

Hickory Hills Park District Dance Program

# Parent & Student Manual

2024 – 2025



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Welcome to the Hickory Hills Park District Dance Program!

Dear Parents and Dancers,

We are pleased that you will be joining us for the 2024-2025 Dance Season. Please make sure you have a valid email on file. This is the way we communicate with you. Also, check our website for information throughout the year.

This parent and student manual has been designed to provide the participants and parents/guardians with the references you need to be comfortable and familiar with our program. Please take a few minutes to read through this manual as it contains valuable information about our program, including new rules. We recommend referring to this manual throughout the year to help answer any questions you may have. Review this information with your dancer so they are also informed.

The attitude, creativity, and energy of participants and staff are what will make this a successful year for everyone. Come prepared to share, learn, and experience a memorable dance season.

Our dance program is approximately 29 weeks long with a recital in mid-May if possible.

All registrants of the program are expected, but not required, to participate in the recital, in May. Please notify your instructor by November 1 if you do not plan on participating in the recital, so we can determine if you need a costume.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns with our program, please reach out to the Business Manager/ Dance Coordinator Ms. Tammy Muth at 708-598-1233 or email at [tmuth@hhparkdistrict.org](mailto:tmuth@hhparkdistrict.org), Andrew Vogrin at 708-598-1233 or email [reccn@hhparkdistrict.org](mailto:reccn@hhparkdistrict.org) or [dance@hhparkdistrict.org](mailto:dance@hhparkdistrict.org).

Sincerely,

Tammy Muth  
Business Manager/Dance Coordinator

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| Table of Contents                            |    |
| Dance Staff                                  | 3  |
| Registration and Payment Plan                | 5  |
| Class Description                            | 5  |
| Hickory Hills Park District Performance Team | 6  |
| Class Placement Guidelines                   | 6  |
| Dress Code                                   | 7  |
| Class Attire Suggestions                     | 7  |
| Pick Up Policy/Drop off Procedure            | 8  |
| Snow Day/Cancellation of Classes             | 8  |
| Illness                                      | 8  |
| Student Injury                               | 8  |
| Bathroom Use/Leaving the Classroom           | 9  |
| Classroom Etiquette                          | 9  |
| How to Succeed in Dance                      | 10 |
| Parent Behavior                              | 10 |
| District Behavior Policy                     | 10 |
| Dance View Days                              | 10 |
| Communication                                | 10 |
| Student/Teacher Relationship                 | 11 |
| Recital Costumes                             | 11 |
| Spirit Wear                                  | 11 |
| Fundraising                                  | 11 |
| Volunteer Parents                            | 11 |
| Dress Rehearsal                              | 11 |
| Picture Day                                  | 12 |
| Recital Information                          | 12 |
| Recital Tickets                              | 12 |
| Performance Classes/Poms                     | 13 |
| Attendance Policy                            | 13 |
| Solos/Duets/Trio                             | 13 |
| Calendar                                     | 14 |
| Confirmation                                 | 15 |



**Hickory Hills Park District Dance Staff**  
**2024 – 2025**

Philosophy: Dancers, like everyone, come in all different shapes, sizes and abilities. We all have our strengths and weaknesses and our goal at the Hickory Hills Park District is to help each individual dancer SHINE through their strengths and improve upon their weaknesses. Teaching dance is about more than teaching steps, technique, and choreography. Students who enroll in our dance program also learn discipline, posture, confidence, and how to overcome challenges. These are lessons that will help our dancers succeed in whatever they choose to pursue, whether it may be in the arts, sports, or academics. Our staff is motivated to teach dance for all aspects of life.

Our hope is....

That everyone continues to have their love for dance.

