

Dear Future Competitive Dance Team Members and Parents of Dance Team Members:

Academy of Ballet Wauconda (ABW) is excited to offer its dancers an opportunity to participate on our competitive dance team. As a member of the team, dancers will compete in local, regional, and national dance competitions and perform at other venues during the year.

Competition dance requires a high level of commitment from both the dancer and the parents. It also carries a significant financial responsibility. This packet will set forth the expected commitment, a tentative schedule and expected expenses associated with being a member of the ABW competition team. Please take the time to review this carefully.

EXPECTED COMMITMENT

1. **TIME.** Our 2024-2025 competition season will start in the Fall of 2024 and run through the national finals in mid-July of 2025. Dance team members are asked to commit to this ENTIRE competition season when they sign on to be a competition team member. As you can see from the tentative schedule below, some national competitions may be as late as mid-July. If we are going to take competing seriously, we need to have our full team for all competitions.
2. **ATTENDANCE.** The most important issue for team members is attendance. We expect dancers to attend all competition-related classes, rehearsals, and performances. While we understand that on occasion, unexpected things do happen (a dancer gets hurt or there is a family emergency), we expect dancers to make attendance their highest priority. It is not acceptable to miss a rehearsal or an event for a birthday party, another family member's sporting event or other social engagement. If you are not there, the whole team suffers. If you miss class, you are not improving your skills and you will fall behind the other dancers on the team. If you miss a rehearsal, you are not learning the routine, which forces teachers to re-teach parts of the routine that you missed. If you are missing a performance or a competition, the whole dance has to be restaged or pulled from that event. You let your teammates down when you are not there. If a director feels a dancer is falling behind due to

missed rehearsals, the dancer may be asked to schedule a private lesson to catch up. The dancer will be charged for any private make-up classes the director recommends.

Dancers may be removed from a team if they have too many absences. No refunds will be issued if you are removed from the team. If an understudy is put into a dance because of absences, the understudy will be able to use any or all previously ordered costume parts purchased by the absent team member. A dancer's removal from a team may be permanent or temporary at the discretion of the choreographer and studio director.

If you are involved with other programs that require specific time commitments, please discuss this with us in advance so we can help you determine if you can participate on the dance team. Fortunately, most school programs (including dance teams, cheerleading, and sports) publish their dates at the beginning of a season so you will be able to determine the extent of the conflict. Sometimes, we may be able to accommodate your involvement in these programs. However, if they will consistently create absences for team commitments, you may have to make a choice between the ABW Competition Team and other programs. Our choreographers and teachers do their best to set up weekly rehearsal times that will work for the dancers they are assigned.

3. COSTS. We have outlined the costs associated with our competitive dance program below. If we decide to do additional competitions or take on other opportunities, there may be additional costs. If this occurs, we will discuss the additional costs with the team members and their parents in advance. Again, please review this information carefully so that you understand the costs that will be involved. The competition team dancers get approx. 11 months of training, rehearsals and competitions per year.

There are basically 4 categories of expenses associated with being on a competitive dance team: (1) competition entry fees, (2) Studio/choreography/rehearsal fees, (3) costumes, and (4) travel/hotel. While we have done our best to outline these costs below, it is possible that there may be some additional expenses.

But, we hope this gives you a good base to determine if you can make the financial commitment to participate.

1. COMPETITION ENTRY FEES

For every competition we enter, there is an entry fee. Most Trio and group entry fees for regional competitions are \$60-\$80 per dance per dancer. Solo entries are more expensive (approx.. \$140 per competition). With that being said, if you are in two (2) dances (non solo), your cost for one competition's entry fees will be between \$125 and \$145. ABW plans to attend at least four regional competitions. ABW will attend at least one national competition in the Chicagoland area as well as one more in either Wisconsin, Las Vegas, Lake Tahoe or East Coast provided dances qualify!

2. STUDIO/CHOREOGRAPHY/REHEARSAL FEES

Studio fee is paid directly to ABW to cover coach fees, studio space, rental fees, etc. for the entire 11 month season. This is a one time only fee, will be due August 10, 2024 and will be \$575. This year we will be offering a \$100 total discount for families with more than one dancer on the team.

Choreographers have set fees for their services and that fee will be paid directly to your choreographer for each dance you will be learning (also a one-time fee). Each Competition Dancer will rehearse every week with their competition team throughout the year. They are also required to take ballet and classes in the genre your team competes. It is also highly recommended they take additional technique class.

3. COSTUMES

Costumes will run \$40-\$140 per costume. At times we will try to reuse old costumes, however you should anticipate purchasing competition costumes.

The costume does not include the cost of shoes, tights, jewelry (same jewelry worn for all dances), or makeup.

4. TRAVEL AND HOTEL

Most competitions are within driving distance. However, if a team chooses to attend an out-of-area competition, all travel expenses are the family's responsibility.

We understand that this is a large financial commitment. Although it is a lot of money, the experience is definitely a good one. We promise to keep a healthy attitude towards competition. While we will always strive for the best and keep our eye on the prize, we will always remember that the journey is the most important. The skills and expertise that will be embedded in the girls will create masters of art and ultimately leave them better dancers and feeling more accomplished. The dancers will also create memories with other dancers shooting for the same goals and sharing the same passion.

5. SIGNING UP. After you have reviewed this packet and have determined that you wish to be involved in our Competition Teams for the 2024-2025 year, please bring back the signed paperwork and all new competitors will need to supply a copy of your birth certificate (certified copies or original birth certificates are not required. Just a copy of the birth certificate is satisfactory). All competitions require that we have copies of birth certificates available in order to verify age if there is a dispute at the competition. **All paperwork must be turned in by August 10.**

We will hold tryouts and group the dancers according to technical ability and age parameters. Our decisions will be final. We will then send out additional information about their specific team along with their rehearsal day and time and what genre they will be focusing on first. Those dancers not quite ready for competition teams yet will be directed to the right technique classes to continue building their skills.

Our Regional competition dates are being finalized and will be made available after auditions which will give dance families 7+ months to plan accordingly. Most Regional competitions we attend are held in late Feb. and April.

