



IMAGINE DANCE ACADEMY

COMPETITION TEAM HANDBOOK

2021-2022 Season

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Team Handbook: A Guide for Students and Parents

Our Competitive Program is one of the tools we use to help our students learn and experience the performing arts, become independent and become motivated to achieve.

We have created this handbook to offer our dancers and their parents a clear understanding of their commitments and responsibilities to the Competitive Dancer Program with Imagine Dance Academy. We recommend that parents read this document in its entirety and ensure that they read and understand all handouts and other communications that come from our studio.

FOR OUR DANCERS

Congratulations! You have been accepted into Imagine Dance Academy's Competition Teams! The first step to becoming a successful dancer is making a solid commitment to your classes, rehearsals, and performances. Strong technique is a key ingredient to your success and class is where you develop that technique. Come to each class prepared to learn and without personal distractions. Class time is your chance to focus on yourself, so try to leave your concerns or worries at the studio door. True progress is made when you look at each class, rehearsal, or performance as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do. Dance full out, stretch a little further, become more aware of your technique, and make the most of every class.

Being a part of the team is a privilege that must be continuously earned each year. It is not a right. All instructors will be watching and assessing your work ethic, class etiquette and your interaction with other classmates throughout the year to determine whether or not your place on the team will continue or be revoked.

The Competition program is about a journey. It is not a destination. The most successful outcome is to achieve a personal best level of performance while supporting your teammates to achieve their personal best through continuous improvement and sincere effort. The purpose of this program is to build a higher level of leadership, self-confidence and self-reliance. You will challenge yourself to make your dream and your team's dream into a goal and then to work together to achieve that goal.

Respect for the teachers and choreographers with whom you work is essential. This is not negotiable. Listen to each correction given, whether it's directed to you or another dancer. A correction is an honor; it shows you how much a teacher cares about your progress as a dancer. Always say "Thank you" when a teacher or choreographer offers you constructive criticism. Nothing can stop those students who apply themselves in every class and appreciate their teachers' knowledge and experience.

Dancers will support and encourage their team members at all times. They will set out to help their team members to continuously improve by sharing their talents with them.

All rehearsals are dedicated to choreography or "cleaning" the choreography. A dancer who misses a rehearsal holds back the progress of the entire group. Repeating the choreography from a previous session for those who were absent takes up valuable rehearsal time, which could result in a performance that is not up to par. When we clean choreography, we may also change it. Dancers who miss a cleaning session may not be properly prepared for the upcoming performance and could end up letting themselves, their team, or their academy down.

Performances and competitions are your opportunity to show the world the results of your dedication and hard work. To make the most of this opportunity:

- Arrive at performances at least ONE HOUR prior to the scheduled time, ready to dance (hair & makeup done, costume on), unless otherwise advised by your teachers.
- Be sure you are properly warmed up.
- Performers must report any physical injury to us immediately.
- Present yourself in a professional manner, with costumes pressed, shoes cleaned, and all accessories accounted for.
- Go out there and show the audience how much you love to dance!

Performers represent the studio and the profession of dance as a whole. As such, they will provide leadership and be a positive role model for all students at the studio at all times.

Attitude, punctuality, behavior, attendance, grooming and general conduct must be exemplary at all times. Performers who are unable or unwilling to adhere to these standards may be temporarily or permanently suspended from the competition team and/or its special events at the discretion of instructor without refund.

Attendance at all classes, practices and rehearsals is expected. A maximum of 3 missed classes is acceptable in each term (July – December, January – June). Absences in excess of this amount for medical, academic or emergencies will be assessed on their merit by instructors. Attendance is essential to successful teamwork and to achieve optimal performance quality. Rehearsals are mandatory.

Performers are expected to be at all performances/competitions and rehearsals unless they give written notice of another engagement. If more than one performance or one rehearsal is missed you may forfeit your place on the team without refund at the discretion of the instructor.

It is the performer's responsibility to arrive on time for all performances and competitions fully prepared and equipped with all the necessary shoes, costumes, tights, make-up, grooming and hair requirements.

Performers are expected to attend extra classes, rehearsals etc. which may be scheduled in addition to the regular class schedule at the discretion of the instructors.

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. This atmosphere is generated through our faculty, dancers 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.

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, competitive dancers have performance opportunities other than competitions. For example, performances will be held at Community Events and Festivals when the opportunity arises. We believe the lessons learned through public performances and giving back to our community are just as valuable as the competition experience.

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 quality of talent available. Only then can we inspire our dancers and teachers to continue to strive to improve what they do and how they do it. For us, competition is an education!

UNDERSTANDING DANCE EDUCATION

As a parent, the all-around support of your student is important, but one of the most important is your emotional support. Encourage your child to be the best that he or she can be without regard to what others may achieve. Dance is an individual art form; each child needs to achieve at a pace that's comfortable and safe for him or her. No two students will progress at the same rate, even if they experience the exact same training. It's important to encourage the children to focus on themselves, give their all, be satisfied with their own accomplishments and strive to build on their successes.

