Philosophy

The Vista Murrieta Dance Team will serve as a support group for the various athletics teams and activities that comprise VMHS. The purpose of the team is to boost school spirit, promote good sportsmanship, encourage and sustain crowd involvement, help student participants and spectators enjoy the spirit of the event, and above all exemplify **Character, Leadership, Attitude, Scholarship, and Service** (C.L.A.S.S.).

The VMHS dancers are highly visible on the school campus and in the community; therefore, high standards and appropriate conduct are essential at all times. In order to earn the respect of the student body, the squad must
demonstrate positive personal behavior and cohesiveness, and provide a standard in which others should emulate.

**Part A. ~ PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

**PURPOSE**

Dancers are student leaders who exemplify and promote school spirit, pride, and sportsmanship. Dancers enhance a positive school climate by exhibiting leadership skills such as respect for individual differences, academic excellence, and modeling appropriate behaviors, in and away from school, at all times.

Dancers are expected to be athletically and technically skilled in the field of dance and both mentally and physically fit. As a representative of VMHS, members of the dance team will be expected to maintain a higher standard of behavior than that of their peers, both on and off campus. In or out of uniform, dancers have a large responsibility to live up to these expectations at all times.

**Composition** ~ The dance team will consist of two separate spirit squads: junior varsity (9th/10th/11th grade), and varsity (11th/12th grade). The VMHS Dance Team is a yearlong commitment.

**Academic and Citizenship Requirements** ~ A minimum GPA of 2.5 is required for all members of the dance team, at all times, including tryouts. If a student falls below a 2.5 on the progress report following tryouts, student will be dismissed from the squad. If a student falls below a 2.5 on the 2nd semester report card in June, they will be suspended the first 6 weeks of school unless they attended summer school with proof of grade check. Grades will be checked at each progress report period (ie – 6 times per year). If a student falls below the minimum at the end of each grading period, the student is considered ineligible. During this period the cheerleader is still required to attend all practices and activities, but is benched for all games and performances until the next grading period. Upon a second drop below a 2.5 (during any part of the season), student will be dismissed from the team.

**Health and Fitness** ~ Dance is a rigorous activity and all participants are required to be in top physical condition.
Students with serious health problems that are aggravated by exercise and/or which limit full participation for a substantial amount of time should not try out for the squad. Dancers will be required to fill out forms located within the athletic packet, which ensures clearance through a physical evaluation by a physician. Although dance is not sanctioned by CIF, we want to ensure the safety of all students who participate in physical activity.

All dance team members will be considered athletes, and are expected to condition and train in such a way as to benefit not only themselves, but the squad as a whole. We are a team, and will function as a whole, and not as individual parts! We will conduct ourselves in such a way as to model a strong, cohesive, and motivated athletic team.

**Fundraising** ~ This is a necessary evil, and a component of every team or group! Money earned is used to further benefit the dance team as a whole. It is essential that every member do their part. Individuals who do not participate in Fundraising will not earn the right to a Varsity Letter or participate in extracurricular activities. There will be several fundraising opportunities throughout the year, and each member of the squad is expected to participate.

**Part B ~ Guidelines and Expectations**

**Uniform and Dress Code ~** *Failure to wear any part of the uniform or practice gear, as well as not having proper shoes or undergarments, will result in the documentation of points and the dancer will not be able to perform/participate.*

*The dancer is required to be in uniform (with warmups as a cover-up) prior to arriving at the game or event. **There will be no putting on make-up, doing hair or changing on the field, court, or bleachers.** (The coach or captain will determine what uniforms will be worn.)

*As long as you are in uniform, no other pieces of clothing may be worn (Uggs, flip-flops, jackets, etc…)*

**Uniform and Dress Code – Continued…**
*No jewelry* may be worn during practice (belly rings, nose rings, anklets, and body piercings) team earrings are the only piece of jewelry allowed at games and performances unless noted by the Coach.

