

Ruston High

PEPPERMINES



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PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

The purpose of the Pepette organization is to promote school spirit, loyalty to Ruston High School, and pride in being a Bearcat. Members are representatives of Ruston High School and are expected to maintain appropriate behavior at all times, both in and out of uniform.

The Pepette organization is comprised of the Varsity Cheerleaders, JV Cheerleaders, Bearcat Belles, Pom Squad, and the Mascot.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- I. Female (Mascot may be Male or Female)
- II. RHS student
- III. 2.0 GPA for previous grading period
- IV. No F's or F6 for previous grading period
- V. No suspensions (ISS & OSS) for the current year
- VI. No more than one referral for the current year
- VII. If trying out for Cheer or Dance, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade year, candidates must have been a member of pepettes for the entire previous year (Transfer students must have been a member of the spirit group of their school)
- VIII. Must be in good health and able to perform the required moves of group (Doctor's notes may be required)
- IX. May not be pregnant
- X. May participate in other sports at RHS but must attend Pepette functions when not playing in a game/running in a meet. EXCEPTION: Cheerleaders and Bearcat Belles may not play volleyball, basketball or soccer due to too many conflicts in schedules and time commitment throughout football and basketball seasons.
- XI. No outstanding school or pepette debts
- XII. Have monetary means to meet all financial obligations of Pepettes on time
- XIII. Have transportation for:
 - a. pick up from after school practices
 - b. Summer workouts / practices
 - c. Summer camps (Girls are NOT allowed to drive themselves to and from summer camp)
 - d. Competitions (Girls are NOT allowed to drive themselves to and from competitions)
- XIV. Signed constitution
- XV. Complete tryout packet in entirety
- XVI. Pay tryout fee \$10
- XVII. Must participate in entire clinic prior to tryout

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

- I. The Pepette organization is financed through:
 - a. Fees
 - b. Concessions
 - c. Donations
 - d. Fundraisers
- II. Parents/guardians will receive an **estimated expense** list prior to tryouts and must sign a financial obligation contract in order for their child to participate. **All money is due by August 1, 2018. For Belles all money is due immediately following Style Show in September. If an alternative payment plan is needed, parents/guardians must meet with Pepette sponsors BEFORE tryouts.**
- III. Cheerleaders, Belles and Pom Squad will be required to pay a coach/choreographer fee. This may or may not be included in the overall expense list. If it is not, it is required to be paid monthly or as the coach/sponsor requires. These payments can be made in cash, money order or check. If a check bounces, cash or money order will be required for all subsequent payments. Failure to pay the coach/choreographer fee will result in the Pepette being dismissed.
- IV. Pepettes who are not paid in full by the first football game will be **will be removed from the organization. If a girl is removed from Pepettes for any reason, she is still responsible for paying all debts to the organization.** Pepette debts will be submitted to the school office to become school debts and prevent registration for the following school year and walking at graduation.

- V. **All Pepettes will be required to pay a \$60 PEPETTE FEE** assist with program expenses throughout the year. This fee is due April 4, 2018.
- VI. Cheerleaders and Bearcat Belles are required to make a \$250 deposit when uniforms and camp clothes are ordered. Pom squad members will be required to make a \$150 deposit when they order uniforms.
- VII. Payments may be made in cash, by check or by money order. If a check is returned for NSF, the Pepette will owe an additional \$25 to cover bank expenses and all subsequent payments must be made in cash or money order.
- VIII. Fundraisers will be offered throughout the year to help offset personal expenses and general expenses for the Pepette program. If a fundraiser is for general Pepette or squad expenses, the Pepette will be required to participate or pay what she is expected to raised.
- IX. Pepette parents/guardians will be required to work at least 1 home football game in the Pepette concession stand to help raise funds for bus transportation and Pepette expenses. If the parent/guardian does not work, a Pepette will be required to pay \$50.

MEMBERSHIP

All pepette members must maintain the criteria required for tryouts. Failure to do so at any point of the year will result in removal from the pepettes.