It is important that parents understand the difference between encouraging and coaching their dancer. Parents should avoid coaching their dancer, but encourage them to continue to practice, stretch, point their toes and smile!

Dance education covers far more than technique or the steps your children will learn. We believe the discipline of dance training gives young people a better understanding of commitment by offering them the chance to learn, experience the spirit of teamwork, and understand what hard work can accomplish. Our goal is to educate the minds, bodies, and souls of our students, to teach them the skills needed for a successful life, whether or not they stay involved in dance.

CLASS OR CHOREOGRAPHY PLACEMENT

Our instructors will meet 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. Confidence promotes 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 Miss Brenda if you have questions or concerns about your child's placement. All new members are on a probationary period of 6 months at the discretion of the instructors.

CLASSES

All dancers are expected to attend their regularly scheduled classes in addition to all rehearsals and performances. A total of six class days per season may be missed. Any team member with poor attendance may be dismissed from the program without refund at the discretion of the Director.

All team members are required to take Ballet, the Team Stretch & Technique classes.

All dancers must show respect for their teachers at all times. Inappropriate behavior could result in dismissal from the competitive team.

DO'S AND DON'T'S

Some parents may compare their child's progress or class or choreography placement to that of others in the program. Watch for this behavior in your children as well, and encourage them to focus on their own accomplishments. Looking to others for inspiration is a good thing; however, a negative focus or comparison distracts from the energy that could be focused on becoming a stronger dancer. In addition, speaking negatively about your child's teachers, fellow dancers, or other parents in front of your child—or other students—could result in problems far beyond your original concerns. Often children will react to their parents in a way that imitates the parent's behavior with other adults or authority figures.

Children learn important lessons from their teachers and parents, acquiring important behavior patterns through their example. Our academy's faculty takes that responsibility seriously. It's our philosophy to encourage our students to feel, think, and act respectfully to their peers, the adults in their lives, and themselves.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's dance education, don't panic—and please don't talk only with other parents when questions arise. This generally leads to the promotion of misinformation, confusion and other issues that will detract from yours and your child's dance experience. Ask for information from the source, i.e. directly from Miss Brenda. Please make an appointment to speak directly to Miss Brenda through the studio office or email rather than approaching your child's teacher between or during classes.

If you or Miss Brenda request a meeting, please listen carefully to what she and/or your child's teachers have to say. They spend a significant amount of time with your child and can offer expertise in the field of dance education.

REHEARSALS & OTHER INFORMATION

Rehearsals are an important part of the commitment to the team. All dancers are expected to work hard and arrive early enough to give themselves time to warm up. All dancers must attend rehearsals in proper dance attire and appropriate shoes. Additional rehearsals may be scheduled at the discretion of the teacher. All dancers are required to participate.

No dancer may miss more than three full-team rehearsals during the season. Any dancer missing more than three rehearsals runs the risk of being removed from the routine without refund. Dancers who need to be excused are required to notify Miss Brenda 1 week prior to the scheduled rehearsal. Any dancer excused from a rehearsal is responsible for learning any missed choreography prior to arriving for the next rehearsal. Missing students affects everyone in the rehearsal, not just one person.

TUITION POLICY

Part of the commitment to the team is being up-to-date with all accounts related to participation. Students may be pulled from their routines or asked not to return to the team if their accounts are not in good standing.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The teams take part in various community events. We like to show our support and give back to our communities. It is expected that all team members take part in as many events as possible. Dates will be sent out as soon as they are confirmed.

*****NEW: Community Participation Draw*****

Each time a dancer takes part in one of our organized community events or non-mandatory workshops/camps, their name will be entered into a draw to win a specially selected prize! (e.g.: Tuition discount, competition entry fee discount, etc.). This begins at the start of our dance season and runs until the end of the following summer.

COMPETITION "EXTRAS"

"New This Season" It is at the sole discretion of the instructors to offer Competition Extras (i.e.: Solos, Duets, Trios and Competitive Only Groups) to team members. Competition Extras are reserved for team members who display the utmost determination and commitment to their dance training, follow the proper etiquette and guidelines of the competition team and adhere to all mandatory regulations set out by this competition team guide. There are fees associated with any competition Extra. These fees are given to each individual dancer according to the extras they are being offered.

*****Extras are subject to change after they have been offered due to students' acceptance.**

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE COMPETITION TEAM

DANCE TEAM GUIDELINES

What is competition?

Competition is a week/weekend of dance where dance studios from different city and states come to perform their dances to receive a trophy/medal/banner and place in a ranking against other groups of the same discipline, age category and number of dancers. Each dance is performed once in the order set by the competition. Award segments (a.k.a. "Adjudications" or "Awards") are held periodically throughout the day to give trophies/medals/banners to each routine that has performed up until that point. At the end of each division, Overall Awards are given to the top ranking routines; all times for performances and awards will be stated in the programs available at each competition once you arrive. You will also be notified of these times roughly 1 week before the competition via email (or as soon as we receive the schedule).

What is my commitment?

