

COMPETITION TEAM HANDBOOK

The Competition Dance Team has established a tradition of excellence, culminating in our most successful season ever this past year. We are excited to continue that tradition again this year. Being a member of the team will provide wonderful opportunities for each student. It will enhance their skills as a dancer and performer, in addition to giving them the confidence to perform in public as a member of a team as well as an individual. The structure of the program is designed to improve the abilities of each dancer. Being selected for the team is a tremendous honor and should be taken very seriously. Included in this letter are some of the guidelines and expectations required of each team member.

CLASSES:

Competition Team members are required to take the following classes at the studio during the year in addition to their competition class:

1 regular Tap/Jazz class (Juniors, Teens & Seniors)

-This class will concentrate more on the techniques of tap & jazz during the first half of the year, with the focus shifting to recital routines after Christmas. The Mini Team is an exception to this requirement. They will NOT be required to take an additional combination class until they become the Junior Team. The Junior & Teen Team will take this as a combination class, while the Senior Team will take each discipline separately.

1 Ballet Technique Class

-Ballet is the core to every great dancer and will improve all aspects of each student's dancing. This class will NOT perform in recital and will focus solely on technique throughout the year. Although this class may not be each child's passion, we cannot emphasize enough how important ballet is to all dancers. A positive attitude will make a world of difference in how beneficial the class will be to each student. This class is being offered to competition team members for a reduced rate of only \$15/month!

Production

-The Production Team will compete at all competitions during the season and will include all members of each team at the studio. The team will also represent the Superstars at all public performances, including the State Fair. This year, Production practices will be held on Saturday once a month. A schedule of which Saturdays the team will meet each month will be handed out at the beginning of the year. We understand that Saturdays are not ideal, but if the schedule is given to you far enough in advance, you are expected to make every effort to attend each practice, as it is the only time the Production Team will meet. If any student must miss a Saturday Production lesson, it is their responsibility to learn what it missed and be totally prepared for the next lesson. The Production Saturdays will be structured in such a way that each team will not have any breaks. While Mr. Jay is working with one group, Ms. Jamie will be working with the other, except for the time scheduled for the whole team. The breakdown of when each team will meet is as follows

	<u>Mr. Jay-Studio B</u>	<u>Ms. Jamie-Studio A</u>
12:00-12:45 pm	New Mini Team	Junior Team
12:45-1:30 pm	Junior Team	New Mini Team
1:30-2:00 pm	FULL TEAM	---
2:00-2:45 pm	Teen Team	Senior Team
2:45-3:30 pm	Senior Team	Teen Team

Please be aware that sometimes changes must be made to this schedule to accommodate conflicts. Additional practices may be called at various times in order to prepare for an upcoming performance or competition. Because Production practice will only be held once each month, the cost for this class has also been reduced to only \$12/month!

*Attendance to all classes is CRUCIAL and members will only be allowed 3 absences in each of their required classes before they are dropped from the team. This stipulation has been abused in the past and will be more strictly enforced this year. Ballet technique is a required class, so don't miss it. Extenuating circumstances that contribute to an absence may be discussed with Mr. Jay.

CAMP:

We will be holding a competition camp (attendance required) at the studio to get a head start on the upcoming season. We will be working on techniques and learning new skills that will enhance each dancer's abilities once routines are started. The fee for this camp is \$65. We understand that summertime is a busy time for families, and we will be more lenient with attendance. If you are unable to attend, please contact the studio immediately! Listed below is the camp schedule:

<u>Mini Team:</u>	<u>August 6, 7 & 9 (Mon, Tues & Thurs)</u>	<u>5:00-7:00 pm</u>
<u>Junior Team:</u>	<u>August 20, 21 & 22 (Mon-Wed)</u>	<u>5:00-7:00 pm</u>
<u>Teen Team:</u>	<u>August 6, 7 & 9 (Mon, Tues & Thurs)</u>	<u>7:00-9:00 pm</u>
<u>Senior Team:</u>	<u>August 20, 21 & 22 (Mon-Wed)</u>	<u>7:00-9:00 pm</u>

COSTUMES:

Members of the competition team will wear separate costumes for each routine they are part of. These costumes will be worn at all competitions throughout the season, in addition to extra performances and the recital. In order to best fit a routine, certain costumes will be ordered from a professional costume company, while others may require the services of our seamstress. If necessary, rhinestones will also be added to the costumes. The costume fee will cover all these costs. Please refer to the included fee list for more detailed information on costumes.

