



2026 NMAA STATE SPIRIT CHAMPIONSHIPS

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION



This document provides general event information for the NMAA State Spirit Championships. Coaches are expected to be fully informed of and comply with all rules, bylaws, and regulations established by the New Mexico Activities Association (NMAA) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) as they pertain to cheer, dance, and championship procedures. This includes but is not limited to the NMAA competition guidelines and performance criteria for Cheer and Dance. For detailed competition rules and performance criteria, refer to the following documents available on the NMAA website:

- **Cheer:** [CHEER Competition Guidelines and Performance Criteria](#)
 - **Dance:** [DANCE Competition Guidelines and Performance Criteria](#)
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1. Teams and coaches enter/check in at the complimentary admission entrance located at the southeast corner of the arena. This is where coaches' packets will be distributed to head coaches.
2. Teams must enter with coach(es). Participants listed on the registration roster will receive complimentary admission and should be prepared with a photo ID if requested by event staff upon entering/re-entering the facility. Alternates must be in the same attire as the performing team members to access areas designated for teams (i.e., team seating, warm-up room and performance floor).
3. Rostered coaches, team/music managers, and performing mascots will receive a wristband. Wristbands are required for access to areas designated for teams (i.e., team seating, warm-up room and performance floor).

Wristband Colors for Dance on Friday

Dance Coaches: Pink

Team/Music Managers: Silver

Wristbands Colors for Cheer on Saturday

Cheer Coaches: Red

Team/Music Managers/Performing Mascot: Vegas Gold

4. Each participant, including alternates, will receive a commemorative bag tag. The bag tag does **not** grant complimentary admission. Participants listed on the registration roster will receive complimentary admission and should be prepared with a photo ID if requested by event staff upon entering/re-entering the facility.
5. Teams will be provided with 10 minutes of locker room access in preparation for their **second routine only**. Teams must follow the locker room schedule (refer to competition schedule) and check in with the locker room attendant at the top of the ramp. Access to the stairwell leading to the locker rooms is on the southeast concourse, and event staff at the complimentary admission entrance can assist teams in locating the stairwell.
6. Teams must follow the scheduled times for photos and warm-ups and **must check in 5 minutes prior to assigned photo time** (refer to the competition schedule). It is the head coach's responsibility to ensure the team reports to the warm-up check-in table (located on the south concourse); it is not the responsibility of event staff to provide reminders or seek out coaches/teams. Failure to check in 5 minutes prior to assigned photo time may result in not being able to take a team photo and a shortened warm-up time.
7. Team warm-ups are restricted to the warm-up room. Teams may not warm up in any other area, including the concourse.

8. When checking in for team warm-ups, coaches and team members must have all items needed for the performance, including music devices and any necessary adapter(s). Coaches and team members will report to the performance area immediately following warm-ups.
9. Only performers, including alternates in uniform, and coaches or team/music managers with a valid wristband may enter the warm-up room and performance floor (performers and alternates in uniform do not need a wristband).
10. After checking in for warm-ups, teams will have a photo taken for each routine performed; taking a photo is required, but there is no obligation to purchase. The photographer will provide information on pricing and how to place an order.
11. A full cheer mat and dance performance floor will be available in the warm-up area for teams to run through their routines. Dance teams will have 15 minutes total for warm-up, with 5 minutes at each station. Cheer teams will have 16 minutes total, with 4 minutes at each station.
12. **A performance roster listing only the performers for each routine must be submitted to event staff when the team enters the warm-up area.** Color-coded rosters for each Dance and Cheer performance will be provided in coaches' packets; coaches must use the rosters provided.
13. Each team will perform two routines; a performance roster is required for each routine, and all performers must be listed on the registration form. No more than four team members can be different from one routine than the other.
 - a. The roster for the first routine must only list those performing in the first routine.
 - b. The roster for the second routine must only list those performing in the second routine.
 - c. A maximum of four athletes included in the first routine may be dropped from and not a part of the second routine.
 - d. A maximum of four athletes who did not perform in the first routine may be added to and perform in the second routine; they must be listed on the roster for the second routine.
14. The following includes protocols and key points of emphasis centered on performances and expectations before and after a performance:
 - a. Team chanting is permitted only at the top of the ramp, and it must cease before entering the area for teams standing by for competition in the tunnel.
 - b. A coaches' box will be provided on the performance floor. Only two (2) coaches may occupy the coaches' box during a performance, and they must remain in the coaches' box throughout the performance. All others with a wristband and/or alternates in uniform must remain behind and to the side of the coaches' box.
 - c. Teams will have 30 seconds after being announced to enter the performance floor, set up props, and assume position.
 - d. Once a team is announced and proceeds to the performance floor, the team may not return to the area designated for teams standing by for competition.
 - e. The timing of a performance will begin with the first signal (i.e., stomp, clap, verbal cue, beat of music, etc.) and end upon the conclusion of the performance.
 - f. Upon the conclusion of a team's performance, teams will have 15 seconds to exit the performance floor.
 - g. Teams must exit via north stairs. Teams can view their performance immediately after at the northwest corner of the concourse. This is a courtesy to allow teams to view their performance. Requests to watch a recorded performance when a coach disagrees with a score and/or a penalty violation will not be granted.

