

# Get Your Crowd on their Feet

(How to Motivate Your School)

## What is School Spirit?

- A feeling of pride and enthusiasm for your school
- It is the glue that binds students together in support of each other.

## How Do You Develop School Spirit?

- With the cheerleaders!

## School Spirit Needs to Involve Everyone

- Students, staff, faculty, athletes, community

## Organization is Key

- Brainstorm ideas
- Establish timelines
- Involve everyone

## Set the Mood on the First Day of School

- Decorate the teachers' doors
- Post *Welcome Back* signs around the school
- Greet the buses
- Welcome back assembly

## Develop School Spirit with Contests

- Birth of a New Season – Place baby photos of some of your athletes on a poster and display it in a key location. Have a contest to see who can match the athletes to their baby pictures. The winner will receive a special prize.
- Fan of the Week – Photograph a wildly dressed fan at the game. Post the winner's photo in the lunchroom and on school web site. Announce his name on the intercom.
- Best Fan in the Stands – The cheerleaders pick an adult and a student that displays the most spirit during the game. Announce the winners between third and fourth quarter. Give each person a t-shirt that says "Best Fan in the Stands".
- Guess the Poms - Toss a bunch of pom poms in a large, clear container. Place the container in a display case where students see it. Have the students guess how many poms are inside the container. The winner receives a pair of poms and free hot dog at the game!
- Spirit Couch –Decorate an old couch in school colors. Place it on the sidelines in a special location at the football game. Place poster through out the school explaining the rules for the contest. During the week, every time a student demonstrates school spirit, a cheerleader hands out a spirit ticket and puts the matching stub in the spirit box. At the end of the week, draw one name from the box and that person sits on the spirit couch at the game with a friend of his choice and is served pizza and soda at halftime

•Pride My Ride – For the first game or at Homecoming, encourage each student to decorate his or her car for the big game! Give a prize for the best.

### **Reward School Spirit**

- Give out spirit promo gifts in the hallway, in classrooms, at lunchtime, at games and pep assemblies to students who display school spirit. Handing out these little surprises are fun incentives to promote school spirit. Some ideas are
  - Grand Candy Bar – “Your spirit is worth a GRAND!”
  - Plastic Eggs filled with Candy – “Thank you for the EGG-tra spirit!”
  - Fireballs Candy – “ Thanks for being fired up for the game!”
  - Spirit Sticks - licorice in school colors – “We like your school spirit!”
  - Bubble Gum – “ Your school spirit BLOWS us away!”
  - Expandable Sponges – “Thanks for EXPANDING your spirit”
  - Balloons – “ Let your spirit soars!”
  - Raisins – “Thanks for RAISing the roof and showing your spirit”
  - Starburst Candy – “You are a STAR”
  - Sunflower Seeds – “Love the way your spirit blossoms!”
  - Snickers candy bar - “Your spirit is nothing to SNICKER at! Keep up the good work!”
  - Good and Plenty candy – “Our Cats are GOOD so show PLENTY of spirit at the game tonight!”
  - Reisen candy – “Support the Cats and give them a REISEN to win!”
  - Mentos candy – “Just some moMENTOS for your school spirit!
  - Banana – “Go bananas for the Wildcats!”
  - Cheer Grams – Have the cheerleaders pass out cheer grams to anyone showing school spirit.
  - Candy Kiss flowers – “Let your spirit bloom!”

### **Develop School Spirit with Game Traditions**

- Team entering field
  - Lead by mascot or cheerleader with school flag
  - Run-through banner
  - Cheerleaders tumbling
  - Roll-down banners
- Use the same cheer/chant for free throws.
- Have the band play your fight song every time the team scores.
- Use the crowd’s favorite chant at timeouts.
- Do push ups or jumps for each point scored at a football game.
- Have a cheerleader take a victory lap with the school flag each time the team scores or a wrestler wins his match.
- During a timeout have a cheerleader do a series of back handsprings down the track or basketball court. Ask the spectators to count out loud the numbers performed.
- Decorate the stadium: balloons, yard signs, balloons
- Encourage the fans to dress in school colors, paint their faces and color hair, dress outrageously

- Rope off a special student section. Everyone in this area must dress in school colors.