*Nails must be kept at sport length.*

*No visible Tattoos (must be covered)*

*No gum chewing or candy*

*Hair must in the appropriate style set by the Coach. Bright hair colors (red, orange, blue, yellow, purple etc.) are not acceptable. We are a team and need to look like a team.*

*All pieces of gear (uniform, hair accessories, team earrings, warm-ups, etc…) will be brought by the dancer to each event, game and practice.*

*For Practice Days ~ Required attire for practices are dance pants, capri pants, t-shirts, dance tops (no crop tops or midriff showing) sweats, jazz shoes or other shoes specified by the Coach, socks. Girls must wear sports bras under practice clothes. It is unacceptable to wear dance shorts and/or sports bra by itself. No loose clothing that hangs off shoulders or short/long shirts that show skin or may be a safety issue are allowed. Sports bras should be navy, white or black. No visible bra straps should be shown anytime.*

*Game Days at School ~ The coach and/or captain will determine what is worn on these days. If you show up and you’re missing any part of your attire then you will be docked points and sit 1 qtr of game. If your missing uniform and arrive in the middle of qtr, you will sit out until the next qtr starts and points will be documented.*

**Dance Behaviors and Expectations**

*Above all, dancers will abide by all school rules, and always model C.L.A.S.S.*

*Dancers will be dressed out and ready to practice by specified practice time.*  
* Dancers will know all sidelines, and routines*
* Dancers will not use cell phones, i-pods, or other devices during practices, games, or other dance events.
* Dancers will not eat during practices, games, or events unless given permission by the coach (this includes gum).
* Dancers will be focused and on task at all times.
* Dancers will be respectful of themselves and others.
* Dancers will be responsible for their actions, attitudes, and performances. Coaches have the right to pull dancers from games/events if they feel dancer is not performing up to their expectation or he/she is not reflecting the appropriate attitude.
* Dancers will maintain a positive and outgoing attitude when performing.
* Dancers will use appropriate language at all times.
* Dancers will us appropriate displays of affection, especially in uniform or spirit wear at games and at school.
* Dancers will represent the school in a positive manner on and off campus.
* Dancers will always give the task at hand 100%, and without complaint.
* Dancers will ALWAYS represent themselves with class on ALL SOCIAL MEDIA including text messages. Foul language, inappropriate pictures, hazing or harassing on any social media will not be tolerated. The coach reserves the right to determine the appropriate action which could include dismissal from the squad.

**Time Commitment** ~ Being a member of the Vista Murrieta Dance Team requires a major commitment from athletes and their families. Successful dance teams require many hours of work from each athlete. Our goals include developing as an individual and as a team. These goals take no less than 100% effort from each individual. Therefore, it is important for athletes to understand the necessity of time management. Calendars are essential! Each dancer will be given a link to our team website which includes a team calendar (updated a month ahead of time). It is the dancer’s responsibility to be aware of upcoming events and to plan accordingly. Though it is
admirable for athletes to become involved and well rounded, athletes should take caution when becoming involved in multiple organizations and activities. Outside commitments should not conflict with any student’s dance team duties. Please consult the practice and dance calendar before making personal appointments. By committing to the program, the athlete is making dance her primary responsibility. Other outside commitments must not interfere with participation in an event, game, and/or practice. Although we do promote multiple sports and activities at Vista Murrieta, we encourage members of the dance team to not overbook themselves.

It is wrong to expect any program to lower its standards because a member of the team has overcommitted themselves. Making wise choices based on your time, talents and interests is a vital part of becoming an adult. Budget your time wisely!

A preliminary calendar will be available online to help families in planning and assessing the commitment required. The calendar could adjust during the course of the year and will include: Please check handout or online

*Daily afterschool Practices and sporting events during the school year which include: Football, and boys/girls basketball.
*Team Fundraising events, community service events, rallies, showcases

**THE IMPORTANCE OF PROCEDURE:** Policies and procedures are put forth in this handbook to ensure that all aspects of the dance team run smoothly, and that each participant has a fair, safe, positive, and successful experience. It would be appreciated if exceptions to the rule are not requested.

At times, unforeseen circumstances may dictate modification of a policy. In this case, modifications will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion and judgment of the coach!

*Any dancer who is ineligible for any reason is expected to attend all practices and games in full uniform/practice gear and sit where designated by the coach; this includes injured members!
*The entire team is expected to be at games, rallies, practices, and events on time.

*Transportation, when not provided by the school, will fall upon the dancer.

*If a dancer is absent for any reason for any event she must contact the coach prior to the absence. Do not send word with another team member, we will not accept messages from anyone but the parent or dancer that is absent. By calling the school to clear attendance will not clear the dancer from dance team. If we do not hear from the dancer or parent prior to practice, game or event, the dancer will be docked as unexcused absence. It is not the coach’s responsibility to figure out where you are!