General conduct rules:

- I. Abide by school rules and Pepette Constitution at all times.
- II. Be respectful of sponsors, administration, faculty members, other school organizations, and other students at all times.
- III. Set a positive example of school spirit for other students to follow.
- IV. Be willing to sacrifice personal gain/wants for good of squad/school as a whole. Be a team player.
- V. Know when games, events and practices are and what to wear. Wear uniforms/hair appropriately and as designated by sponsors. Come dressed fully for practices, games, and pep rallies.
- VI. Inappropriate posts, photographs and graphics unbecoming of an RHS Pepette on social media (texts, Twitter, email, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, etc.) that may be considered vulgar, bullying, harassment, obscene, cruel, etc., will NOT be tolerated as they reflect poorly on Ruston High School and the Pepette organization. Actions of this nature will result in removal from the team.
- VII. Get permission from sponsor before leaving field/court or stands, including when using restroom.
- VIII. Pepettes will be required to ride the bus to and back to Ruston from away ball games.
- IX. Follow instructions of captains, co-captains and sponsors.
- X. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum while in uniform, unless given permission from coaches and sponsors. School-colored water jugs are allowed in stands/field/court. Only water bottles will be allowed but may not be on the track or court sidelines. Soft drinks and energy drinks are not acceptable.
- XI. Do not get on or check your cell phone during practice, ballgames or pep rallies. Cell phones can be used between games as long as there is no performance or program.
- XII. Do not pack up or gather materials until the game is completely over.
- XIII. Do not leave a game until given permission from sponsor/coach and the alma mater has been sung.

UNIFORMS & DRESS CODE

- I. Complete uniform includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Correct top
 - ii. Correct bottom
 - iii. Tights/correct socks
 - iv. Correct shoes
 - v. Correct sports bra
 - vi. Correct bow/hair piece
 - vii. Hair fixed appropriately
 - viii. Poms
 - ix. Rain jacket
 - x. Cold weather gear
- II. Each girl will purchase and wear the regulation uniforms. She must purchase all uniform pieces.
- III. Each team will match in uniform and dress at all times.

- IV. Pepettes should arrive at Pepette functions fully dressed and ready to go with hair done and uniform on correctly. Pepettes should stay in that uniform / hair style until she has left the event or is on the bus.
- V. NO jewelry is to be worn at practice or in uniform except in class during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, watches, rings, bracelets, necklaces, chokers, earrings, anklets, and any other body piercing. This is for safety purposes and for squad uniformity. Captains may wear watches (No iWatches). (AACCA and NFHS guidelines).
- VI. Hair color should be natural, in accordance with the school handbook. Hair must be capable of being worn in the style assigned by the Coach/Sponsor.
- VII. Pepettes who have tattoos must have the tattoos covered to the approval of the sponsor/coach during performances.
- VIII. Pepettes should have naturally colored, short fingernails. NO COLORED POLISH for games and performances.
- IX. Sunglasses and headphones/ear buds will not be worn with uniform.
- X. In event of cold or wet weather, Pepettes will wear regulation cold weather wear and regulation rain jacket. Cold weather accessories such as gloves and hats must be approved by the sponsor and should be red, white, gray or black.
- XI. It is the responsibility of the Pepette to keep uniforms clean and have them altered to fit appropriately. If a uniform piece becomes too small, gets damaged or is lost during the year, the Pepette will be required to pay the expense of replacing it with a new one. Sponsors and coaches reserve the right to determine if a uniform is too small.
- XII. Uniform shoes are to be worn at all times with uniform. This includes practices, school and events. Cheerleaders. Belles and Pom Squad must wear designated sock style.

LETTERING

- I. Pepette must have completed two (2) years in Belles, Cheer and or Pom *and* have made the team for the third year.
- II. Pepette must not have been cut or suspended from any game or performance during the 2 year period.
- III. A \$100 deposit must be made for a letter jacket when ordered. Jackets will not be ordered at all if there is any outstanding balance.
- IV. Pepettes will not receive letter jackets until paid in full.
- V. Pepette coach/sponsor approval must be given to letter.

