



# **2023-2024 Handbook**

## **York Elite All Star Cheer Mission Statement**

- E - Empowering (to make stronger and more confident)
- L - Loyal (constant support of our teams)
- I - Inspirational (showing inspiration to do or feel something creative)
- T - Trustworthy (able to be relied on as honest)
- E - Encourage (give support, confidence, and hope to people)

## **The York Elite All Star Cheer Philosophy**

York Elite All Star Cheer strives to be affordable to all athletes who want to participate. We want the community to be involved through sponsorship and mentoring of athletes. We will achieve ELITE status by ensuring our athletes are empowering, loyal, inspirational, trustworthy encouragers. Through teamwork, athletes will become physically involved, focused, and responsible by being part of something bigger than themselves.

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## ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

York Elite athletes will be held to a high standard of moral character. Our goal is to maintain a positive and supportive attitude among our athletes, coaches, and parents to create an environment that allows our teams and athletes to achieve their goals. Our Athlete Code of Conduct outlines principles and expectations our athletes are expected to follow. Parents should read through this Code of Conduct with their athlete to ensure it is understood by all parties. Failure to follow this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

- I understand that this is a full season commitment and my team is depending on me to fulfill my responsibilities as a team member. I will not give up, threaten to quit, or quit. I understand the importance of my role as a member of my team.
- I will come to practice with a positive attitude and ready to work to achieve both my personal goals and the goals my coaches have established for my team. I realize a positive attitude is contagious and will do my best to influence my teammates in a positive manner.
- I will respect my coaches, assistant coaches, and all York Elite staff. Though I may not always agree with their decisions, I understand they were made to better the team as a whole. All decisions about team placement, routines, and spots are the discretion of the coaches and directors.
- If I am faced with an issue I cannot solve on my own, I will seek guidance from my coach and parents to help solve the issue. I will help find a positive solution to the problem and not encourage it to grow.
- I will not use profanity at practices, competitions, or any place I am representing York Elite.
- I will only bring water or Gatorade into the gym. I will not bring any food, candy, or gum into the gym.
- I will never bully another athlete or resort to physical violence of any kind.
- I will demonstrate good sportsmanship to teammates, parents, coaches, judges, event staff, spectators, and rival teams before, during, and after competitions. I will not speak to competition officials for any reason. I will be modest when successful and gracious in defeat. This includes but is not limited to no bad-mouthing, gossiping, foul language, inappropriate actions, or speaking poorly of York Elite or any other cheer organization.
- No athlete may text, email, or post inappropriate messages on a social media platform about a teammate, coach, another program, individual, or about York Elite.
- The use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol & abusive language is prohibited.
- Absolutely no cell phone use during practice. Cell phones should be silenced and kept with your personal belongings and may only be used during approved breaks. In the event of an emergency, your parents will reach out to your coaches if they need you immediately.
- I understand that I am representing the York Elite name and will take on that responsibility as an honor.
- I will come to practices and competitions wearing the appropriate mandatory attire (practice wear, uniform, cheer shoes, bow). My hair will be pulled up and I will remove or cover all jewelry (watches, necklaces, rings, bracelets, anklets, earrings, body piercings, etc.) before practice begins. I will keep my nails short and refrain from getting fake nails during the cheer season.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

All Star Cheer is a team sport! When any one member of the team is absent it effects the team as a whole. The York Elite schedule must be a priority however we understand an athlete must occasionally miss a practice. Examples of excused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Family commitment such as a wedding or funeral
- School related function that reflects a grade
- A contagious illness

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Jobs
- Non-contagious illness
- Cramps
- Social events (dances, birthday parties, concerts, banquets, family reunions, etc.)
- School projects or homework
- Traffic
- Weather (unless approved by gym)

**If you will miss a practice or are running late, a message must be sent to the team coaches and assistant coaches as soon as possible. Vacation requests must be submitted to office staff by 8/1 to be counted as approved absences.** This will allow adequate time to find a substitute athlete for practice. Vacation requests that fall during competition season may be denied. Please note that if an approved vacation results in the athlete missing practices the week of a competition, the athlete may be replaced for that competition. There will be no refund given for competition fees for a competition missed due to vacation.