**Miss Liz**

Ms. Liz Dynowski has been the lead instructor at HHPD for 25 years. She has an extensive background in dance and student mentoring. Ms. Liz has studied dance since she was three years old and started teaching dance, at the Diana School of Dance, at age 14. She also studied under Billy Siegenfield, at Northwestern University, where she pursued her degree in Psychology. Throughout the years, Ms. Liz has performed professionally as a Saberette, she has danced on WGN's morning Bozo Show, Kidding Around, and a local cable's TEEN Talk Show. Her love of dance has passed on from one generation to another. Her choreography has been showcased in several local and national venues. During the competition season, the HHPD Company Dancers have won many awards and platinum trophies and have come home with national titles and awards. The HHPD Company Dancers have also performed in New York City, Disney World, Disneyland, and Royal Caribbean Cruise ship. It is during those Company trips that her dancers have had the opportunity to work with renowned choreographers from Broadway Dance Center, Joffrey Ballet and Disney. Ms. Liz's goal is to always provide a dance class that is both fun and challenging for her students. She thrives to give her dancers the best dance experience possible so that they may pursue their dreams of becoming professional dancers, teachers, or choreographers. Many of her students that have graduated from the HHPD program have worked professionally in the dance world: some have performed professionally for Disney Studios, others have been showcased at the House of Blues in Chicago, and one is a 2021 Colts Cheerleader utilizing all their dance skills mastered at HHPD. Her greatest success story is when her love of dance gets passed on to others through HHPD graduates that become poms coaches for local high schools and colleges. Ms. Liz loves collaborating with contacts she has made in the dance world with her HHPD students. She has worked with choreographers from Disney, the New York City Joffrey Ballet and finalist from So You Think You Can Dance. Miss Liz looks forward to continuing to challenge her students and promoting her love of dance with all her students.

### **Miss Gianna**

Miss Gianna Agozzino has been a dance instructor for eight years, has danced with the Hickory Hills Park District for 15 years and with the competition team for 10 years. Her dancing experiences include tap, jazz, ballet, hip hop, lyrical, competitive dance, gymnastics, cheerleading, poms, and two years performing in the Joffrey Ballet's Nutcracker. She was a Chargerette for the pom team for four years and was a part of the Orchesis Dance Club where she was a choreographer. She is also our preschool teacher. She is very excited to be teaching with the Hickory Hills Park District again.

### **Miss Sarah**

This is Miss Sarah's sixth year teaching at HHPD. She has a long history with the program, taking classes for 13 years and being a part of the performance team for 11 years. She loved to compete and travel around the country with the team - performing in New York, Disney, Universal, and on a cruise. She has taken all styles of dance such as tap, jazz, ballet, lyrical, pointe, and hip hop, with tap being her favorite. Miss Sarah graduated from Stagg High School in 2019 where she was a part of the poms team all 4 years, being on Varsity for the last 3 years. The team qualified for State twice, and they competed at Nationals in Florida - taking 7th in the hip hop division. She was also involved in the Orchesis dance club all 4 years and was one of the Co-Presidents her senior year.

For the past 2 years Miss Sarah has also been working at a veterinary clinic in Countryside where she is able to show her love for animals. She is also attending online school with the goal of being a Certified Veterinary Technician.

### **Miss Isabella**

Isabella has been a part of the Hickory Hills Park District dance program since she was 3 years old. Now, many years later, she is getting the opportunity to lead classes of her own. She has always had a passion for dance, but even more so helping young dancers and being behind the scenes. Choreographing and having that creative control in making pieces, along with working on improving technique, is something she has been waiting to do since she started helping with other classes 5 years ago. She is very excited to finally start her teaching journey! She has done her schooling at home since she was in first grade. Because of that, she has made many friends from dancing at HHPD. The great connection she has made with her teammates and instructors are irreplaceable. With years of competing, volunteering, and bonding with people she now calls family, HHPD is her home. She cannot wait to give the same experience to new dancers in the company! Her goal is to keep grasping new methods to teach to her younger students, providing them with a strong foundation of technique. In the future, Isabella would love to continue teaching dance, but her dream is to become a special education preschool teacher. In the past, Isabella volunteered and was a substitute teacher in the preschool program, and absolutely loved it! She really enjoys working with younger groups of kids, which is another reason why she cannot wait to be teaching ballet, jazz and lyrical level 5/6 classes this dance season!

### **Miss Adelena**

Working with young dancers is one of Ms. Adelena's greatest passions, and she can't wait to share the joy and creativity of dance with all her students for a second year. This season, she will be teaching all Level 1 classes, including ballet, tap, hip-hop, jazz, and mini poms. She brings a diverse dance background to the studio, having spent 13 years in the HHPD dance program taking classes in various styles as well as being a part of her high school varsity dance team her last 3 years. In her senior year, she served as captain of her dance team where she choreographed the routine that led them to State! Her goal is to create a supportive and positive environment where dancers feel confident exploring dance, regardless of their starting point. When she's not teaching, she is attending Lewis University, majoring in Diagnostic Medical Sonography, and working frequently around the park district. As a dance teacher, she is here to help aspiring dancers build a strong foundation, develop their skills, and, most importantly, enjoy every step along the way!

