



Cheer By-Law FAQ's

Cheer Tryouts

When can an IHSA Competitive Cheer Team conduct team tryouts?

- Competitive cheer team tryouts must be held during the competitive season, on or after Monday of week 17 (October 28, 2019).

May a Competitive Cheer Team conduct tryouts in early October so they are ready to learn choreography on Monday of Week 17?

- No. Competitive cheer team tryouts must be held on or after Monday of week 17, the first day of the competitive season.

When can a Sideline Cheer Team conduct tryouts?

- Sideline cheer teams can host their tryouts at any time throughout the year. Sideline Teams are supportive to athletic teams at school events. Sideline teams follow the IHSA Activity by-laws 4.000. For example, if a school has a sideline cheer team that cheers on the sidelines during football games that school may conduct tryouts at any time (April, May or any other date that the district designates).

Does an IHSA member school Cheer Team still have to comply with the IHSA By-laws even if they are not going to enter the IHSA State Series but plan to compete at other contests?

- Yes. All IHSA member schools must comply with all NFHS spirit rules and IHSA by-laws regardless if they are entering the IHSA State Series (This applies to: Eligibility, Season Limitations, Contest Limitations, Qualifications of Coaches, etc.).

Choreography

May an IHSA Competitive Cheer Team use a choreographer during the summer?

- Yes. Choreographers can be used during the summer and do not have to be ASEP certified if they are working with student-athletes during the 25 days of IHSA allowable summer contact.

May an IHSA Competitive Cheer Team use a choreographer during the IHSA Competitive Cheer Team Season?

- Yes, on or after Monday of Week 17. If the choreographer meets with the cheer team during the competitive cheer season (5.351) he/she will have to be a certified coach (by-law 2.070).

IHSA By-law 2.070 QUALIFICATIONS OF COACHES

To serve a member school as a head or assistant coach, athletic coaches in member schools must:

- be regularly certified by the ISBE as a teacher, administrator, or school service personnel (i.e. counselor, social worker, speech therapist, etc., including substitute teachers), or*
- be a retired teacher/coach from an IHSA member school, or*
- be a college student coaching as part of an official student teaching assignment, or*
- be certified through ASEP, NFHS or other IHSA board approved coaches certification program (see IHSA Policy Number 9 for a complete list of approved programs), and*
- be at least 19 years of age, and*
- be officially employed by the local school board of the member school.*

IHSA By-law 2.071: *All remuneration for high school athletic coaching must be from the board of education of the member school employing the coach.*

May a competitive cheer team learn elements of a competitive routine between the end of the 25 contact day period, August 4, 2019 and October 28, 2019?

- No, the only times a competitive cheer team may organize and/or learn choreography are during the 25 days of IHSA allowable summer contact or after October 28, 2019 (5.351).
- Sideline cheer can learn routines year round.

All-Star Competitions and Lessons

Will IHSA member school students be allowed to compete for a school's Competitive Cheer Team and compete for an "All-Star" Cheer Team during the IHSA Competitive Cheer Season, Monday, October 28, 2019 through Saturday, February 8, 2020?

- No, IHSA member school students will not be able to compete for a non-school team and compete for their high school during the IHSA competitive cheer season (Monday, October 28 of Week 17 through Saturday, February 8 of Week 31). Cheerleaders are allowed to compete for a non-school team after the IHSA competitive cheer season or after their school's last competition date, whichever comes first.

IHSA By-law 3.101: During the school season for a given sport, in a school which maintains a IHSA competitive cheer team, a student shall not participate on any non-school team, nor as an individual unattached in non-school competition, in that given sport or in any competition that involves the skill of the sport in question. Violation shall cause ineligibility for a period not to exceed 365 days.

IHSA By-law 3.103: The phrase, "participate on any non-school team," as utilized in by-law 3.101, is defined to mean engaging in any team activity, including but not limited to, tryouts (except as defined in Section 3.102), drills, physical practice sessions, player evaluations, team meetings, etc.

