

CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS  
CONNECTICUT, INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE  
30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, Connecticut 06410  
Telephone (203) 250-1111 / Fax (203) 250-1345

TO: CIAC Member Schools  
FROM: Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference  
RE: CAS/CSAC Cheerleading Competition

The Connecticut Student Activities Conference under the authority of the Connecticut Association of Schools will for the 35<sup>th</sup> time conduct an Association cheerleading competition. In order to more accurately estimate the number of schools competing, CAS/CSAC requests that you complete the Entry Form if you intend to enter.

Please submit the Entry Form to CAS, via the password-protected online eligibility center by January 9, 2026 Your promptness is appreciated.

The competition that is planned will be as follows:

- A. **State Championship** – Saturday, March 7, 2026  
Site - Newtown High School  
12 Berkshire Rd  
Sandy Hook, CT 06482  
Snow date – Sunday, March 8, 2026
- B. **Entry fee** of \$100 per team will be charged.
- C. Each squad of not more than **20** cheerleaders will be required to **PERFORM A 2 TO 2 ½ MINUTE ROUTINE. THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THE AMOUNT OF MUSIC THAT CAN BE USED.** There will be, in addition to the all-girl divisions, a co-ed division. **All music used must have the proper licensing and squads will be asked to provide a copy of their license. Please see the USA Cheer website for a list of approved music providers.**
- D. 2025 – 2026 National Federation Rules will be followed.
- E. The number of classes such as **Co-ed, LL, L, M, and S** will be determined based upon the number of schools that enter the competition.
- F. Teams entering will perform once. Regional competitions **will not** be held.
- G. Appropriate awards similar to CIAC awards will be presented to the champion, first and second runner up teams in each Class.

Questions or concerns may be addressed to the CAS office – telephone (203)250-1111 or Fax (203)250-1345

**Please share this information with your cheerleader coach/advisor.**

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CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE  
30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

TO: CAS/CSAC Member Secondary School Cheerleading Coaches  
FROM: CAS/CSAC Cheerleading Committee  
RE: 35<sup>th</sup> Annual CAS/CSAC Cheerleading Championships

The information in this packet covers in detail the 2026 CAS/CSAC Cheerleading Championships.

Your school is encouraged to participate in this activity which has been well received in the past thirty-four years. **If you intend to enter, please do the following:**

1. Complete the **Entry Form** and submit it via the password-protected online eligibility center by **Friday, January 9, 2026**. Mail the \$100 entry fee, payable to CAS, to the CAS-CIAC office, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT 06410.

NOTE: An Intent-to-Enter form is no longer required. Place all cheerleaders in your cheerleading program, Varsity, Junior Varsity or Freshmen on the entry form. There is no limit to the number of cheerleaders who may be on the entry form but only twenty (20) of those listed will be able to compete on the day of the competition and only a maximum of twenty-two (22) will be allowed into the competition via the team entrance.

**Only cheerleaders who will be competing and on the mat for the state competition as well as four alternates and three coaches will be allowed to enter through the participant entrance. If there are other members of the team they should not be in uniform and along with any other coaches will be required to enter through the spectator entrance and will be required to pay the entrance fee.**

According to the National Federation Spirit Rule Book: “If spirit competition is approved as part of the school’s activities, it should be placed in perspective with the total educational program and should not interfere with the primary responsibility of spirit groups, which is to support the interscholastic athletic program.” **Therefore, schools must be represented by a squad of winter cheerleading member as long as each member of the competition team is actively cheering/participating in winter cheerleading athletic events including practices and games.**

The CAS/CSAC Cheerleading Committee encourages you to participate and support this program. These championships are a worthwhile activity for all high school youth.

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30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

**35<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CAS/CSAC CHEERLEADING CHAMPIONSHIP 2026**

**1. AUTHORITY**

The decisions of the CAS/CSAC Cheerleading Committee and/or Meet Directors relative to the operation of the competition shall be final.

**2. AWARDS**

In each class a plaque and 22 individual medals will be awarded to each of the champion, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> runner-up teams.

**3. DATE OF COMPETITION/SITE/STARTING TIMES**

**DATE:** State Championship -- Saturday, March 7, 2026  
Snow Date -- Sunday, March 8, 2026

**TIME:** To be announced with a follow-up communication

**SITE:** Newtown High School  
12 Berkshire Rd  
Sandy Hook, CT 06482

The CAS/CSAC cheerleading committee will determine the starting time for each division competing and a follow-up letter will be mailed to participating schools indicating the starting time as well placed on the CIAC winter cheerleading site.