### **Miss Emily**

Emily was a dancer at HHPD for 16 years. She's taken ballet, tap, jazz, lyrical, pointe, hip-hop, poms, and competitive classes, with her favorites being hip-hop and poms. She also danced for A.A Stagg during all four years of high school. She was a Junior Varsity Poms captain for her sophomore year then moved to Varsity for her last two years and choreographed for the Orchesis Dance Club her sophomore, junior, and senior year. This is Emily's 2<sup>nd</sup> year teaching classes at HHPD, and she's very excited to be back to not only teach her students but to learn and grow as a teacher herself.

## Miss Aryanna

This will be Ms. Aryanna's second year of teaching, but she has been a part of the HHPD dance company for ten years and has been a part of the competition team for all ten of those years. She has been in the advanced level all throughout high school. She has been a soloist for the past four years and has come in first at multiple IPDDC competitions as well as placing in the larger dance competitions. She was part of the varsity dance team at Shepard High School her freshman and sophomore year while securing a captains position her sophomore year. She has been a helper and assistant choreographer for two years. She has begun her senior year and plans on majoring in Kinesiology, the study of the body, next year in college. She is very excited to start teaching and choreographing again for the upcoming dance season.

## Registration & Payment Plan Information

Registration begins in late August for any students returning to our program from the previous year & in the current summer program first.

Registration begins in August for residents of Hickory Hills who are new to the program.

All classes must be PAID IN FULL before the first dance class. Class starts the week of September 12. Classes will be held at the Cynthia Neal Center. ANYONE who is not paid in full before the first class will NOT be allowed in class. There are no refunds after the class has begun. No Refunds for illness, doctor notes, COVID and quarantine time.

New enrollment WILL NOT be accepted after December 2. If you are unable to attend classes until January due to IHSA regulations, please see the office before December 2.

## Class Descriptions

**PRE-BALLET** (Ages 3 - 5 Years): In this level we focus on dance and rhythm using exercises that enable the child to discover musicality and creative movement. We will also concentrate on the beginnings of ballet such as skips, gallops, walks, plies, port de bras and attention to clean and consistent footwork.

**BALLET** (Ages 5 & Up): In these levels we use floor exercises that promote coordination, strength and flexibility. As the levels increase additional focus will be placed on the following ballet technique: proper body placement and carriage of the arms and head, free movement, jumps and traveling across the floor. It is also important that a student learns how to feel and correctly utilize the center core of their body which is the basis of balance and strength in dance. Higher level students should understand advanced concepts of ballet such as placement and alignment of the body, clean footwork, positions of arms and feet, and correct muscle use. The training and expectations, both technical and behavioral, intensifies as each level increases. **\*Please note:** Ballet is the foundation for all forms of dance. It provides strength, balance, flexibility, posture, technique and knowledge of terminology critical to success in other dance forms, including jazz, lyrical, tap, poms and hip-hop. *(It is strongly recommended by the Dance Staff that all dancers take ballet in conjunction with any other dance genre.)*

**POINTE** (Instructor Permission): Students in ballet who are interested in Pointe will be allowed on pointe only at the discretion of the teacher. The teacher must be sure the child has strong ankles, feet, and center core. Pointe work takes a great deal of strength and focus and should only be taken by students willing to apply these concepts in class. *Must be enrolled in an additional ballet class.*

**LYRICAL** (Levels 3 & Up): This class is defined by a fusion of jazz, ballet and contemporary dance techniques. Lyrical dancing is performed to music with lyrics to inspire movements or to express strong emotions the choreographer feels from the lyrics in the chosen song.

**TAP** (Ages 5 – 18 Years): Children will have fun learning basic tap steps emphasizing basic motor control and rhythmic concepts. Students will improve the speed and articulation of their footwork in these levels. They will demonstrate ability to dance with equal emphasis on the musicality, posture, and sounds.