While your athlete's York Elite schedule should be a priority, we also understand the importance of school sports. If you athlete is planning to play a school sport, please meet with your York Elite coaches to see if an acceptable arrangement can be made.

Unexcused absences will not be tolerated and may result in removal from spots, stunts, and formations in the routine leading up to removal from the program. Three tardies will be counted as one unexcused absence. Three unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the program. Absences from the practice before a competition may also result in removal from spots and stunts.

## CHOREOGRAPHY

Team choreography is typically scheduled for each team in July or August. Aside from approved, planned vacations, attendance is required. Each team will be scheduled for 1-2 days of choreography. Additional choreography dates may be scheduled if needed.

Details about time and attire will be communicated as soon as it becomes available. Athletes must arrive to their choreography sessions ready to work. Due to the amount of work covered during these days, disruptions and horse play hurt the team and are disrespectful to the coaches who are leading the training and will not be permitted.

## COMMUNICATION POLICY

Parents and athletes must stay up to date with all information that is provided by York Elite. Information may be shared via email or the York Elite Parents Facebook group. Designated team parents may also use other means of communication to share team specific updates. Parents are responsible for checking their emails and social media. It is your responsibility to stay informed.

Coaches are available for team specific questions, such as practice times, questions about team placement, your athlete, the team. While we aim to answer your question promptly, please allow up to 48 hours to receive a response.

Contact Chris with questions or concerns about athlete accounts or fundraising. Contact your team's Team Parents with questions or suggestions concerning team building and bonding questions.

## COMPETITIONS

A preliminary competition schedule will be made available by September each year. Competitions may vary per team. Changes to the competition schedule will be released as soon as details become available. Attendance at competitions is mandatory. Prior to each competition, the directors will release the following team-specific information:

- Arrival time – the time you are expected to arrive at the venue. This time will be used for coaches to ensure that all athletes are present and prepared for the competition.
- Meet time – the time you will reconnect with your coaches and team to report to warm-ups. All back packs, bags, warm-ups, etc. should be left with a parent/guardian at this time.
- Performance time – the time when the team is scheduled to perform.
- Awards – the time awards are expected to begin.

Please remember competitions are live events and the times may change as the event runs ahead or behind. Updates will be made available as the coaches and directors receive them. It is your responsibility to arrive on time and ensure you have all the pieces of your uniform (uniform, bow/cuff, sneakers, socks, etc.). Athletes must have a parent, guardian, or chaperone present at each competition.

From the time they arrive at a competition, athletes are required to watch and support every York Elite team unless they are in warm-ups. Parents/guardians are encouraged to sit together in support of our York Elite teams. Athletes are required and parents are strongly encouraged to cheer on our teams in the VIP viewing area at competitions. We will have individuals dedicated to recording our performances so that parents/guardians can concentrate on watching and cheering on our teams. Our athletes feed off your enthusiasm. Athletes may not leave the competition before their respective awards without prior approval from their head coach or the directors. Athletes are expected to remain in full uniform and wear their warmup jacket to be permitted on the awards stage.

Some competitions will require travel and hotel arrangements. Parents/guardians are responsible for booking/paying for their athlete's hotel and travel arrangements. Please keep in mind that we typically schedule gym-wide send-off events before any of our national competitions. Please check with office staff before making travel

arrangements. Occasionally, competitions are designated as Stay to Play and require hotel reservations through a particular hotel. We will provide a hotel block for these overnight competitions as soon as it is available. York Elite is not responsible for reimbursing travel/hotel expenses due to changes in schedule or the cancelling of a competition. It is not recommended to purchase nonrefundable rooms or travel accommodations.

Please note all competitions are subject to change, and all monies are NON-REFUNDABLE. If a competition is canceled, the organization will decide if the competition will be replaced with a comparable event if able to and adjust fees accordingly.

## **CROSSOVER POLICY**

At the discretion of the coaches and directors, athletes may be asked to crossover to another team in addition to their main team. To align with Varsity Summit guidelines, athletes may only cross up or down one level from their main team, however exceptions may be made at the discretion of the directors. The directors reserve the right to change an athlete's crossover status.

