

# 2024

## CHICOPEE BRAVES CHEER

Season begins on Thursday August 1st, 2024

Crystal McCollaum, Cheer Director  
[bravescheerleading@yahoo.com](mailto:bravescheerleading@yahoo.com)  
(413) 626-3401

The guidelines below are to inform the cheerleaders, and their parents/guardians of the expectations of participating in the Chicopee Braves Cheer program. Parents must agree with these guidelines AND must adhere to them during the season.

The objectives of the Chicopee Braves Football & Cheer Association

- To promote athletic endeavors for the youth of the City of Chicopee and surrounding cities who do not have a Pop Warner Association of their own.
- To encourage the adults of the community to help instruct the youth to play various sports.
- To increase the physical fitness of the youth.
- To supervise youth activities and teach them fair and good sportsmanship.
- To encourage more youths in the community to participate in sports.
- To encourage scholastic fitness.

### Practice Schedule (subject to change)

#### *August*

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday	6:00 – 8:00
Saturday	10:00 – 12:00

#### *September & beyond*

Tuesday & Thursday	5:30 – 7:30
Saturday	10:00 – 12:00

### Practice Expectations

- Practice is mandatory throughout the entire season. Athletes must be at practice to be eligible to participate in performances (games, competitions, etc.)
  - Please notify your coach if your athlete will miss practice for any reason.
- Athletes must arrive to practice ON TIME, dressed appropriately & ready to practice.
  - We understand that some parents get out of work a little later, please notify your coach if this is the reason for tardiness.
- Bathroom breaks are a huge distraction. Please be sure your athlete is using the bathroom prior to arriving at practice.
- Please notify your coach at the start of the season of any vacation that is already scheduled where your athlete will miss practice.

**The below acceptable & unacceptable practice attire is for safety reasons. Please be sure to adhere to all safety regulations.**

### **Appropriate Attire for Practice**

- Cotton Shorts/Spandex (like Nike Pros)
- Crew Neck Sweatshirt
- Leggings/Yoga Pants
- Cheer Sneakers (no high tops)
- Socks
- T-Shirt

## **Unacceptable Attire for Practice**

- Crocs
- Flip Flops
- High Tops
- Hoodies
- Jeans/Jean shorts
- Overalls
- Pockets
- Sandals
- Skirts
- Spaghetti Straps
- Zippers

**Nails must be cut at fingertip level, no nail polish, includes clear – NO FAKE NAILS**

**NO JEWELRY OF ANY KIND, BEADS OR HAIR WRAPS.**

Practices will be canceled at the discretion of the Cheer Director. If a practice is canceled for any reason, you will be notified through our SportsYou app.

## **Game Day**

Our season schedule is being put together, as soon as we have this, it will be shared with each of you.

Typically, our games are on Sunday, but we may also have Saturday games.

- Games are mandatory for all cheerleaders. We have games in rain, snow, cold, etc. Please be sure that your cheerleader is dressed appropriately for the weather. We can have cooler mornings that warm up, so please be sure they are dressed in layers as they are able. As with practice, if a game is canceled, you will be notified through our SportsYou app.
- All cheerleaders are expected to be at the playing field for all games, 1 hour prior to game time. This is for home & away games. The coaches use this time to warm up, practice, & decide on a half time routine. It is at the coach's discretion if the arrival time is changed (no shorter than 30 minutes prior to game time)
- Cheerleaders are not able to be with their parents during games. Please be sure they have water/water bottles. They should eat before or after games. The athletes are with their team from when they arrive, until the coaches release them at the end of the game.
- Parents are responsible for transportation

## **Attendance Policy (Regular Season)**

Attendance is essential to the success of the season. 1 person missing a practice or game has a significant impact on the team, & specifically the stunt group they are in, since they are unable to stunt with a missing athlete. This includes the pregame practice. For this reason, we have created an attendance policy that we believe to be fair to all of those involved.

We understand things may come up through the season. For that reason, each cheerleader is allowed **two (2) unexcused absences**. Please be advised that just because you notified the coach of an absence, this does not excuse the absence.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES ARE: MEDICAL, FAMILY EMERGENCIES, CLASS REQUIREMENT (if this cannot be fulfilled at another time), INJURY (athlete must still attend if they are able to)**

**\*Athletes cannot miss any practices the week leading up to competitions.  
NO exceptions.**

**TARDINESS/LEAVING EARLY – 3 times unexcused tardy, leaving early, or any combination of the two is considered 1 UNEXCUSED absence.**

If not in proper practice attire, the athlete will be asked to sit out practice. This will also count as 1 **UNEXCUSED** absence.

**1st unexcused absence:** A warning will be provided to the athlete & parent. Extra conditioning (cheer jacks, squats, etc.) or an extra lap of running at the start of the next practice to make up for what was missed.

**2nd unexcused absence:** A meeting with coach, cheer director & parents will be held. Extra conditioning (cheer jacks, squats, etc.) or an extra lap of running at the start of the next practice to make up for what was missed. The cheerleader will be required to sit the 1st ½ of the weekend's game.

**3rd unexcused absence** - A meeting with coach, cheer director & parents will be held to discuss a resolution. Chicopee Braves reserves the right to remove any child from our cheerleading program if the participant has missed 3 or more practices or games.

**\*If a coach, or the Cheer Director is not notified about a missing practice, the athlete will be required to sit during a game, & this could result in removal from the competition routine. The Cheer Director has the discretion to remove a cheerleader from the team for excessive tardiness &/or poor attendance.**

### Uniforms

- Uniforms are included in your registration & are to be returned at the end of the season in the same condition received.
- Recommendation is to purchase 2 pairs of cheer shoes. One for games, & one for competitions. This is NOT required, only a suggestion.
- Game Day & Competition bows will be provided.
- Head Coach will notify athletes regarding game day & competition socks to be worn.

### Regular Season Competition

Teams will compete at a minimum of 2 competitions. The Tri State Competition & the CCPW Local Competition. These typically take place in October. Dates, location & times will be announced as soon as they are made available.

Those teams that place (1st or 2nd place) at CCPW Local Competition, will advance to the Regional Competition. This competition typically takes place the 2nd weekend in November & will be held at MassMutual Center in 2024.

Those teams that place (1st or 2nd place) at NE Regional Competition, will advance to the National Competition

- December 7th – 14th - Pop Warner National Competition (Orlando FL)

The approximate cost for Nationals (based on 2023), should a team advance, would be \$1500-\$2000 per athlete.

There is a \$500 deposit per athlete due in advance of the Regional Competition. If the team does not advance, the check/payment will be returned.

We will have fundraising events to help offset the cost of this competition.

### Fundraising & Sponsorships

We ask that each of our athletes participate in all fundraisers. We typically have 2 fundraisers per regular season. These funds are used to pay for our indoor practice space, Insurance, Player Fees, Competitions, Awards Ceremony, Uniforms, etc.

**We need SPONSORS!** If you own a business, know someone, or are a regular at a local business ask them about supporting the Chicopee Braves, youth sports. We are a non-profit organization so this would be a tax deductible donation. **We have an awesome sponsorship program!** Let me know if you need additional information.

### SportsYou

This year we will be utilizing the SportsYou app for all communications. You will receive an email with a code. Once you enter that code, you'll be added to your athletes team chat.

### Additional Events – Dates & Times TBD

Chicopee Night Out – Monday, August 5th, 2024

The Big E – Chicopee Day, September 2024