



Ari's House of Dance & Performing Arts Studio LLC

"The Dance Club"

Competition Team Expectations and Handbook

2010-2011 Season

Philosophy

The Ari's House of Dance (AHD) competition team was developed to create a positive environment where serious dancers can grow as performers and technicians, as well as increase their self-esteem, self-discipline, and pride in their accomplishments. Our dancers will improve their dance technique, become more precise and enthusiastic, and learn how to be responsible team members. At AHD we value the process, not just the award at the end, and we encourage our dancers to appreciate all accomplishments, no matter how small. The process will help them learn to respect others and themselves and boost their self-confidence. It is important to us that our choreography and costumes are appropriate to each dancer's age and technique level.

Competitions and Conventions

Our teams will begin conditioning and learning choreography at the end of August. During the months of February through June, we will attend 4 competitions, 1 national competition and 1 convention/workshop. This year we will choose the dates in advance, based on the competition company's schedules that the competitions are using used this year. We will choose dates based on the preparation time we feel our groups need to perfect their dances. We also will take into account the type of competitions we feel will suit our studio best. It is our goal to have these dates chosen prior to the Placement Audition. Therefore dancers will need to have some flexibility in their schedules to make this work, and once a date is chosen and you have agreed to participate in the competition team, it must take priority over all other events planned for that weekend.

What is a Dance Competition?

At a dance competition, students perform their dances and are judged on their performance quality, dance technique, precision, and timing. They are usually judged against a point system or standard, and do not necessarily compete against other groups directly. These events can literally last all day depending on the number of dance teams competing. The judges tally the points and give the dancers constructive and positive feedback on audio CD's and score sheets. It is a great way for the dancers to become better performers, and learn to work toward a goal. They also have a blast performing!!

What is a Dance Convention?

A dance convention is a weekend-long event. It usually is held at a hotel in the area. The students take classes from about 9AM to 3PM, with a few breaks in between. They take classes in many different dance styles, and learn from instructors from around the country. It is a fun and challenging experience for them.

What is a Dance Performance?

A dance performance is one in which we are called upon to perform a dance at special events throughout the Washington, DC and Northern VA area. Although we encourage advance notice from our vendors, most times we are called upon on a moments notice and have to use extra rehearsal time to prepare for the event. Examples of performance events are multi-cultural festivals, concerts, school promotions, television tapings, etc.

Commitment

The AHD competition team is a large commitment, both financially and time-wise, and every dancer (and parent) who chooses to participate must be ready to be committed to the team and the work required. The competition team is similar to a sports team where the players depend on each other to work hard and be present. Each dancer must be physically and mentally present in each class and rehearsal, to be fair to the other dancers, the choreographer, and himself/herself.

Behavior Expectations

Dancers will be expected to focus, and try their best in every class and rehearsal. They will be role models for the other dancers at the studio. Classes and rehearsals will be fun based on the joy of accomplishment and the joy of movement – not fun based on “goofing around”. Classes and rehearsals are not appropriate times for socializing with friends. Every teacher must be treated with the same high level of respect.

Positive attitudes are essential! We will be learning new and challenging things, and positive attitudes will help each dancer to achieve our goals! All dancers must work as a cohesive team, which means holding their classmates, team members, and teachers in the highest regard.

The competition team is highly respected within the studio as well as throughout the community. Every teacher must be treated with the same high level of respect. Positive attitudes are essential! We will be learning new and challenging things, and positive attitudes will help each dancer to achieve our goals!

Parent Expectations

For the Parents: *“We’re in this together”*

We believe that children’s success depends on the support of their parents or guardians. Because your commitment to the process makes an enormous difference, we encourage you to be a part of your child’s dance education. Our program relies on a positive atmosphere for our faculty, competition team participants, and their parents; it promotes a positive learning

experience for all involved. Cooperation between all parents is expected. Showing respect for the other parents, along with the students and faculty, makes an important impression on the children. You are a role model for your child in how to interact with others in a professional setting.

Your child's presence at all classes, rehearsals, and performances is imperative. The spirit of teamwork and the lesson of dedication are a big part of our school's educational process.

Parents and teachers may look at a child's learning from different perspectives. However, they share a common goal: to assure that every child receives the best possible training, both physically and mentally. Mutual respect between our faculty and our dancers' parents provides the children with the ultimate care and education.

We highly encourage participation from parents, i.e. volunteering, carpooling etc. We encourage parents to get involved, volunteer and support the dance team. We expect for team parents to have their kids on time for rehearsal, encourage them to take responsibility, and make sure they are fully prepared for rehearsals, performances and competitions.

Class or Choreography Placement

The Placement Audition allows us to see all new and returning dancers dance together, so we can evaluate technique levels. We are determining the groups based on performance and technical abilities, so your dancer might not be with their friends. We will make our decisions about levels based on what is best for your dancer, as well as what is best for the team as a whole. We want our dancers to be challenged, but not overwhelmed, which is why we will make selections based on the total concept and evaluate the "total dancer".