Occasionally, certain teams will be set up as technical teams and will pull athletes of various levels together and these athletes may be crossing to a team that is more than one level from their main team. To comply with Varsity rules, these teams will strive to win bids to end of season events by other event producers.

Any athlete who crosses to another team will be responsible to pay the competition registration fees for the additional team. The athlete will pay the monthly fee of the team with highest division and a monthly crossover fee, as well as all other costs affiliated with the additional team(s).

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

In the event that athletes or parents fail to comply with the policies of the program or act in a manner that jeopardizes the team or name and reputation of York Elite, the following progressive disciplinary process will be followed:

- Verbal Warning – A verbal warning will be given when it is identified that an athlete or parent engaged in unacceptable behavior. Verbal warnings are documented and placed in the athlete's file.
- Written Warning – A written warning is more serious than a verbal warning. A written warning will be given when an athlete or parent engages in further unacceptable behavior. Written warnings are placed in an athlete's file and a copy is given to the parent.
- Dismissal – An athlete will be removed from a team or the program when the athlete or parent continues to engage in unacceptable conduct or does not correct the matter that resulted in less severe discipline.

While York Elite will generally take disciplinary action in a progressive manner, it reserves the right to decide what disciplinary action will be taken in a given situation. York Elite reserves the right to dismiss an athlete from the program at any time due to policy infractions.

## END OF SEASON EVENTS

Teams have the opportunity to earn bids to various end of season events. At the beginning of each cheer season, the directors and coaches will communicate what the end of season goals are for each team. By accepting your athlete's position on a team, you are agreeing to the possibility of these travel competitions and the associated fees. End of season competition registration fees and travel expenses are not included in the regular season fees. Fee information and due dates will be released as soon as they become available. Fees must be paid in full by the due date.

York Elite will release the practice schedule for the week of these end of season events as soon as possible to allow adequate time to make travel arrangements. Please keep in mind that we typically schedule gym wide send-off events before any of our end of season events and there is typically a practice scheduled in Orlando before Summit. Please check with your coach before making travel arrangements.

Coaches and the directors reserve the right to replace athletes at end of season events due to delinquent accounts, loss of skills/abilities, excessive absences, poor attitudes, injuries, crossover issues, etc.

## FINANCIAL POLICIES

Your York Elite account must be kept current and in good standing. A payment schedule of anticipated fees will be provided at the beginning of the season. Any changes to these fees or fees that arise as the season progresses will be communicated as soon as the information becomes available. It is your responsibility to make payments on time and in full.

Payments may be made by cash, Cash App, Venmo, or credit card (service fees will be applied). Cash payments may be made in the gym office during office hours. If paying through Cash App, please pay \$YorkElite and note the athlete's name. If paying by Venmo, please pay @yorkeliteallstars and note the athlete's name. Credit card payments will be processed through GoMotion, our account management system and processing fees will be added. If payments have not been made within 5 days of the due date, the card on file will be charged.

Tuition payments are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, other various fees are due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. **Please see the Information Packet for the current year's pricing.** A \$40 fee will be assessed to your athlete's account for any returned payments. Please contact Chris at [yorkelitechris@gmail.com](mailto:yorkelitechris@gmail.com) with any payment questions. Due dates for any other fees will be communicated via email and social media. To aid in planning payments, important payment dates are as follows:



MONTH	DUE BY THE 1ST	DUE BY THE 15TH	
		Returning Athletes	New Athletes/Returning Athletes Purchasing a New Uniform
<b>May</b>	Registration Fee		
<b>June</b>	Tuition and Practice Wear fees	Choreography and Music fees	Choreography and Music fees
<b>July</b>	Tuition fee	Competition and Bow fees	Bow and ½ of uniform fees
<b>August</b>	Tuition fee	Competition fees	Competition fees
<b>September</b>	Tuition fee	Competition fees	½ of uniform fees
<b>October</b>	Tuition fee	Competition fees	Competition fees
<b>November</b>	Tuition fee	Competition fees	Competition fees
<b>December</b>	Tuition fee		Competition fees
<b>January</b>	Tuition fee	Competition fees	Competition fees
<b>February</b>	Tuition fee	Competition fees	Competition fees
<b>March</b>	Tuition fee	End of Season fees	End of Season fees
<b>April</b>	Tuition fee		