**4. DIVISIONS**

The 2026 Cheerleading Championship Divisions will be determined when the entry forms are submitted to the CAS CIAC website

**5. ENTRY FEE/ENTRY FORM**

Each cheerleading team entering the Championships will be assessed an entry fee of \$100, which must be mailed to CAS, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT 06410. Entry form and fee must be in the CAS office not later than January 9, 2026. Entry forms are to be submitted via the CAS website.

**6. LATE ENTRY POLICY**

- Tournament entries will not be accepted after the established deadline except those approved by the CIAC Board of Control.
- Corrections requested by a school to an entry form that was submitted by the established deadline, but prior to the seeding/pairing data published on the web site will be assessed a fee of \$50 per correction to a maximum of \$250.
- All requests for corrections must be submitted on a support ticket via the online eligibility center. **No phone requests will be considered.**

## **7. MEET REGULATIONS**

- A. Only member schools of CAS/CSAC may enter these championships.
- B. EACH CHEERLEADING SQUAD MUST PERFORM FOR AT LEAST 2.0 MINUTES BUT NOT MORE THAN 2.5 MINUTES. Performing less than the required time or performing more than the required time will result in points being deducted. Two points will be deducted for each 5-second violation or any part thereof. Timing will begin with the first words, motions or music after the team's name is announced when they are on the mat. **NO ORGANIZED ENTRANCES WILL BE ALLOWED CHEERING AND CHANTING MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE CHEERLEADERS TAKE THE MAT.**
- C. **There is no limit to the amount of music that may be used in the routine. All music must have the proper licensing and squads will be asked to provide a copy of their music license. See USA Cheer website for a list of approved music providers.** A disc jockey equipped with a tape and CD player as well as a connection for iPhone will be provided at the site, however a team may use their own device for music if they so choose. *It is highly recommended that each squad bring a backup of their music.*
- D. Four panel judges, a deduction judge and a safety judge will score each team. If two divisions are competing at the same time there will be two sets of judges. Technical difficulties will be adjudicated by the judges. Judges for the state competition will have attended a professional development on the scoresheet to ensure they understand the rubrics for the category they are judging.

Sherrie Zembrzuski is the Tournament Official Coordinator - Cell Phone (203)233-0881 email: missz14@sbcglobal.net. Sherrie will hire and assign judges with the assistance of a subcommittee of the CAS/CSAC Cheerleading Committee. Safety judges **will not** preview the squads.

- E. **The 2025-2026 National Federation Rules for Spirit squads must be followed. Team stunts or actions judged to be illegal by the National Federation Rules will result in penalty points assessed. If you are in doubt about the legality of a stunt or pyramid, submit a picture or video tape to Sherrie Zembrzuski by February 20, 2026. A decision will be made within three days of receipt of the picture or video. RULINGS ON ANY STUNTS OR PYRAMIDS SUBMITTED AFTER FEBRUARY 20, 2026 WILL NOT BE GIVEN.**
- F. “Props” which are permitted in this competition are megaphones, pom poms, signs, flags, banners etc.
- G. Judges decisions on scoring will be final and binding on entries. Technical difficulties, such as music stopping, will be adjudicated by the judges.
- H. The Cheerleading Committee will determine the “order of performance” for the championship prior to the competition and will mail this order to those member schools entered.
- I. Only one squad per member school may enter the competition.
- J. All competitors must be grade 9, 10, 11 or 12.

K. Each team will be reimbursed for five (5) tickets. These tickets are to be used for school personnel and spouses, NOT PARENTS. A written request must be sent to the CIAC office and will only be reimbursed to those schools that have paid their entry fee.

**ALL TICKET SALES FOR CIAC TOURNAMENT GAMES WILL BE SOLD AND REDEEMED VIA DIGITAL TICKETING. ALL TICKETS WILL BE PURCHASED PRIOR TO ARRIVING AT THE COMPETITION VIA GO FAN.**

<https://gofan.co/app/school/CIAC>

Admission prices for the competition are:

Children five (5) and under are free;  
Military in uniform or with I.D. are free;  
All other spectators \$10.00

L. Cheerleading coaches are expected to maintain discipline among the competitors and make certain that good sportsmanship prevails in both winning and defeat. Schools will be held liable for actions of their competitors which may include but is not limited to property damage or assault.

