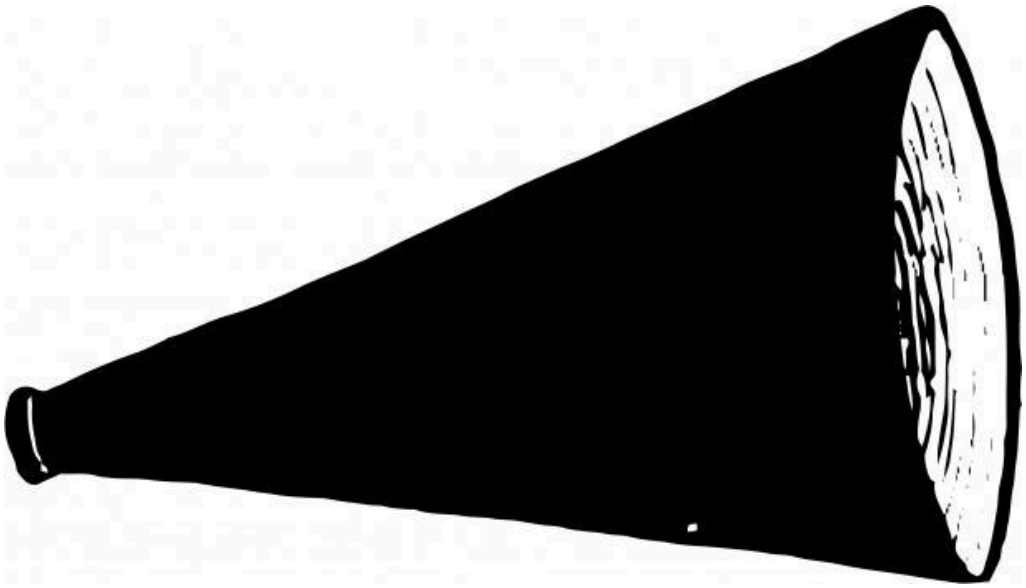
NYSPHSAA
SECTION IV



COMPETITIVE CHEER
2026-2027
HANDBOOK

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FOREWORD

This handbook is intended for the use by all Athletic Directors & Coaches. We have tried to include all of the necessary forms and information for the Sectional and State Tournaments.

Section IV Basketball will comply with the regulations set forth by National Federation of High School Sports, the New York State Public High School Athletic Association and Section IV of the NYSPHSAA.

The current rulebook issued by the NCAA will be the standard unless noted otherwise within this handbook.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2025-2026 SECTIONAL CHAMPIONS

CLASS A – Union-Endicott

CLASS B - Horseheads

CLASS C - Chenango Valley

CLASS D – Seton Catholic

COED- Oneonta

SECTION IV OFFICERS

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Andrea Guccia – 607-743-0044 – andreaguccia@gmail.com

IMPORTANT DATES

Nov 12, 2026	Pre-Season Coaches Meeting via Zoom 7pm
Nov 16,2026	Start Date for Winter practices
Feb 13 & 14 2027	STAC Championship Union Endicott High School
	IAC Championship date TBA
Feb 20, 2027	Section IV Championship Chenango Valley High School

Classification Numbers

Class A	973 and up
Class B	613-972
Class C	274-612
Class D	273 and below
Co-Ed	One Class

REQUIREMENTS FOR REGULAR SEASON ELIGIBILITY

Coaches Certification: In addition to the NYS coaching license, cheerleading coaches are required to have current certification in the *USA Cheer Safety Risk Management Course* formally ACCAA and High School Rules Comprehensive Course (USA Cheer). Coaches must complete the RefReps NYSPHSAA Cheer course.

Sanctioned Events: All competitions both in and out of state must follow sanctioning rules and be sanctioned by NYSPHSAA.

Video Replay: All Judges' decisions are final. **Use of video replay is prohibited under any circumstances.**

2027 SECTIONAL TOURNAMENT RULES & PROCEDURES

- Sectional officials are supplied by NYSCJA.
- In order to compete in the Sectional Championship, you must place in the top three from your Conference Championship and then submit the Cheerleading Declaration Commitment Form found in this booklet.

- NYSPHSAA Competitive Score Sheets will be used for all events.

- Athletes on your roster have to meet the minimum 3 contest requirements this season to be eligible to compete at Sectionals.

SECTION IV GAME DAY CHEERLEADING DECLARATION FORM
Winter 2026-2027

The Section IV Competitive Cheer Championships will be held on Saturday, February 20th, 2027 @ Chenango Valley High School. Start time is 10 am.

Warm-up and competition times will be posted no later than Wednesday, February 17th , 2027

- **Complete and submit this form regardless of intent to compete by Monday, February 15th, 2027**

School: _____

Head Coach: _____Cell phone:_____

Coaches email: _____

Please check/circle the category you will compete in:

- Class A
- Class B
- Class C
- Class D
- COED
- NOT COMPETING

Total number of athletes competing _____

Names of Board Approved coaches attending:

_____

Athletic Directors Signature: Date:

_____ _____

COMPETIVE CHEER ROSTER VERIFICATION FORM

Please verify that each athlete on your roster has met the minimum 3 contest requirements this season to be eligible to compete at Sectionals. List all athletes on your roster and the 3 contests they competed in/were an eligible participant for.