The studio faculty meets regularly to discuss the students' progress and/or placement. It is our policy to offer appropriate opportunities to every child.

Placement decisions are derived from many years of teaching experience. Often a child is placed in a particular group or class where he or she will feel confident, in order to promote the development of self-esteem. Some dancers who are placed in a higher level become discouraged, only to lose their passion for dance. Others respond to the challenge of being in a class with dancers who are more proficient by pushing themselves to work harder. Placement is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex. Please see the school's director if you have questions or concerns about your child's placement.

Image

The children and parents involved in the Competition Team Program participate in many outside activities, each of which becomes a reflection of the school's philosophy.

Please keep the following in mind:

- We never speak negatively about teachers, dancers, or parents from other schools.
- We never create conflict with the directors or judges of events in which we participate.
- We never recruit dancers from other dance schools.
- The school director handles all communication with the directors of our outside activities.
- No parent or dancer may call or question the directors of any event. If you have a concern, please contact the director of our school.

COMMUNICATION

1. **Email** is a major form of communication. It is imperative that we have your current email address and any changes to your email address that occur during the year. Please check your email DAILY! If you do not have email, or you are having problems with your computer, it is your responsibility to check in to the office for updated information. If you are allowed to accept email at your work email address, include that as well.

2. No one will take it upon themselves to contact a competition or convention directly. It is against competition company's policies to do so. If you have a question concerning a competition/convention that can't be answered by visiting the company's website, you must go through the AHD office.

Please attend all meetings and read all newsletters and postings to keep updated about any additional commitments.

COMMITMENT

Each student must be enrolled in the required technique classes for their individual training and growth as indicated in their schedule. Some dancers may be asked to take additional technique classes to further their training. You may also request to take additional technique classes or private lessons to further your training.

Once you commit to a group or dance and begin choreography, you are not permitted to drop. If you are asked to join a group after the start of the fall dance season, it is considered an additional dance and you are not permitted to drop one in its place. If you are having financial difficulties, solos, duo/trios should be the first to go. Any changes in your schedule need to be discussed in a meeting with the studio director. Any student who understudies for a competition class shall comply with all competition rules. No student may compete or perform for any other dance school/ dance program, or train at another facility under teachers/instructors not affiliated with or approved by Ari's House of Dance, while training or participating on The Dance Club competition team. For approval for additional programs, please notify the office to set up a meeting with the studio director.

Each student must follow all directions given by instructors and chaperones while under The Dance Club competition team care, both on AHD and other premises. If there is an extenuating circumstance and you must miss a mandatory activity it must be in writing and submitted to the office. Please do not rely on other students to pass along your student's absence.

Required Weekly Classes

1. **Weekly technique class in jazz, tap and/or hip hop.** 3 – 4 ½ hours weekly.
2. **One ballet technique class per week.** 1 hour weekly. This class is included in your monthly tuition cost.

- a. Ballet is a foundational dance technique, and it will enhance and reinforce all that is taught in regular class and rehearsal. Each Ballet Technique class is based on age and level.
3. All new and returning team members MUST take a ballet class. All new and returning team members are HIGHLY encouraged to attend summer classes and camps as well.

Required Rehearsals

Each dancer will be required to attend weekly or bi-monthly rehearsals, depending on the scheduling. We have designated some open time slots in our 2010-2011 schedules for this purpose, and we will do our best to make the rehearsal times work for everyone. The rehearsals are subject to change based on the availability of the majority of the dancers and other AHD scheduled classes. Rehearsals will be 1 to 2 1/2 hours depending on the dance. Please plan to remain for the entire period unless otherwise discussed with the instructor.

Groove Theory rehearsals times are Tuesdays 7:30PM – 9:30PM, Fridays 6:30PM – 8:30PM. Ballet Technique classes are on Mondays and Thursdays based on age and level.

Dynasty rehearsals times are Tuesdays 5:30PM – 7:30PM. Ballet Technique classes are on Mondays and Thursdays based on age and level.

Freshh rehearsal times are Saturdays 10:00AM - 11:00AM. Ballet Technique classes are on Mondays and Tuesdays based on age and level.

Our open Sunday schedule is 3:00PM – 6:00PM. We will use this time as needed on a rotation schedule. Please leave your schedule open until specific dates become available.

Special Rehearsals

Extra rehearsals will be scheduled on an as-needed basis. The extra rehearsals are generally used for dress rehearsals before performances. We will try to give plenty of notice before the special rehearsals are scheduled.

Emergency Sunday rehearsals may be called to finalize choreography or clean a routine.

*Rehearsals may take place on holidays when public schools may be closed.

