

Competitive Dance Team Handbook for Students & Parents

A competitive dance team is designed for the serious dancer who is highly motivated in the performing arts. Those selected for company will possess the following:

- Be physically fit with emphasis on healthy mind and body
- Be self-motivated and able to self-evaluate
- Have solid technical and performance skills
- Strong desire to grow and develop as a dancer
- Have a sense of humor, bright smile, and positive attitude
- Have respect for the team and staff
- Show support for the studio, teachers and fellow dancers

The Competition Experience:

It is important to understand that the “competition” aspect of being a member of a Competitive Dance Team should be considered a “performance” opportunity. Competition results are strictly a subjective opinion, and each dancer’s growth should not be completely gauged by their scores or achievements at competitions. It is important to keep competition experiences positive, and most importantly, be proud of the growth and development that takes place within your dancer. Team members are not in competition with each other. Students are encouraged to strive to improve themselves and to work to their full capacity. Each dancer is uniquely different, each with their own strengths and their own weaknesses and each brings their own talent to the team as a whole.

Attendance/Tardies:

Attendance is mandatory for all dance classes. The studio tries its best to be flexible and accommodating with conflicts due to school and/or important family activities. However, by becoming a member of a team, you have agreed that this is a priority in your schedule. Missed classes for any reason other than illness must be approved in advance. Student absences will be recorded. If more than 3 unexcused absences have occurred, it is possible the dancer may not be able to compete in the competition OR they may be required to take some private lessons at a cost to catch up. Any time an absence occurs, students are responsible to learn what was missed before the next class, either with a private lesson or from a friend.

Students must arrive on time for class or earlier. Missing the first part of class causes the students to become behind on stretching and warming up which can lead to injuries. More than 3 tardies may result in additional classes assigned by the competition teachers to make up for the lost time.

Also frequent tardies and absences may result in students to drop their solos, duets or trios.

Being part of the competition is a team effort and attendance is very important to the other dancers. Dance teachers do understand that they are dealing with busy children and socially active teens with many school demands; being a well-rounded individual is important, however, when it comes to participation on a competitive team, skills are constantly being taught....students must be present!

Required Classes:

Each dancer is required to take 2 ballet classes, leaps and turns, as well as a technique class that coincides with the team/teams they are on. The dancer is also required to take the company class which will take place on Saturday mornings. In addition students may be required to attend extra rehearsals as necessary and determined by the choreographer.

Summer Classes:

We understand that some of you have vacations planned during the summer. We have condensed the classes to allow more free time. Dancers will start required classes on July 6th and will have classes Tues, Wed, Thurs starting at 5:30 during the month of July. The Choreography Intensive will be Aug 3rd-7th during day hours ex: 9am-3pm. **All students must attend this week! No exceptions!** The regular fall schedule will begin Aug 10th.

Competition/Audience Etiquette:

- Do not enter or exit the auditorium during any performance. If you think you will be getting up and down a lot, please be seated closer to the back of the auditorium.
- Do not allow young siblings to walk/run up and down the aisle, or wander around unattended. It is distracting to other audience members.
- Absolutely, positively no picture taking or videotaping in the auditorium. The studio could be kicked out of the competition if anyone is caught doing it, so please don't! You will have ample opportunities for pictures during awards, or out in the hallway.
- Keep chatter/talking to a minimum while you are seated. If you want to have a conversation with someone or use your phone, please go out in the hall! Remember to put phones on vibrate.
- Students are encouraged to watch other Footnotes teams as they perform at competition, when present to help support their team mates and create a sense of unity.
- After competition, all students will listen to the judges' critiques and are expected to apply the corrections suggested. Students should expect to hear the honest truth from the judges and appreciate what they have to say.

Judging:

Every competition has different criteria for judging routines. The four basic things that routines are ALWAYS judged on are:

TECHNIQUE:

The reason for all those extra ballet tech and stretch/strength classes is TECHNIQUE!

This includes:

- pointed feet
- turn-out
- extensions
- proper execution of turns
- use of plié
- placement of hands

TECHNIQUE IS ALWAYS AT LEAST 50% OF A ROUTINE'S SCORE, SO GET TO THOSE BALLET CLASSES!!

OVERALL PERFORMANCE QUALITY

How well each student knows their routine and how well they entertain the judges and audience with it. Also in this area is the use of facial expression to convey the "feeling " of the routine.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Here it is the TEACHER that is judged! Choreography scores are based on appropriate choice of music and costumes, use of stage, difficulty of routine and how well the movement in the dance relates to the music.

This is often the smallest portion of the overall score.

APPEARANCE

This pertains to costume fit, whether undergarments are showing, neatness of hair and make-up. Hats and hair pieces must be securely attached and, if performing in a group, consistently placed. Costumes will be tested BEFORE the first competition to determine if you need to pin or secure it during our mock competition. This is a non-negotiable for all students and all teams, including solos/duets/trios. Not wearing your costume during this rehearsal will result in removal from competition and entry fees to be forfeited. Double check that you have the proper bra/tight/shoe for each different dance. Wardrobe malfunctions can bring down a score very quickly!

