheer@gbjrgrizzlies.org

Cheer Coordinator

Samantha Castillo

Email: cheercoordinator@gbjrgrizzlies.org

Cheer Registrar

Chris Bauer

Email: cheerregistrar@gbjrgrizzlies.org

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

Receipt and Acknowledgement of Parent Information Handbook

I, _____, Parent/Guardian of _____,

confirm that I have read the **Granite Bay Jr. Grizzlies Parent Information Handbook** and agree to follow the policies and standards established by the organization.

I understand these expectations are designed to ensure a successful and positive season for all participants.

Print Name (Parent): _____

Signature (Parent): _____

Print Name (Athlete): _____

Signature (Athlete): _____

Date: _____