Additional rehearsals may be scheduled at the discretion of the teacher/choreographer. All dancers are required to participate.

Rehearsals for nationals will take place during the month of June. A different schedule for June will be available in May. All dancers must attend June rehearsals and technique classes.

All Competition Team dancers must attend rehearsals in proper dance attire and appropriate shoes. Female team members are required to wear their hair pulled back or in a bun for all rehearsals. All dancers must wear rehearsal uniforms at ALL rehearsals. Ballet rehearsals require a black leotard and white tights for the girls (hair in a slick performance bun) and black jazz pants and a black T-shirt for the boys.

Attendance

Excellent attendance is a MUST! For continued progression in dance technique, performance, and choreography each dancer must be present in regular technique classes and rehearsals, unless there is an emergency, outstanding circumstance, or illness. If a technique class is missed, the dancer is required to do a make-up in another class. If a dancer is sick or injured, but feeling well enough to observe class and rehearsal, coming to class to observe is appreciated and will be noted as participation.

If a dancer will be absent from rehearsal for any reason, our administrative staff must be notified in advance. Rehearsal absences will be limited to 3 per season total. If more rehearsals are missed, the dancer will need to reconsider his/her participation in the competition team, and face being dropped from the club. There are no refunds or credits for missed rehearsals, as well as no refunds or credits if the dancer cannot fulfill his or her commitment and must leave the team. If a make-up is necessary, there may be an additional charge of \$25 for the instructor's time. Please note that dancers are encouraged to come 20 minutes early for class as instructors and team members can use this time to help with any missed practices. We request a courtesy call 3-4 days in advance if you require this time.

Payment Policies

Part of the commitment to the Competition Team Program is being up-to-date with all accounts related to participation. All monthly payments are due the 10th of each month. Any payment received after the 10th of the month is subject to a \$20 or 10% of your balance late fee, whichever is greater.

Each student must fulfill all financial obligations brought about by competition requirements, including choreography fees, if applicable, class tuition, competition fees by the due date, costume and prop fees, fees for space use and any other fees incurred. **ANYONE WHO IS CONTINUOUSLY TWO OR MORE MONTHS DELINQUENT IN PAYMENT WILL BE RELEASED FROM THE COMPETITION TEAM.**

There are 2 payment options:

1. **PAYMENT PLAN** The office will calculate your monthly payment, which will include ALL fees (monthly tuition September through June, **estimated** competition entry fees, including Nationals, **estimated** costume costs, rehearsal and recital fees). Your first payment will be due the day of your first class. All other payments are due the first full week of the month. Any payment not paid by the 10th of the month will incur a \$20 late fee (or 10% of your balance if the amount is greater than \$200). Any other, such as dancewear, shoes, school warm ups, videos, t-shirts, recital tickets, registration, dance camp, workshops, etc., must be paid for at the time of purchase.

Competition fees are based on last year's fees and are subject to change. Costume prices are estimates only.

If you have other children enrolled in the school, their tuition, costumes, etc., are also figured into the payment plan amount.

2. You may continue to pay your fees as they are due, i.e., tuition each month, costume deposits, balances and competition fees when due. Again, a late fee of \$20.00 per month (or 10% of your balance if the amount is greater than \$200) will be assessed after the 10th of the month. Please be aware that **any amount** overdue (tuition, costume, comp fees) will incur a late fee.

Entry fees for competitions or conventions are due 60 days prior to each event. Tentative fee schedules will be distributed at the parent competition meeting. All costumes must be paid for in full prior to distribution.

Rehearsal tuition will be billed with regular classes, and will be due with regular tuition. Solos and duet/trios are billed at a different rate than group routines, as they are considered more intense private instruction.

The Dance Club Monthly fee 1st Year: \$165.00

The Dance Club Monthly fee continuing members: \$145.00

There will be One Team Captain and One Team Manager for each dance team. Team captains will be voted in by their team. Team managers will be selected by the director.

Team Captains will be responsible for:

1. Motivating and encouraging their team!
2. Acting as a substitute when a teacher or coach cannot be present or running late.
3. Warm ups and conditionings.
4. Choreography.
5. Teaching missed lessons to members.
6. Keeping the director informed and updated on student grievances and progress.
7. Coordinating with team members for costume and music ideas.
8. Other small duties as requested by the teacher and/or director.

Team Managers will be responsible for:

1. Making sure ALL team members are aware of NEW practice schedules as they arise.
2. Calling or texting team members' reminders as they arise.
3. Checking costume garment bags the night before competitions to make sure all items are available.
4. Helping the director with measurements and competition application submissions.
5. Other small duties as requested by the director.

Costumes

Costume payments are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian. The average cost of a costume is \$65 to \$100. A deposit of \$50 per costume is due by September 1, 2010. The balance due for costumes and team jackets must be paid in full by November 1. Your dancer will get a good amount of use out of this costume, as it will be worn for 4 competition performances as well as the recital.