Your commitment:

- Mandatory Ballet Classes
- Mandatory Stretch Classes
- Extras – all scheduled rehearsals other than regular weekly classes
- Minimum of 2 competitions per year
- Minimum of 4 Community Events per year

What are the extra fees?

The extras fees you can expect are as follows:

- Team Jacket (\$85/dancer)
- Team Pants (TBA) ****Coming Soon****
- Team Practice Wear (TBA) ****Coming Soon****
- Travel & Accommodations

TEAM UNIFORM

All dancers are expected to purchase a team uniform available for order through the studio which includes a jacket and pants. Orders will not be placed until full payment has been received.

STAGE JEWELRY

Team Stage Jewellery can also be purchased from the Dance Store. It is always safe to purchase an extra set of earrings to have on hand in case a piece is lost or broken. These pieces of jewelry will also be worn for Recital performances. (Boys do not require any stage jewelry.)

Earrings: \$10/pair



PROPS

Each family may be responsible for transporting props to and from competitions for their child's dances. If someone has extra room for other props, we appreciate the help in transporting our props to competition!

COMPETITION PROTOCOLS

On the day of Competition please arrive with hair and makeup done and first costume on **1.5 hours before your scheduled performance time**. Go straight to our dressing area to drop off your belongings and get setup. 1 hour before performance time, please go to the rehearsal area to stretch and run your dance. Your teacher or assistant will be in the rehearsal area to run your dance before you go backstage. Please note that there will always be a teacher backstage with the dancers. Understand that if your dancer is late, it affects the entire group. Plan ahead and arrive early!

Dressing Room Guidelines; No Parent/Guardian/Friend/Family Member of any Senior or Adult dancers should be in the dressing rooms. We are often in tight, shared spaces with other studios therefore we must make room! These dancers are old enough to get themselves dressed for their routines. Hair and makeup should be done BEFORE you arrive, so parents are not needed inside the dressing rooms! If you have an Intermediate dancer and feel they are prepared to dress themselves in the dressing rooms, you may also leave them to tend to themselves. We want to encourage our dancers to be responsible and independent!

Parents; once the teacher/assistant has taken your dancer for run-through, you are free to take your seat in the audience ☺ There are no parents allowed backstage and we ask that you leave your children with their teacher once they begin their run-through.

All dancers must remain at the competition venue if they have less than 3 hours between their dances. If you must leave between your short break, please find or send Miss Brenda a text message to inform her of where you will be and what time you will return.

If you are scheduled to compete at the beginning of the day, the competition venue opens 1 hour before competition start time. You will not be able to enter the venue before that time.

Be sure to bring all of your costumes needed for that day, along with all of your makeup and hair accessories. Hair and Makeup should be touched-up between each dance.

Dancers must be wearing their team jackets at all times while at the competition venue and especially when going up on stage for adjudications.

We encourage dancers to attend as many team performances as possible to help support the competition team. We realize you may want to shop, visit friends/family, enjoy the sites and attractions, but please show your support for the rest of the team. After all, it is why you are attending the competition in the first place.

PLEASE NO SWIMMING on competition days before you dance – Swimming will be permitted after your dancing is done for the day. (Swimming takes a lot of energy and muscles become weak. Dancers need all their strength and energy for their performances!)

COMPETITION & THEATRE ETIQUETTE

The children and parents involved in the Competition Team become a reflection of the studio's philosophy.

AT COMPETITION, KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN MIND:

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

WHEN YOU ARE IN THE THEATRE/VENUE:

- Do not enter or exit the theatre during a performance; please wait for the dance to be finished before you move around!
- We clap and cheer for EVERYONE! Not just our studio/team.
- Please remember to share your space! We are often tight backstage and in the dressing rooms so make room where you can!
- Be polite and helpful to everyone around you!
- Congratulate other dancers and each other backstage after a performance and don't forget to wish everyone (including other teams) Good Luck!
- Please remember when you are wearing the studio jacket, you represent the team! We'd like everyone to remember us as polite and respectful to each other and all other teams!

INDEPENDENT & OTHER ENTRIES

No dancer may compete in any competition as an independent entry without the permission of Miss Brenda. Participation in any other dance competitions not related to the are not permitted should any rehearsals or performances/competition dates conflict with any of our classes, rehearsals or performance/competition dates.

CASH/OVERALL/SPECIAL AWARDS

Cash, Overall & Special Awards won during competitions will be given to Miss Brenda to remain at the studio. Individual medals for solos may stay with the dancers as well as regular ribbons/pins/etc. given during awards/adjudications.

– VIDEO JUDGE –

LISTENING TO THE JUDGES COMMENTS AFTER COMPETITION

The week following competition, each class will watch their videos with the judges' comments during their class times. These videos are not accessible for students at any other time. Studio doors will remain closed and only students in that routine will watch the videos. Parents are not permitted to sit in and watch videos.

FINAL NOTE

WELCOME TO THE COMPETITION TEAM!

We look forward to an exciting and rewarding season! If you have any questions or concerns regarding this information please speak with Miss Brenda after the Team Meeting.