If a payment is not received within 5 days a \$50 late fee will be applied. Any account that carries a balance fifteen days after any given due date will be considered delinquent. It is your responsibility to know the status of your account. If your account is delinquent, it is your responsibility to actively communicate with Chris regarding payment updates. While your account remains delinquent, your athlete will not be able to participate in practices, classes, team tumbling, competitions, and special events. York Elite also reserves the right to withhold uniforms, practice wear, warm-ups, etc. as well as jackets and rings earned at competitions. Any funds paid toward other items could be forfeited and applied to the athlete's past due account.

If an account remains delinquent, the athlete will be replaced until the balance is paid in full. When payment is received, the athlete will be added back to the team at the discretion of the coaches and directors. An account that remains delinquent after 60 days will result in dismissal from the program. Any athlete with an outstanding balance from the prior season will not be placed on a team until all prior financial commitments have been met.

All payments are non-refundable and non-transferable. If an athlete decides to leave or is dismissed for any reason, there will be no refunds given. If an athlete leaves after choreography, a \$500 early termination fee will be applied to their account. All payments received and all funds in individual accounts, including fundraising profits and all payments, will immediately be released to the general York Elite account. You will also be responsible for any fees assessed attempting to collect outstanding balances, including collection fees, court costs, and attorney fees.

## FUNDRAISING

We recognize that All Star cheer is an expensive sport! To help offset these costs, the gym will coordinate fundraisers each month. There will be a wide variety of fundraisers offered throughout the year. Your profit from the fundraisers will be applied to your athlete's account to be used towards monthly tuition, competition fees, uniform fees, choreography and music fees, or practice wear. If an athlete leaves the organization, for any reason, all funds in the athlete's account will be moved to the York Elite general fund. Fundraisers held for the benefit of your athlete's account are optional but encouraged.

**Our gym will hold two mandatory fundraisers each year.** These funds will be used toward gym costs including but not limited to program events, coaches' travel expenses, equipment, etc. Athlete's will be given the option to buy out of the mandatory fundraisers. Money will also be raised at other functions throughout the year, such as send offs, showcases, and raffles.

## GYM CLOSURES

The gym typically closes for the following holidays (specific dates for these breaks will be released at the beginning of each cheer season):

- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Halloween
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas/New Years
- Easter
- Memorial Day

It may be necessary to close the gym at times due to inclement weather. The Directors will notify athletes and parents of any gym closings via email and on the gym Facebook pages. We will do our best to give as much advanced notice as possible, weather permitting. If you are uncomfortable driving in inclement weather, please plan accordingly and attempt to carpool if possible. Contact your coach if driving conditions are worsening in your area. There will be no refunds or prorating of monthly payments for missed practices.

## GYM POLICIES

To maintain a safe environment for our athletes, please follow these gym guidelines:

- Only athletes registered with York Elite are allowed in the practice area. Parents must remain in the parent lounge unless invited into the gym.
- No food or drink other than water or sports drinks are permitted in the gym at any time.
- Cell phones must remain in backpacks.
- York Elite is not liable for any lost, stolen, or damaged items. Found items will be placed in lost and found.
- Athletes are responsible for cleaning up all trash and disposing of it properly.

## ILLNESSES

The health of our athletes and coaches is of utmost importance. If your athlete has a fever or is experiencing nausea or diarrhea, contact your athlete's coaches and keep your athlete home from practice. If your athlete is feeling ill but not experiencing any of these symptoms, they should report to practice. Work with your athlete's coaches to determine if a modified practice is necessary.

If your athlete has an illness and is under a doctor's care, provide the gym with a doctor's note explaining their limitations. The coaches will work with you and your athlete to develop a plan to return to practice safely.