15. The following provides key information and recommendations regarding music for all performances:
 - a. There will not be an opportunity for a sound check. A music system will be provided, including in the warm-up room. All music must be recorded on a laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Record music at the highest volume possible. Live music is prohibited during a team's entrance, performance, and/or exit.
 - b. It is strongly recommended that a device with a direct auxiliary (AUX) port be used. Teams are responsible for providing their own adapters (i.e., lightning/USB/USB-C for AUX port or any other necessary AUX port adapter). Adapters will not be provided by the NMAA.
 - c. Each team is responsible for providing a team representative to control (start/stop) music, including the volume on the laptop/tablet/smartphone. Prior to connecting to the music system provided, music must be cued and ready with the volume up all the way on the laptop/tablet/smartphone. Tablets and smartphones must be in airplane mode and cases removed.
 - d. There will be designated event staff at the sound system stationed next to the announcer on the east side of the performance floor. The team representative responsible for controlling the music must remain seated at this station throughout the performance since they are controlling the music (not event staff).
 - e. Recording equipment varies. The team representative controls the music, including the volume on the laptop/tablet/smartphone. In the event of a music malfunction during a performance, the team representative will make the determination whether to stop the music. This includes if the wrong music is played or a technical issue occurs. Music not loud enough is not considered a technical issue, record music at the highest volume possible. If a team does not stop and completes the routine when a technical issue has occurred, the routine will be judged accordingly.
 - f. If the team representative stops the music, the announcer will direct the performing team to regroup and restart the performance. There will not be a point deduction for a music malfunction.
 - g. A coach may not request that the routine be repeated once the team has left the performance floor.
 - h. Coaches must be prepared with a backup device and necessary adapter(s).
 - i. It is strongly recommended that the head coach has a signal to communicate with the team representative for starting music and whether to stop music in the event of a music malfunction.
16. There will be two panels of six performances judges (12 total). One panel scores a team's first routine, and the other scores the second. Panels are stationed on the east and west concourse, and teams alternate which side they face per the schedule (refer to the competition schedule). There will be technical judges on the performance floor to monitor safety violations and issue penalties as needed. It is the head coach's responsibility to prepare teams for the format.
17. Scoresheets will be available immediately following the award ceremony for each class and will be distributed at the check-in table at the warm-up room located on the south concourse.
18. All scores are final. Technical protests or appeals will not be accepted. Requests to watch a recorded performance when a coach disagrees with a score and/or a penalty violation will not be granted. Designated NMAA staff will make a courtesy call to the head coach's mobile phone listed on the registration form if a team is issued a deduction. Informing the head coach of a deduction will be the sole purpose of the phone call. Communication will be limited to notifying the head coach of the deduction and will not serve as an opportunity to debate the deduction.
19. There will be an award presentation at the conclusion of the competition session for each class (refer to performance scheduled). State championship trophies will be awarded to the top-finishing teams in each division and class. Medals will be awarded to each member of teams finishing in first place.
 - a. For second and third place, a maximum of four (4) team members may enter the floor to receive awards.

- b. For first place, the entire team may enter the floor to accept the trophy and banner (medals given to head coach to distribute upon returning to stands).
20. Two athletic trainers will be on site, one in the warm-up room and one on the performance floor.
21. Facility access is as follows for teams, school administration, bus drivers and spectators:
 - a. Doors open on Friday: Teams 8:00 AM | Spectators 8:30 AM
 - b. Doors open on Saturday: Teams 7:00 AM | Spectators 7:30 AM
 - c. Coaches, teams and school administrators enter through the complimentary admission entrance located at the southeast side of the arena. School administrators must sign in.
 - d. Bus drivers will be provided with complimentary admission; they must enter through the complimentary admission entrance located at the southeast corner. Bus drivers must sign in.
 - e. Spectators enter through the main entrance of the arena. Tickets can be purchased ahead of time online at [NMAA Spirit Championships | University of New Mexico](#). Tickets will be available for purchase online or at the venue on the day of event.
22. Facility seating is as follows for teams and spectators:
 - a. Team seating is on the south side (Sections K–N) and is for registration rostered members only.
 - b. Spectator seating is general admission and is first-come, first-served.
 - c. Parents and fans can have front-and-center views of their respective teams. A reserved section is located at the center of the performance floor on both the west and east sides of the arena. **Seating is only available for fans of the team performing and must be vacated immediately after the performance. The respective seating sections are cleared after each performance.**
23. Other pertinent facility information:
 - a. UNM utilizes metal detectors at all entrances.
 - b. Spectators must follow UNM's [clear bag policy](#); participating teams are exempt.
 - c. No outside food or drink is permitted.
 - d. Spectator signs that support teams may not exceed 12" x 12".
 - e. Selfie sticks, sign sticks, and PVC, metal and/or wood posts/poles are not allowed (does not apply to flag poles used for team performances).
 - f. Balloons, beach balls and confetti are prohibited.
 - g. Artificial noisemakers are not allowed.
 - h. Recording performances is permitted if it does not obstruct the view of others; tripods/cords are not allowed in the stands. **Streaming the event is prohibited.**
 - i. UNM charges \$7 for parking. Parking fees are waived for school buses and school vehicles with a government license plate (notify parking attendant if vehicle has a government license plate).
 - j. Buses should drop teams off on the southeast side of the arena and proceed to park on the east side of the baseball field. Parking lot attendants can direct buses to designated parking.
24. NMAA State Spirit Championships will be streamed live on www.NFHSnetwork.com.
25. The competition schedule is available online for the NMAA State Spirit Championships; refer to links below.
Link: [Dance Competition Schedule](#)
Link: [Cheer Competition Schedule](#)