*Any student-athlete who engages in conduct on or off school grounds or at a school sponsored activity that is in violation of their school or the facilities policy, will be subject to disciplinary consequences by their school's administration AND be ineligible to compete in the State Cheerleading Competition.*

*Any student or adult who are in possession of the following contraband or any other items deemed as contraband by security, will be ineligible to compete in the competition. All items will be seized and not returned:*

*All weapons and nonprescription drugs of any type, including but not limited to: firearms, tazers, mace/pepper spray, knives/razors, box cutters, kubatons, knuckles, door opening devices, scissors, shanks/sharp pointed objects, screwdrivers, metal forks, hair picks, nonprescription drugs, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, alcohol beverage, glass bottles, BB-guns, water guns.*

M. Competitors will not be permitted to compete without the presence of their cheerleading coach/advisor, or having in writing from the Principal of the school a statement designating an adult replacement.

N. Coaches are to bring a large plastic bag so that what their team “packs in” may be packed out.

O. Score sheets will be presented to each coach at the conclusion of the competition. Also available to coaches will be an order of finish and point totals for their division.

P. Scoring will be done in accordance with the score sheet. The score sheets for this year’s competition can be found on the CIAC Cheerleading Winter Cheerleading Site

## **8. TEAM COMPOSITION**

Each team may have up to but not more than **twenty (20) cheerleaders** performing.

**CO-OP TEAMS WILL BE ALLOWED.** Please submit the co-op application at the end of this packet.

## **9. TRAVELING EXPENSES**

Competing schools must provide their own transportation at their expense.

## **10. WARM-UP AREA**

A warm-up area will be provided at the competition site for use by teams prior to the start of the competition. A 42' by 42' (Seven (7) panels) mat will be provided in the practice and competition areas. You will only be allowed to warm up on the provided mats.

## **11. DRESSING FACILITIES**

Facilities will be available at the site.

## **12. PERFORMANCE AREA**

The performing surface will be a 42' by 42' (Seven (7) panels) mat. Stepping off the mat will NOT result in point deduction. **If a body part other than the feet lands off the mat after a tumbling pass, a deduction will be assessed.**

## **13. MEDICAL SERVICE**

Medical personnel will be on site at the competition to attend to any emergency needs of competitors, coaches and spectators. Each coach is responsible for his/her own team.

## **14. NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL CHEERLEADING COMPETITION**

- Only three teams from each division are allowed to compete at the New England Regional Cheerleading Competition..
- In the event that teams are tied, in any division, at the conclusion of the Connecticut State Championships, the following procedure will be used to determine the top three teams eligible to advance to the New England Regional.
  - A. The points awarded from each judge in the category for “overall effect/overall appeal” will be totaled and the team with the highest score in that category will be eligible to advance.
  - B. If a tie remains, the highest and lowest score for each judge will be deleted and the remaining scores will be tabulated with the team awarded the highest point total given the higher rank.

**The New England Competition will take place on March 21, 2026 at  
Worcester State University, Worcester, MA**

## **Cheerleading Cooperative Team Sponsorship**

The CSAC Board of Control shall have the authority to approve the formation of cooperative cheer teams of two or more member schools under the following conditions:

1. The determination of the proper set of circumstances which will allow multiple schools to form a cooperative team will depend on the issue of participant displacement. Schools having sufficient numbers of participants are advised not to request the formation of a cooperative cheer team. It is only when two or more schools are experiencing difficulty in obtaining the desired number of participants that the request for a cooperative cheer team should be initiated. Cooperative cheer teams may not be formed for financial reasons.
2. Multiple cooperative cheer teams cannot exceed two times the maximum determined limit which is standard for high school cheer teams.
3. The schools must be located in the same geographical area.
4. The schools must be members of CASCIAAC.
5. A cooperative cheer team will be placed in the appropriate tournament classification using the combined enrollment as follows:
  - a. 100% of the 9-12 boy or girl enrollment of the largest school in the co-op.
  - b. The % of participants from the remaining school(s) in the co-op will be calculated and that % of the co-op school(s) 9-12 boy or girl enrollment will be added to the largest school enrollment.