## INJURIES

York Elite values the safety and wellbeing of our athletes. If your athlete experiences an injury at practice, they should inform their coach **immediately**. Our athletes need to understand that hiding it or attempting to work through the pain can possibly hurt them further and put other athletes at risk. Our coaches and directors will assess the injury and determine a proper course of action. The injury will be logged and if necessary, a parent or guardian will be contacted. If an athlete experiences an injury outside of the gym, the coaches and directors should be notified immediately.

With any injury, if applicable, a physician's note must be supplied to the gym detailing the injury and what restrictions the athlete should follow. Unless the physician instructs otherwise, injured athletes must continue to attend and be engaged in practice, participating when possible. Injured athletes must also plan to attend competitions to support their team. A letter of release from the athlete's physician must be presented to the coaches and directors prior to returning to full practice.

If you are injured and cannot participate, a replacement may be called in as a substitute for your spot. It will be at the coaches' and directors' discretion when and in what capacity the athlete will return to the team routine thereafter.

## PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

York Elite parents play an important role in their child's commitment to our program. Our goal is to maintain a positive and supportive attitude among our athletes, coaches, and parents to create an environment that allows our teams and athletes to achieve their goals. Our Parent Code of Conduct outlines principles and expectations our parents are expected to follow.

- I understand that this is a full season commitment and teams are depending on my athlete to fulfill responsibilities as a team member. I will not allow my athlete to quit, give up, or threaten to leave during the season. I will help my athlete understand the importance of their role as a member of a team.
- I will work with York Elite directors and staff to help resolve any issues with my athlete. I will contact the directors to address any issues.
- I will not use profanity at the gym, lobby, competitions, or any place I am representing York Elite.
- I will demonstrate good sportsmanship to my athlete's teammates, other parents, coaches, judges, event staff, spectators, and rival teams before, during, and after competitions. I will not speak to competition officials for any reason. This includes but is not limited to no bad-mouthing, gossiping, foul language, inappropriate actions, or speaking poorly of York Elite or any other cheer organization.
- I will respect my child's coaches and trust their decisions. I will allow the York Elite coaches to exercise their coaching skills and not intervene with practices. This includes only having my athlete train with their York Elite instructors and at the York Elite gym unless discussed with our directors prior to taking them elsewhere.
- I will help ensure my athlete arrives at practice and events on time in the appropriate attire and ready to practice or perform. If my athlete will be late, I will contact their coaches immediately.
- I understand all absences must be approved by the coaches and directors. If it is a planned absence, such as a vacation, it must be communicated by August 1.
- I understand that the coaches reserve the right to suspend my child's participation in practice or competitions as a disciplinary action if rules and/or the code of conduct are broken.
- I realize event producers that host competitions have codes of conduct that include parent actions and poor sportsmanship by parents can cause deductions or disqualifications of my athlete's team. I will demonstrate good sportsmanship as a York Elite parent.

## PRACTICE PROCEDURES

All practices are mandatory. Athletes must arrive on time, dressed in the required practice wear, with hair up, and sneakers on. All jewelry must be removed or covered. During the cheer season, fingernails should be short and athletes should refrain from getting fake nails.

Practice times vary per level. Occasionally extra practices are needed and will be communicated by the coaches and directory via email and in the team Facebook groups. Approximate practice frequency and length are as follows:

	PRACTICE	COMPETITIONS
<b>Tiny Novice</b>	1 Practice/Week, Approx. 1 hour	5 Local competitions
<b>Half Year</b>	1 Practice/Week, Approx. 1 hour	Local and travel competitions
<b>Elite/Prep</b>	2 practices/week, approx. 4 hours and team tumbling.  Additional practices may be added at the discretion of staff	Local and travel competitions, including two-day events, and possible end of season bid events  *Potential overnight competitions include Cheersport Nationals, Reach the Beach, U.S. Finals and Summit

## SOCIAL MEDIA

York Elite will use their social media pages and groups to communicate gym and team information. York Elite social media pages may not be used for complaints, criticisms, or inappropriate messages about our program, our athletes, another program, or events.

Videos of the team practices and routines will be posted at the discretion of the coaches and directors. Videos may **not** be posted to any personal pages on any social media platform.