May high school competitive team cheerleaders attend tumbling lessons during the IHSA competitive cheer season?

- Yes, a student may take a lesson during the season. Note: Lessons cannot be mandatory and coaches conducting lessons during the season have limitations (by-law 3.111)

IHSA By-law 3.103: The phrase, "participate on any non-school team," as utilized in by-law 3.101, is defined to mean engaging in any team activity, including but not limited to, tryouts (except as defined in Section 3.102), drills, physical practice sessions, player evaluations, team meetings, etc.

Are coaches allowed to attend team tumbling practices at a gymnastics facility?

- Yes, during the sideline and competitive seasons, if a coach attends tumbling at an outside facility it must be an organized team practice. During the competitive season, the tumbling instructor must be a certified coach (by-law 2.070). If it is not an organized team practice, a coach should not attend if more than two students from their school are in attendance, as it would be considered a lesson, camp or clinic (by-law 3.111).

IHSA By-law 3.111: During the school year, a person who is a coach at any IHSA member school may not be involved in any respect with any coaching school, camp, or clinic for any interscholastic sport or which provides instruction in any skill of an interscholastic sport and is attended by more than two (2) persons from the coach's school. Violation shall cause ineligibility for a period not to exceed 365 days. Programs that involve only demonstration of skills and sports theory without providing instruction and requiring active participation by attendees are not considered coaching schools.

May a coach at a member school coach a non-school team, once the season is over?

- Yes, during the school year, a coach may coach a non-school team if members from his/her school on the non-school team does not exceed 6-six for a small team school, 8-eight for a medium team school, 10-ten for a large and coed team school.

IHSA By-law 3.170: During the school year, a person who is a coach in any sport at a member school, may be involved in any respect with any non-school team, only if the number of squad members from his/her school which are on the non-school team roster does not exceed one-half the number of players needed to field a team in actual IHSA state series competition in that sport. The number of non-school team squad members that are counted only include those that are eligible to participate in the next season of that sport.

Season Limitations

When can a team conduct their first Competitive Cheer Team Practice?

- Competitive Cheer Team practices and tryouts can begin on Monday of Week 17, October 28, 2019. <http://www.ihsa.org/SportsActivities/CompetitiveCheerleading/5YearSeasonCalendar.aspx>

IHSA BY-LAW 5.351 SEASON LIMITATION

- a. No school belonging to this Association shall conduct its competitive cheer team practice earlier than Monday of Week 17 (October 28, 2019) or later than Saturday of Week 31 (February 8, 2020) in the IHSA standardized calendar.
- b. No school belonging to this Association shall allow its competitive cheer team to participate in interscholastic contests earlier than Monday of Week 17 or later than Saturday of Week 31 in the IHSA standardized calendar.

How many times can a Competitive Cheer Team compete during the IHSA Season?

- Competitive cheer teams can compete on 6 dates not including the IHSA sectional and state competitions.

IHSA BY-LAW 5.352 CONTEST LIMITATION

No Competitive Cheer team representing a member school shall, in any one season, participate on more than 6 dates exclusive of the IHSA state series.

Does a stunt group or game day contest count toward a team's allowed 6 dates?

- Yes.

Travel Policy

May high school Cheer teams miss multiple days of school if they are traveling to a contest out of state?

- Yes. **IHSA By-law 2.180 TRAVEL POLICY** School teams may travel out of state any distance provided the participating students miss no more than two school days, including travel to and from the competition. The number of instances that any single school team can use this provision is limited to two occasions per school year.

Summer Contact

May cheer teams practice during the "no contact" period between IHSA allowable summer contact dates and the IHSA start of fall practice dates?

- The "no contact" period applies to competitive cheer teams. Sideline cheer teams follow the IHSA activity by-laws and have no season limitations, however, local school districts can apply this restriction to sideline teams as well.

Is participation in summer cheer programs mandatory?

- Participation by high school students in summer programs must be voluntary and in no way be an actual or implied prerequisite for membership on a high school team