School _____

	Athlete's Name	Contest 1	Contest 2	Contest 3
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
	Continue back if necessary			

_____ _____

Coaches Signature Athletic Directors Signature

Email the above roster and Declaration Form to andreaguccia@gmail.com by Monday, 2/15/27

The rules governing cheerleading come from the NYSPHSAA Handbook, the Section IV Handbook and the NFHS Spirit rules of play.

I. **Season** - Teams may compete in Competitive divisions within the Winter Cheerleading Season, only.

II. **State Championship** -
   A. Scheduled for the Saturday of Week 16 of the Winter Season.
   B. The championship format will be a preliminary round for each class, then a final round for the top 5 teams.

III. **Team Size** - The following minimum and maximum requirements are only in effect for competing in the NYSPHSAA State Championships:
   A. **Class A & B:** Utilize 3 stunt groups (min), at some point in the routine, and a maximum number of 24 athletes on the mat
   B. **Class C & D:** Utilize 2 stunts groups (min), at some point in the routine and a maximum number of 20 athletes on the mat
   C. **COED:** Utilize 2 stunts groups (min), at some point in the routine and a maximum number of 24 athletes on the mat.
   D. These stunt groups are based on double based groups containing 4 athletes in each group. The requirement means that at some point in the routine, the minimum number of groups required must perform stunts or pyramid skills at the same time but are NOT required to perform the same exact skill.

IV. **Judges Panel** - Must request 4 Panel and 1 Safety for any event that is counting toward the teams minimal required competitions.

V. **Uniforms** - Any cheerleading uniform may be used.

VI. **Coaching Requirements** -
   A. USA Cheer Safety & Risk Management Course (Every 4 Years)
   B. High School NFHS Rules Courses for Coaches (Comprehensive Course the first year, then the Comprehensive Course OR Changes Only Course, annually)
   C. Encouraged: RefReps NYS Cheerleading Training Course (Annually)
   D. Note: These are in addition to the required courses for all coaches

VII. **Injury/Illness During A Performance -**
   A. The only person(s) that may stop a routine for injury are: competition director/organizer, competition officials, the coach of the team performing. This is a shared responsibility of all parties involved to recognize an injury has occurred.
   B. When a performance has been stopped due to injury/illness, the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. The spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of the competition director/organizer. The team must perform the routine again in its entirety (all skills performed) but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.
   C. The injured athlete that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:

1. The affected athlete(s) receives clearance from the Medical Personnel/Athletic Trainer.
2. An athlete who has a suspected concussion should be removed from the activity immediately and should not be allowed to return to participation the same day of the incident and without being cleared by a medical professional in accordance with NYSPHSAA concussion protocol.

VIII. **NYS Deductions and Violations** -

A. Rules - All NFHS Spirit Rules must be followed
B. See NYS Defined Deductions for Complete List of Deductions
C. Competitive Timing Deduction: 2:30 Maximum/30 Second Cheer Minimum - Timing will begin with the first movement, voice or note of the music, whichever comes first. Teams may start in a load position or choreographed position before timing begins. The timing will end when the music ends or the team is done chanting. If teams end in stunts, the timing stops but can still receive applicable deductions. Judges will not issue a deduction until 2:34 for the full routine and less than 29 seconds for the cheer.
    1. Cheer Minimum (-5.0)
    2. Overall Routine 4 - 5 seconds over (-1.0)
    3. Overall Routine 6 seconds or more over (-2.0)

IX. **Competitive Routines** - NYS Competitive routines, teams will be evaluated on a crowd leading or performance cheer, building skills, tumbling skills, jumps, dance, and routine composition, creativity, & performance. Safety and proper progression is emphasized above the difficulty of skills. Therefore, athletes should not perform skills without mastering proper lower level progressions of any given skill.

A. Total Time is limited to 2 minutes and 30 second
B. Teams are required to incorporate a minimum of 30 seconds of cheer, anywhere within the routine. No music can be played during the cheer portion of the routine.
C. NYS Game Day Score Sheets:
    1. Competitive Score Sheets (Proposed for 2025)
    2. Competitive Safety Deductions & Violations Score Sheet
D. Teams may choose to perform a crowd leading cheer or a performance cheer. Skills are required within the cheer. If no skills are incorporated, all scores associated with skills will receive a zero. Props are not required within the cheer, but are necessary for an effective crowd leading cheer and may enhance a performance cheer, if used effectively.
E. The incorporation of skills (Stunts/Pyramids, Tumbling, & Jumps) are required within the music portion of the competitive routine. Any skill category not performed will receive a zero for all associated scoring elements and may affect the routine composition score(s).
F. Minimally, teams are required to perform two connected, full team jumps, with variety.
    1. Each of the two selected jumps must be the same jump performed by the entire team. Any athlete not performing the same jump as the rest of the

team will decrease the total number of points possible for the jump execution score.

2. Teams that do not perform two different connected jumps will receive a zero. *Note: Left/Right Hurdlers are considered the same jump and therefore can be performed at the same time for one of the two connected jumps.*

G. Dance is required within the routine but does not have a minimum number of 8 counts and does not have a required number of participants.