### **Develop Good Game Skills**

- Cheerleaders use big, bold moves.
- Have them make eye contact with the crowd.
- Cheerleaders must understand the dynamics of the sport. Teach the squad to be familiar with the scoreboard. At practice, review the rules of all sports.
- If at first a new idea does not work, don't give up. New customs take time.
- Remember that cheerleaders must always project a fun, enthusiastic appearance. Fun is contagious!
- Situate the cheerleaders as close to the crowd as possible. In some areas, cheerleaders stand on large wooden boxes in order to be seen well.
- Always cheer for your team and never against the other team.
- If the crowd starts a supportive chant, encourage the cheerleaders to participate. Many times cheerleaders think they have to initiate all chants. Not true. If the crowd is displaying school spirit, support it!
- Cheer as the team enters the field or onto the court.
- Cheer and stunt as a means to discourage negative remarks or booing from the fans.
- When yelling chants, remember to do them 5 to 7 time or more

### **Motivate the Crowd by Using Props**

- Signs
- Roll-down banner
- Dancing letters
- Megaphones
- Spirit Items

### **Motivate the Crowd with Themes**

- *"Ride the Wave to Victory"*

Announcement made on the intercom while the song "Surfin' USA" is playing in the background. Throw a beach ball into the audience before the game starts and at halftime to get them excited. Cheerleaders perform to "Surfin' USA" at halftime  
Give leis to first 200 students that enter the stadium.  
Encourage the students to dress in Hawaiian attire.

- *"Blow Away the Cougars"*

Hand out blow pops during school.  
Give a bottle of bubbles to the first 100 fans at the game.  
Rent a bubble-making machine and use it for the tunnel as the football players enter the field.  
Give out gum and host a "Who can make the biggest bubble" contest at lunchtime on game day.  
Release helium balloons at the start of the game.

Cover the locker room floor with balloons.

- “*Get Fired Up! Cats are Red Hot!*”

All week, during announcements over the intercom at school, play the song “Hot, Hot, Hot” in the background.

Paint posters with the theme and place throughout the school and locker room.

Cheerleaders and fans arrive at the stadium in a fire truck.

Cheerleaders man a “Spin the Wheel” game. If it lands on the fire-symbol, the student wins a prize. Prizes include food items like Hot Tamales candy, Jalapeño potato chips, and Red Hot candies.

Cheerleaders perform at 1/2 time to the song “Hot Stuff”.

- “*Let Your Spirits Soar*”

Cheerleaders dress up in flight suits and greet the fans as they enter the stadium.

Give out car flags to the first 100 fans.

Play games like Pin the Plane on the Sky, and Guess the Number of Mini Planes in a Jar.

Host a paper airplane toss contest at halftime. Award a prize to the one who throws it the farthest.

If you live close to a military airfield, ask the local search and rescue helicopter unit to hover over the stadium and deliver the game ball to the field with one of their men dressed up in the mascot uniform.

- “*The Cats Can Do It All!*”

Ask all the students to bring a can of food to the game. Deliver the collected cans to the local food bank.

Make posters for the upcoming game that look like cans.

Have a can-stacking contest at lunchtime to promote the upcoming event.

- “*Going Into Battle*”

The MC of a pep rally dresses like *Braveheart* on the battlefield. Ask your school video department to make a movie where they dub in scenes of practices over the battle sequence of the movie.

### Reference sites

<http://www.oakharborcheer.com/Spirit.html>

<http://www.oakharborcheer.com/Spirit3.html>

<http://www.oakharborcheer.com/Spirit2.html>

<http://www.oakharborcheer.com/Themes.html>

\* 101 School Spirit Ideas, Pam Headridge, Coaches Choice, 2008