To eliminate some confusion and chaos, I will be asking for 1-2 parent volunteers from each team to chair the costume work for each team. The costume chairperson would be in contact with Mr. Jay regarding costume requirements and would relay that information to the other parents of the team. As costume choices are made and finalized, I will call a parent meeting to further discuss the issue of volunteering.

WARM-UPS:

Each NEW member of the team is required to purchase a matching warm-up that will be worn over their costume at all performances and competitions. No exceptions! Dancers may not be seen in costume unless they are on stage. In addition, the warm-ups promote team unity. This year, we will be phasing in new warm-up jackets. The new jackets will not be mandatory for team members until the 2008-2009 season. Cost for the warm-up jackets is \$85.

SHOES:

Members of the team will be required to purchase a pair of tap and jazz shoes for competition and performance use only. This way, shoes will look nice and neat for all appearances and will not get dirty or scuffed up during practice. Also, matching shoes make for a unison look on stage. Since these shoes may only be worn for performances and competitions, another pair must be worn for practice. There are no special requirements for practice shoes and they may be an old pair from a previous year.

Unlike practice shoes, the actual color and style of the competition shoes must match the costume. Therefore, the required shoes for competition will not be chosen until costumes are ordered. You will be notified as to what color and style are required for competition after costumes are chosen. Do not order competition shoes until this time, as we cannot guarantee that competition shoes can be exchanged. We would hate for anyone to get stuck with a pair of shoes they won't end up using, so please do not order competition shoes until notified to do so.

MAKE-UP:

All girls will be required to purchase the SAME make-up for competitions. Again, a unison look on stage is best and when team members have different colors on their face, it breaks up the continuity of the group and overall look of their performance. Colors will be chosen once costumes are chosen. Ms. Jan, in coordination with Arbonne, will choose all make-up requirements.

ACCESSORIES:

Rhinestone chokers and/or earrings, etc. may be required for certain routines. You will be notified as to whether or not your child's team will be required to purchase these accessories as costume choices are finalized.

HAIR:

Once again, a unison look on stage is essential and hair is no exception. Some teams may be required to purchase a fake hairpiece so that all members look the same. When a hairpiece is worn, it is attached to either a ponytail or bun. If hair is not long enough to put in a ponytail or bun now, please start growing it out so that it can be in time for the competition season. If a hairpiece is not required, hair must still be done the same and you will be notified as to what to do with the hair so that everyone looks the same. Regardless of what is done with hair, longer hair is preferred as it is much easier to work with and allows for a variety of options.

COMPETITIONS:

Each team will compete approximately 4 times throughout the season in and around the Des Moines area. Competitions typically take place between February and May. We may compete once in Omaha or the Cedar Rapids area in order to expose the team to other studios and styles. All other competitions will take place in Des Moines. The group entry fees for each entry at a competition are \$35 per dancer for each routine they enter in the competition. Please refer to the section entitled "Accounts" on the next page for more information regarding entry fees.

A schedule of which competitions the team will participate in and their dates will be finalized and handed out sometime between Thanksgiving & Christmas. Most competitions are scheduled for Friday-Sunday of a given weekend. Once the competition schedule is finalized, please clear your ENTIRE weekend for the competition. Unfortunately, the competitions will not advise us as to our performances times until a week before each competition. Therefore, it is impossible for us to know when your child will perform - it could be any time! Competitions are MANDATORY. That is the entire purpose of joining the team - to compete. There will be consequences for any member that does not attend a competition and will be determined at the discretion of the directors.

BULLETIN BOARD:

A bulletin board is located outside Studio A and will be the center for important information and announcements. During competition season, it would be to your benefit to periodically check the bulletin board for updated information. It is YOUR responsibility to know what is going on. Checklists and detailed itineraries for competition weekends will be sent home with each student the week of competitions.

COMPETITION WEBSITE:

This year, Mr. Jay has set up a website strictly for the competition teams at the studio: <http://superstarscompetition.com>. Important information regarding the team will be posted to this site. It would be to your benefit to check this site weekly for updates. Mr. Jay plans to post practice schedules; competition information and schedules; costume, hair & make-up checklists; photos and other miscellaneous information pertinent to the team. We're really excited about this new aspect to the team and feel it will be very beneficial.