ABSENCES/EXCUSES

- I. Each Pepette is expected to attend all Pepette functions and practices unless one of the following occurs:
 - a. Personal illness —must have a doctor’s excuse NOTE: Illness means you could not attend school due to sickness. If you are well enough to attend school, you must be at practice, pep rally, game, etc.
 - b. Death in family
 - c. Other school activities with advanced approval from the sponsor
 - d. Pepettes with one or more demerits will not be allowed to travel for play-off games
- II. Possible absence scenarios: (each time it says practice – it could also say game, performance, etc.)
 - a. I have an orthodontist/dentist/hair/doctor/ etc. appointment and the only time they had available is during practice but I will make it to practice before the end/just leave a few minutes early... UNEXCUSED
 - b. I start feeling bad during the day and check out but do not go to the doctor. I do not attend practice... UNEXCUSED.
 - c. I start feeling bad during the day and check out but go to the doctor and get a doctor’s note. I do not attend practice... EXCUSED.
 - d. I feel bad and stay home. I do not attend practice. I do not have a doctor’s note... UNEXCUSED
 - e. I feel bad and have been home for several days with the stomach bug. I do not attend practice. I do not have a doctor’s note... UNEXCUSED.
 - f. I feel bad and stay home. I do not attend practice. I have a doctor’s note... EXCUSED
 - g. I stay during practice to take a make-up test with my math teacher because I went to the doctor during math. I miss practice... UNEXCUSED
 - h. I stay during practice to finish an assignment in my previous class because I only had a few questions left. I don’t get approval from my sponsor first...UNEXCUSED.
 - i. I stay during practice to finish an assignment in my previous class because I only had a few questions left. I get approval from my sponsor first...EXCUSED.
 - j. I want to go to a family event that is out of town. I leave Friday after school but miss the game. The family event is not a family funeral... UNEXCUSED
 - k. I want to go to a concert and miss a pepette function or practice...UNEXCUSED
 - l. I miss practice for after school detention... UNEXCUSED (Detentions should be served in the morning)

- III. Practices before camp—All cheerleaders and Belles must attend practices before summer camp and summer camp itself. No trips should be scheduled that conflicts with these.
- IV. Summer Workouts – Each group has a summer workout policy that must be adhered to.
- V. Ballgames during holidays—occasionally ballgames may occur during holidays, including Thanksgiving. If necessary, Pepettes will be asked to attend these games. Excuses will only be granted at the discretion of the sponsors and the administration.
- VI. You are expected to arrive on time for Pepette functions and practices. This means you should be at least 5 minutes early. If you are late, you will receive a tardy. Three (3) tardies will result in the assigning of an unexcused absence.
- VII. Cheerleaders and Bearcat Belles must be present on the days that a new cheer/routine is learned in order to participate in that week’s routine. If more than one practice during the week of a performance is missed, the cheerleader or Belle will not be allowed to perform.

DISCIPLINE

The Red Flag and Demerit System is a disciplinary tool that is utilized to note violation of the Pepette Constitution. Red Flags and Demerits are assigned by the sponsors. Sponsors reserve the right to assign Red Flags, Demerits, or other punishments or consequences such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. Each Pepette will be informed of Red Flags or Demerits when they are assigned and sponsors will maintain records throughout the season. The season runs from tryouts to tryouts. Pepettes are expected to follow the RHS Student Handbook at all times in addition to this Constitution.

A coach/sponsor/choreographer retains the right to sit out an athlete from participation if there are any issues with disrespect, failure to fully participate, etc. The time period to be benched is determined by the coach.