**Attendance/Discipline ~** The school policies for attendance and discipline, as stated in the school handbook, will be enforced. If at any time a cheerleader acts or speaks inappropriately, causes harm to another student, or simply acts with conduct detrimental to the organization, the coach reserves the right to choose the appropriate consequence. Any participant who quits (for any reason) will be disqualified from trying out the following year. Any participant who quits or does not complete a full season forfeits their right to earn a varsity letter or certificate of completion.

**Absence:** All dancers will be allowed a total of 3 “Sick Days” per semester. A “Sick Day” will be classified as a day in which the dancer is absent from school due to illness and is not seen by a doctor. If a dancer is sick before/during/after school, she must still check in/contact her coach and it will be up to the coaches’ discretion. Dancer must inform coaches of all school activities in order to be cleared from an absence/tardy and all vacations must be given in a 1 month advance notice.

- **EXCUSED ABSENCES**
  - Illness (more than 3 days provide Dr. note)
  - Injury that prevents attendance
  - Doctor/dentist appointment (with note provided- 3days to clear)
  - Funeral
  - Religious holiday (with 1 month given notice)
o Unexpected emergency (contact coach); absence pre-arranged and approved by the coach.

➢ UNEXCUSED ABSENCES
  o Doctor/dentist appt. without a note;
  o Work/job; uniform/dress code violation;
  o Tardies
  o Vacation (not cleared 1 month in advance)
  o Extra-curricular outside of school.

Vista Murrieta’s 2014/2015 Dance Team will document discipline and behavior on a point system. Each dancer will have a 30 point allowance for the entire season. If a dancer reaches the 30 point allowance at anytime during the season, she will be dismissed from the team. Points will be accumulated as outlined below:

**POINT SYSTEM**

1 point: - Tardy to practices (less than 30 min), Jewelry, gum
2 points: - Tardy to practices (more than 30 min),
            - Warning for missing uniform piece (assuming dancer is able to retrieve missing piece prior to start of game).
3 points:  - Tardy to game (less than 15 min)
5 points:  - Tardy to game (more than 15 min) plus 1 qtr sit out (discretion of the coach).
            - Absent to practice (unexcused)
8 points: - Absent to game (unexcused) this includes not having the proper uniform.
            - NO CALL NO SHOW (Absent from practice without notification)
10 Points: - NO CALL NO SHOW (Absent from game without notification)
10 - 15 points:
            - Inappropriate social media, bullying, harassing, text messages (All social media)
5 – 15 points:
            - Behavior, Attitude, dishonesty
20 points: - Suspension from school plus 1 week suspension from squad after returning from school suspension.
-Uniform: As outlined in the uniform and dress code section of the handbook, all dancers are expected to follow these expectations at all times. If a dancer is missing a part of the uniform (this includes proper undergarments, hair accessories, team earring, shoes, etc) she will be sent home to change and points will be documented. If she is able to return to school before the scheduled meeting time with the appropriate uniform she will only be documented 2 points for the ‘warning’. Dancers must be “Ready to Go” at the scheduled meeting time.

-Social Media/Bullying: As this issue is taken extremely serious on our campus, any bullying/cyber bullying issues or social media conflicts will result in an automatic 15-point documentation. The dancer will be written up and notified of their current point total. Depending on the severity of the issue, dismissal from the squad is left up to the discretion of the program advisor.

-Behavior/Attitude/dishonesty: This documentation is dependent upon the action of the dancer and will be left up to the discretion of the coach. It may results in a 5-15 point documentation.

Complaint/Concern Procedures ~ Please follow this hierarchy:

1). Bring your concern/complaint to the coach’s attention first. Most issues can be resolved at this time.

2). If then you are still not satisfied, contact the Dance Team Advisor in charge of overseeing the Dance Team

3). If the above steps have been done and you are still not satisfied then we will make an appointment with the Dean of Students Steve Rausa. The Dean of Students and or Principal will not meet with parents unless the above steps have been taken.

Communication – There are several ways to this to occur. Information may be put on the team’s website, e-mails, sent home via a flyer or handout, or communicated by phone/text message. You may contact the coach through several methods as well:
Dance Team Handbook Acknowledgement

Signing The Dance Team Handbook Parent/Student Acknowledgement form confirms agreement to the expectations outlined on the previous pages. The dancer must follow the rules and expectations throughout the entire season. Failure to follow this contract may result in dismissal from the squad.

Student Signature X______________________________

Student Name (print) X__________________________

Parent Signature X______________________________

Parent Name (print) X____________________________

Coach’s Signature X_____________________________

Date ~ ______________________