Awards:

Awards Ceremonies are usually held a few times each day of competitions, and are the MOST FUN time of the weekend! Students are required to wear their warm ups on stage for all award ceremonies that they attend. They are required to attend all award ceremonies for the teams that they are on but students often like to go on stage for others.

Awards are the time to:

- Hoot and holler (parents AND dancers),
- Take pictures
- Sit back and relax.

The most important thing to remember about awards is that ALL scores are the opinions of 3 or 4 judges with different opinions.

Financial Commitment:

Being in a program such as this requires a certain financial commitment.

Tuition Fees:

Choreography Fee → \$275 (Due June 15th, upon commitment to your teams)

1 team → \$175

2 teams → \$215

3 teams → \$255

4 teams → \$295

Unlimited teams/classes → \$325

Solo → \$250

Duet → \$300

Trio → \$375

Competition Fees:

The fees do not include any of the competitions. You will be given a workshop and competition schedule at the beginning of the year. Each dancer's competition costs vary based on their age, the size of the group performing each dance, and the number of dances the dancer is participating in. Entry Fee deadlines will be clearly defined and must be paid timely! If you do not pay on time, a late charge will be added and it is possible the dancer will not be allowed to compete.

In addition, transportation to and from the competition is not provided or arranged nor are any hotel fees for competitions too far away to commute.

Every effort is made to select competitions that will provide our dancers and their families with the best experience possible. Any cash prize awarded at a competition will go to the studio, with the exception of a cash prize for a Solo/Duo/Trio which will be split 50/50 with dancer(s).

Group Entries→ \$60 per student/per routine
Solo Entries→ \$125
Duet/Trio→ \$195 (split between the performers)

Costumes:

Costume charges are additional. Costume costs vary greatly with some costumes created out of items already in dancer's closet/bought at local store (for example: baggy or ripped jeans with sneakers and a hoodie/t-shirt are typically used for hip-hop dances) and other costing \$120.00 or +. Parents and students may be asked to assist in the preparation of costumes, including rhinestoning or altering. Again, costume costs will vary on the number of dances each dancer is dancing in. In addition to competition costumes, there will be additional recital costumes required for classes that do not participate in competition (for example: you may be required to take a ballet class or a tap class that are not part of the team classes; these classes typically have other participants that are not team members who deserve to be able to perform at recital-their only opportunity to be on stage-and all class members are required to perform at the recital, held once a year in June.

If you quit or are asked to leave a team, you are required to leave your costumes at the studio for another person to fill your spot. This is not negotiable. Your costume will be returned to you at the end of the season. If you do not leave your costumes, for each costume needed, your account will be charged a replacement cost.

Social Media and Studio Etiquette:

We are implementing a new policy. Please do not take this personally or lightly. If you post negative things on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. or exhibit behavior reflecting negatively on our studio, we will consider this grounds for probation or suspension from the company. This includes the behavior of the parents. If we are in a public situation (competitions, performances, conventions, etc.) the expectation is that you will conduct your behavior responsibly. Remember you are a representative of Footnotes Dance and Music. If there are situations that need to be addressed, please remember that we can handle those upon return to the studio. In a public forum, it is unacceptable. This issue may not have been addressed in the past, however, it will be going forward.

Our goal is to foster a healthy competitive team environment. With so many personalities, we realize that conflicts may arise, but we must be respectful of one another. Be kind to one another. There is no room for personal conflicts amongst the team. Do not bring them to the dance studio. It is hard to stop gossip among students and parents all together, but we do not want it to become destructive. If you have a problem with a parent, instructor or staff member, please contact Ms. Barbara to discuss your concerns and make the proper corrections.

Class Dress Code

Ballet:

- Any solid black leotard
- Pink, convertible tights
- Shoes: Any split sole ballet shoe or Pointe shoes (as determined by teacher)
- (Optional) Ballet skirts are acceptable, however no tutu type ballet skirts as this prohibits the teacher being able to see clean hip alignment.
- Hair in a clean Bun, out of face (this includes bobby pins and possibly hair nets)
- Boys: White Solid T-shirt, black solid pants, black ballet shoes

Tap:

- Leotards, sports bras or other fitted tops
- Dance pants, capris, or booty shorts
- Shoes – Black, lace up oxfords.
- No t-shirts except on boys.

Jazz:

- Leotards, sports bras or other fitted tops
- Dance pants, capris or booty shorts
- Shoes – Tan slip on jazz shoe or tan pirouettes. No Bare Feet
- No t-shirts, except on boys

Hip hop:

- T-shirt, leotards, or sports bras
- Any style comfortable pant or shorts
- Sneakers
- No shirts with foul language or vulgar images allowed.

Contemporary

- Leotards, sports bras or other fitted tops
- Dance pants, capris, or booty shorts
- Pirouettes, MDM modern style shoe, or foot undies

NOT PART OF DRESS CODE:

- Socks
- Flashy jewelry, including earrings larger than a nickel
- Regular Bras (padded or not)
- Loose hair

Coming to class out of dress code may result in removal from class as well as an unexcused absence (INCLUDING HAIR). If missing item is in stock in the office, student will be required to purchase and a charge will be placed in account.