SOLOS, DUET/TRIOS, SMALL GROUPS:

Again this year, members of the Mini, Junior, Teen and Senior Teams will be offered the chance to participate in solos, duet/trios and special small groups. If you're interested in participating, please fill out the accompanying form and return it to the studio. Solos, duet/trios and small groups will be selected at the discretion of the directors and will be reserved for those students who have displayed exceptional skill and talent level, outstanding hard work in and out of class, extraordinary passion for improvement, a significant display of respect and an overall positive attitude. Being selected for an additional routine is a tremendous honor and should be treated as such. The directors will make their decision based on what they feel is best for each student. These routines are for **competitions only** - not for recitals. Mr. Jay would like to complete these additional routines during the summer, so it is imperative that interest be expressed in a timely manner.

ACCOUNTS:

It is essential that all accounts remain in good standing throughout the year so that we can continue to offer this wonderful opportunity to our students. Entry fees will be figured into your tuition. Please refer to the attached sheet for information regarding additional fees.

RECITAL:

Members of the team will perform in ALL recitals. In addition, members of each competition team at the studio will perform in the Finale. An additional t-shirt will be required for this number, and will cost \$20. Participating in all shows and the Finale is an honor reserved for the team.

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES:

Members of the competition team are the ones who represent the studio to the community. Throughout the year, the Superstars are asked to perform at special events. As a competition team member, you are expected to participate in all events that you are asked to if possible.

BOOSTER CLUB:

The growth of the team and the success and reputation it has built, has made it is necessary and essential for everyone to get more involved in the Superstars Booster Club. We understand that competition is expensive, but also feel it is extremely rewarding and beneficial. Therefore, fundraising through the Booster Club would help defray some of the cost and would allow us to do more. The money raised by the team could go towards entry fees, costumes, props, etc. Ms. Jan has some excellent resources as to what other studios do for fundraising and already has some wonderful ideas that could generate some extra financial help for the team. In order for any and all fundraising efforts to operate smoothly, it is imperative that we have all parents (and team members for that matter) involved. More information regarding the Booster Club will be sent home once the year has started. Any parent that wishes to have a more active role in the decision-making for the Club is asked to contact Ms. Ann in the office.

PROPS:

This year, a \$25 prop fee will be applied for each team member. Last season's winnings will be applied toward buying a trailer for prop transportation. If this year's winnings are not enough to purchase a trailer, winnings from this season will be applied to this cause as well. Volunteers, however, will still be needed to assist in building, transporting and moving the props on and off stage at the competitions. If you are interested and willing to volunteer for the Prop Committee, please contact the studio.

NATIONALS:

A meeting regarding the possibility of participating in a national competition in the Midwest next summer will be held this summer or at the beginning of next year. Please look for more information regarding this meeting on the competition website.

If you are a returning member of the competition team, thank you for all your hard work last season - it was certainly unforgettable! You represented the Superstars in such a fantastic way and it was so rewarding to watch some of the tremendous improvement! If you are a new member, WELCOME! Get ready to become a crucial part in the wonderful tradition of the Superstars Competition Dance Team! My goal with the team is for them to have fun, but to also learn something in the process. All competition classes and functions should be approached with this theory in mind.

**We reserve the right to alter or change these rules and guidelines as we see necessary in order to best benefit the studio and the team.*

NORWALK SUPERSTARS
COMPETITION CONTRACT

Please sign the following and send to the studio before classes start in the fall.

IMPORTANT!!!

A signed contract is required before any student may begin participating in any competition classes this fall. Students will be asked to sit out of their competition classes until a signed contract has been turned in to the studio. Any classes that are missed due to lack of a signed contract will count against the student's attendance requirement.

STUDENT:

As a member of the Superstars Competition Dance Team, I will:

- *always try my hardest in each class
- *practice outside of class
- *have a good attitude during and outside of class
- *respect Mr. Jay, Ms. Jamie and all other staff members at the studio
- *respect all other members of the Superstars Competition and Production Teams, as well as the members of teams from other studios

I have read and understand what is expected of me as a member of the Superstars Competition Dance Team. I will abide by all the rules set forth in order to best benefit the team and myself.

Signature _____
Date

PARENT:

I have read and understand what is expected of me as a parent of a Superstars Competition Dance Team member. I will also abide by all the rules as set forth above in order to best benefit my child, the entire team and the studio.

Signature _____
Date