- 3 red flags=1 demerit
- 2 demerits=dismissal from Pepettes

Examples of violations that result in Red Flags/Demerits
INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

I. RED FLAGS

- A. Failure to follow the instructions of captains/officers or any Pepette sponsor/coach
- B. Disrespect
- C. Complaining/ Negative attitude
- D. Chewing gum
- E. Wearing jewelry in uniform at Pepette functions (jewelry may be worn during the school day only)
- F. Continuous talking during game or practice
- G. Late paperwork
- H. Forgetting poms, shoes, practice clothes, bows, etc.
- I. Using a cell phone during practice, performance or game (sponsors/coaches will take it until the end of practice or game)
- J. Cell phone ringing during practice, performance or game (sponsors/coaches will take it until the end of practice or game)
- K. Being picked up late (excess of 15 minutes after Pepette function ends) (3rd offense results in a demerit)
- L. Eating or drinking (except for water) in uniform without permission of Pepette sponsors
- M. Failure of Pepette and parent to notify sponsor about absence prior to event
- N. Failure to dress properly for practice or event
- O. Any girl who is not in complete uniform upon the arrival time of an event (Beginning of 7th hour for pep rally, entry on bus for away games (unless given permission to wait), arrival at home games) will be given a red flag and will not be allowed to participate in the event.

Complete uniform includes but is not limited to:

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Correct top ▪ Correct bottom ▪ Tights/correct socks ▪ Correct shoes ▪ Correct sports bra | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Correct bow/hair piece ▪ Hair fixed appropriately ▪ Poms ▪ Rain jacket ▪ Cold weather gear |
|--|--|

- II. DEMERITS-One (1) or more demerits will be assigned for the following
 - A. Failure to follow instructions of captains/officers or any Pepette sponsor/coach
 - B. Showing disrespect to captain/officer, another Pepette or a Pepette sponsor/coach
 - C. Lying
 - D. Poor sportsmanship
 - E. Physical or verbal display of anger
 - F. Using foul language or gestures
 - G. Leaving a Pepette function without permission from sponsor
 - H. Failure to return on time after a break
 - I. Accumulation of 3 red flags

DISMISSALS

- Any pepette who is dismissed must still meet any and all outstanding financial obligations.
- Any pepette who is dismissed will be ineligible to try out for pepettes the following year.

A Pepette will be dismissed for the following:

- I. 2 demerits or 6 red flags
- II. Indecent behavior, which includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Fighting
 - b. Refusal to perform
 - c. Arguing with sponsor or coach
 - d. Possession/use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products at a school function or in Pepette attire
 - e. Charge/conviction of a crime
 - f. Inappropriate use of technology and social media (obscene photos or posts, bullying, negative comments about Pepettes, sponsors, coaches, team members, etc.)
- III. Refusal to participate in a performance
- IV. 2 unexcused absences from practice and events
- V. Pregnancy
- VI. 2 Referrals
- VII. In-school suspensions
- VIII. Out of school suspension
- IX. Failure to pay bills on time.
- X. Being unwilling to give time and service to the Pepette organization as required. Participation in Pepettes is a privilege and only those who are willing to give 100% effort all the time.
- XI. Failing to have a 2.0 GPA and having an F for a nine-week grading period
- XII. Attending a ball game or other Pepette function out of uniform when required to cheer/dance

CONSTITUTIONAL INTERPRETATION/CHANGES

- I. Portions of this constitution may be changed or interpreted at the discretion of the Pepette sponsors and RHS administration because the organization is school-sponsored.
- II. With Pepettes most discipline decisions will be left to the discretion of the Pepette sponsors. If assistance is desired by the sponsors, the decision will be referred to an executive committee that is comprised of:
 - a. Ricky Durrett—Ruston High School Principal
 - b. Jarrod Baugh—Athletic Director
 - c. Varsity Cheerleader Sponsor
 - d. Junior Varsity Cheerleader Sponsor
 - e. Bearcat Belle Sponsor
 - f. Pom Sponsor
 - g. Pepette Coordinator
- III. If an issue is not covered by the Pepette Constitution, the Ruston High School Athletic Handbook and RHS Student Handbook will be used as a guide to handle it.