Costumes will remain at the school, until all balances are paid in full. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY.

If a competition team dancer is dismissed or leaves the program, an understudy will replace him or her. The student leaving the team is expected to turn in all costumes to the school office; they will be returned to the student after the last performance of the season.

TIPS: COSTUME COMMON SENSE

- Always have a second pair of tights available.
- Place costumes in a garment bag for travel.
- Carry hats in a hatbox or container to prevent them from damage.
- Hang and press costumes before each performance.
- Place your name in all costumes and shoes.

There are specific shoe requirements, depending on the costume. Again, we try to keep our requests reasonable, and keep the costs as low as possible. Please note that the cost of the shoes, if applicable, is separate from the cost of the costume and that the dancer may be required to purchase the shoe from an outside source.

We will ask for a costume deposit of \$50 per costume, and a full payment of \$60 for rehearsal uniforms and dance bag at time of registration in addition to first month tuition and \$25 annual registration fee.

Hair

Hair must be in its best condition for competition. Hair must be touched up, pressed and clean for ALL competitions. Remember that this is a stage performance, and we all need to look like professionals.

ABOUT COMPETITIONS

Attendance

The student will participate in **all** scheduled competitions, except in **extraordinary circumstances** in which case the office must be notified in writing by September 1. Please avoid scheduling vacations during competition weekends.

Independent Entries

No dancer may compete in any competition as an independent entry without the permission of the school director.

Monetary Awards

All monetary awards received at competitions belong to the studio. These monetary awards offset administrative costs, contribute to program development and improvements, and cover expenses for teachers and coaches to attend all events.

Fundraising

We are always trying to institute some creative fundraising projects to help displace some of the entry fee costs to the competitions and conventions. If you have any ideas, please share them!

Financial Commitment

AHD understands the challenges of today's economy. That is why our studio is conscious of costs, and costs less than most competition teams in the area. However, any kind of intense instruction or team is a larger financial commitment than basic recital classes. Please be prepared for this and keep it in mind as you choose how many competition dances your child will do. For every competition dance your child is in, please consider the following expenses: \$65 - \$100 for costume, \$35 per competition entry fee, \$150 per dance convention, travel costs, make up, garment bags, hair extensions, shoes, in addition to an extra classes per week on your tuition bill. If you would like a more complete projection of cost, please let us know.

The Focus Is Not Simply on Competition

Since it is our goal to instill a passion for performing rather than merely the desire to win awards, Competition Team dancers have performance opportunities other than competitions. They perform at community events and other events as they come up.

Our solid reputation for quality reflects our attitude toward competition and our goal to develop in each student a genuine respect for dance as an art form. We consider participation in competitions not simply part of our students' training as dancers; it's also an important part of how we influence them as people. With the right focus, the experience gained in competition can be an excellent source of self-confidence. If the dancers feel good about a performance and understand that they become better each time they go onstage, they are truly growing through the competition experience. Hitting that stage and doing the best they can is what it's all about; whether they win—or which award they win—is secondary.

Through participation in competitions, we hope to instill in our students an appreciation for other dancers and schools. We are not out to beat anyone; instead, we hope to motivate both students and faculty by exposing them to the highest caliber of talent available. Only then can we produce the best dancers and teachers possible. For us, competition is an education!

Open Door Policy

We are proud to announce that The AHD Competition Dance Team is currently approaching its fourth year! We learn many new things each season about how to take our team in new directions as well as continue to offer our dancers a wonderful experience. We encourage any dancers or parents to speak with us openly about any questions or concerns that they may have.

Thank you! Welcome to the family!!

THE DANCE CLUB
COMPETITION TEAM CONTRACT 2010-2011

NAME _____
BIRTHDATE _____ AGE _____
EMAIL _____

We, _____ (parent) and _____ (student), have read the Competition Team Handbook, Rules and Regulations, and Team Schedule and agree to abide by the Rules, including fulfillment of financial obligations in a timely manner and understand that late fees will be charged if payments are delinquent. We understand that failure to comply will result in the student's termination from the Competition team. The student further agrees to approach each competition class/session/event with a positive attitude, leaving daily problems behind, and do his/her absolute best no matter what the circumstances. We also understand that the Competition Team is an additional part of AHD and not all competition dances will participate in the June recital. We understand that all monetary prizes won at competitions belong to AHD, but may be equally distributed to dancers per The Dance Club's discretion. We understand and agree to participate in one National competition in the summer of 2011.

Please indicate which payment plan you would prefer:

Option 1 (Payment plan) _____

Option 2 (Pay by due date) _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this page only to The Dance Club office on or before September 1, 2010 along with:

1. A \$50 deposit per competition dance
2. First month tuition
3. \$25 annual registration fee
4. \$60 for rehearsal costumes.