## TEAM PLACEMENTS

We are committed to evaluating our athletes based on their current age and overall abilities across all skill sets. At evaluations, athletes will demonstrate their stunting, tumbling, jumps, motions, and dance skills. Previous years of participation, attendance, attitude, and conduct will also be considered. Using the Varsity Scoring Grid as a guide, we are committed to creating strong, successful teams where athletes are able to showcase a combination of their abilities while strengthening the team as a whole.

All new and returning athletes must attend evaluations to be considered for placement on a team. All returning athlete accounts must be current to be evaluated. Please understand that athletes may be re-positioned, moved or replaced at any time at the discretion of the coaching staff. Any changes are made to benefit the team as a whole.

Please remember, tumbling alone does not dictate leveling. Everyone will be placed on a team as we have a “no cut” policy but you are not guaranteed a spot on any specific team! Athletes will be placed based upon the skills presented at evaluations and team need. Athletes should perform skills they can execute with the best technique. Execution and technique are weighted higher than the difficulty of the skill. The chart below lists level appropriate skills.

LEVEL	STUNTING	JUMPS	STANDING TUMBLING	RUNNING TUMBLING
1	Knee Level stunts, prep level.	Beginner jumps	Back walkover, non-tumblers	Front Walkover, non-Tumbler.
2	Prep level one-legged stunts, extended two legged stunts.	Level Jumps	Back handspring, back-walkover into back handspring	Running tumbling to a back handspring
3	Prep level one-legged stunts, extended two legged stunts.	Level jumps	Multiple connected back handsprings, jumps to standing back handsprings	Running tumbling to tuck, specialty tumbling to tuck
4	Release moves to extended level, twisting stunts to two feet, double twisting dismounts from two feet.	Above level jumps	Standing tuck, jumps to back handspring tuck, standing back handsprings to tuck	Running tumbling to layout, specialty pass to layout.
5	Twisting stunts to extended level to one-foot, double twisting dismounts from one foot.	Hyper extended jumps	Jumps to back tuck, standing tumbling to layout	Running tumbling to full, specialty to full
6	Twisting stunts to extended level to one-foot, double twisting dismounts from one foot.	Hyper extended jumps	Jumps to back tuck, jump to standing tumbling to full or standing tumbling to double	Running tumbling to double, specialty to full or double.

## TEAM PARENTS

Each season, the coaches will look for 2-3 parent volunteers to be Team Parents. This is a particularly important job responsibility and role for the team. If you are selected to be a Team Parent, you will be responsible, but not limited to, the following duties:

- Organize team bonding events
- Organize Bid Reveal parties
- Organize the planning of team gifts for end of season events
- Organize and plan team donations for York Elite fundraisers
- Plan and coordinate snacks and/or lunches/dinners for team choreography days

Team Parents are a volunteer position and are not employees of York Elite. Team Parents will work to assist the coaches and organization but are not the voice of the coach or directors. Failure to follow the guidelines may result in being removed as Team Parent.

## **UNIFORMS/PRACTICE WEAR**

All athletes will be required to have a uniform and two sets of practice wear. Coaches and staff will communicate to all athletes which practice wear set should be worn at each practice. Practice wear is mandatory.

All uniforms and practice wear designs are approved by York Elite. Payments details will be communicated as soon as they become available. You will not receive a uniform or practice wear if your balance has not been paid and your account is not current. Estimated costs are as follows:

The York Elite Swap group on Facebook is available to allow parents and athletes to buy and sell York Elite uniforms, practice wear, and apparel. This group is not run by York Elite and York Elite is not responsible for any sales in the group. Before purchasing a uniform or practice wear, please confirm with York Elite staff if it is the mandatory items for the cheer season.

## **YORK ELITE LOGO AND NAME**

The York Elite logo and all York Elite names/slogans/team names are the property of York Elite All Stars. Logos and names/slogans are not permitted to be reproduced on apparel or any other item without approval from the directors. York Elite apparel and gear will be offered for sale through selected vendors and links to access these pro shops will be provided in the York Elite Parents Facebook group as well as on the York Elite website.