Example: School A 9-12 girl enrollment 500  
School B 9-12 girl enrollment 250  
Total 750

# of participants in co-op – 15  
10 from school A – 100% enrollment 500  
5 from school B – 33% enrollment of 250 83  
Total 583

6. Once established and approved, cooperative cheer teams shall exist for a period of two consecutive years. However, approval may be granted for one year.
7. Written assurance shall be understood that “no cut” policies shall govern cooperative cheer teams.
8. Schools wishing to form cooperative cheer teams should jointly make application to the CSAC Board. The suggestion timeline shall be at the start of the winter sport season or prior to December 1. Further, it is understood that co-op cheer teams will cheer for their respective winter sports teams; thus not only competing in local or statewide competitions.
9. The CSAC Board reserves the right to investigate a co-op cheer team that appears to have a substantially different number of participants in the co-op. The board may render an immediate consequence for such disparities.

# CAS APPLICATION FOR COOPERATIVE CHEER TEAM SPONSORSHIP

(Cooperative team policy information can be found in the CIAC Handbook of bylaws Section 3.0)

**Application deadline: Winter sport – December 1**

Application for:  Initial  Renewal Application Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Names of Schools Applying 2. City/Town 3. Principal's Name

Host School (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Co-op School (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Co-op School (3) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Team (Girl or Co-ed) \_\_\_\_\_ Total # of athletes allowed by CIAC 20-22

5. Effective Date of Co-op \_\_\_\_\_

6. Name of Co-op \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Potential Participation** (List number of students in each school who are expected to participate on this team.) \*\*\*

Include eligibility lists for previous year.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Host School (1)</u>	<u>Co-op School (2)</u>	<u>Co-op School (3)</u>	<u>Total</u>
*9	_____	_____	_____	_____
10	_____	_____	_____	_____
11	_____	_____	_____	_____
12	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____	_____

\*Note: This figure must include the expected participants from the incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders if this application is submitted the previous school year.

8. **Current Program Status** (List the number of participants included in your program during the sport season preceding this application.)

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Host School (1)</u>	<u>Co-op School (2)</u>	<u>Co-op School (3)</u>	<u>Total</u>
9	_____	_____	_____	_____
10	_____	_____	_____	_____
11	_____	_____	_____	_____
12	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Dissolving an active CIAC approved co-op lies solely between the schools involved.**

**Addendums to this Application:** (The following items must accompany this application in order for it to be processed.)

- A. A written statement expressing the reason for formation of this co-op.
- B. A written statement from all schools involved that they will adopt a “no cut” policy for this co-op.
- C. A written statement from your league or six (6) competing schools approving this co-op.
- D. The eligibility lists of previous sport season.

**NOTE:** Member schools are advised that when a cooperative athletic team is dissolved for any reason, any and all remaining players from the school that is no longer participating in the co-op are not eligible to continue participating with the host team. For purposes of clarification, the host team is that team which was previously part of the co-op team and has increased its team membership to a level which the CIAC determines sufficient to sponsor its own school team independent of a co-op arrangement.

**COOPERATIVE TEAM APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA**  
**THE ONLINE ELIGIBILITY CENTER.**

# **2025-2026 CAS-CSAC Cheerleading Championship**

## **Music Copyright Compliance Form**

**In order to protect the CAS-CSAC Cheerleading Championship and its participants, we are requiring that all participating teams provide proof of music copyright compliance prior to the competition.**

**By signing this form, you are verifying that all copyright requirements were met prior to you obtaining your music from your producer.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, verify that all copyright permissions  
Coach's Name

were properly and completely obtained by \_\_\_\_\_,  
Music Mixer's Name

prior to production of the 2025-2026 CAS-CSAC Cheerleading Championship routine music for the

\_\_\_\_\_ team from \_\_\_\_\_.  
School's Name Division

These permissions can be verified by certification document(s) **available upon request**.

I acknowledge that this form will be kept on file by the CAS, and **I will need to keep my certification documents on file** for a minimum of THREE (3) years.

By signing this form, I confirm that the information above is complete and accurate. I also acknowledge that my signing of this form releases the CAS of any liability pertaining to my use of copy written music in my routine.

Coach Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrator/AD Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Administrator/AD Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: A copy of the music license **AND** this form must be completed and returned to Sherrie Zembrzuski by **February 20, 2026**. Return via email (missz14@sbcglobal.net).