**HEELS** (by instructor permission only)

**JAZZ** (Ages 6 & up): This is a high-energy dance class, which develops flexibility, rhythm, extension, balance, speed and strong movement in dancers, preparing them for a lifetime of dancing. Students who continue in jazz classes build upon the movements and technique that students have already learned.

**HIP-HOP** (Ages 6 & up): Students will learn different hip-hop techniques. We will use the latest sounds in R&B, alternative rock, acoustic, and pop music.

**TECHNIQUE:** This class consists of focusing on the foundation of dance technique. The class hopes to improve technique in all steps and styles of dance including Ballet, Jazz, and Lyrical. These classes offer practices for jumps, leaps, and turns but they will also use the ballet barre to improve the overall technique and flexibility to perform every dance step. This is not a recital class.

### **Hickory Hills Park District Performance Teams**

**DANCE:** A performance dancer will be able to take part in the following activities depending on your own schedule and commitment. Performance classes focus mostly on Jazz, with the exception of the Performance Lyrical class for higher level dancers.

**Level A & B** - Clean single turns, working on or having mastered clean doubles, pointed toes on all leaps, battement (kicks) etc.

**Level C** - Clean doubles, pointed toes on all leaps, battement (kicks) etc., leaps in 2nd are mastered; switch leaps are clean, fute turns are clean in 2nd position.

**Performance Jazz & Lyrical** - Clean triples, pointed toes on all leaps, fully extended legs, all the following leaps/jumps are mastered: switch, C, calypso, 2nd, ring. Spotting fuetes without losing center will be expected of this level.

**Required Performances:** There will be 3-5 park district competitions for level A, B and C.

**Optional Performances:** We are currently looking at one \$65 Regional Competition, however, no Nationals will take place this year due to this being a travel year. Performances include a weekend dance convention in Chicago (approximately cost per dancer is \$200), a performance at Great America (approximately cost per dancer is \$35), a performance and masters class at an out of state trip (cost per dancer for the entire trip is approximately \$1,500 for 10 days). In the past HHPD dancers have performed at Great America, Disney World, Disneyland, Universal, the children's division of The Nutcracker in various professional dance company and Dance Chicago. This year we will be performing in Florida.

Please see page 13 for more information on attendance requirements for the performance team.

**POMS:** Pom's girls are also included in the annual recital. We will perform at Christmas party and 3-5 Park District Competitions.

**MINI DIVISION (K - 2nd):** They will be learning performance skills and dance techniques with pom arms and jazz incorporated combos and routines.

**JUNIOR DIVISION (3rd - 5th):** The participants will gain performance skills and pom techniques along with jazz techniques.

**VARSITY DIVISION (6th & Up):** These participants will learn a variety of advanced skills to help them improve their performance, pom, and overall dance skills to further themselves in junior high and high school dance teams.

***In order to be on one of our performance teams (dance or poms) it is required that you take at least one other class (ballet, lyrical, jazz, hip hop, or technique) with us. You cannot take just performance. You also cannot take just Poms & Performance. A supplemental class must be taken as well.***

### **Class Placement Guidelines**

All teachers have given the office who they believe should move up or stay based on classes taken in the previous year. You should call the office before registering for fall classes. Adhering to the class placement guidelines, along with these helpful tips, will ensure that each student is receiving the appropriate training at the appropriate level:

- Participants must be the appropriate age by the first day of class.

- **It is necessary for parents to follow the instructor's placement recommendation. Please trust their expertise and respect their decision. Our instructors are trained professionals who have your child's best interest in mind.**
- The Park District reserves the right to transfer students into a different class that will be more suitable to their skill level.
- If you have questions regarding what level your child is qualified for, please contact the office prior to registration.

**Please Note:** Due to the design of our syllabus, dancers should expect to remain in the same class level for a *minimum* of two years. Some exceptions may apply.

### **Dress Code**

Proper attire is vital for the dancer's safety and will maximize the dancer's learning experience. It is necessary for the instructor to see the shape and line of the dancer's body and will assist in the proper assessment of the advancement of each student. The Park District staff will enforce the dress code. If these following requirements are not followed, parents will be notified by the instructor or office, and the student may not be permitted to participate in class until the proper dance attire is worn. We appreciate your cooperation and compliance with the dress code for our program.

### **Dance Attire Requirements for All Classes**

- Hair must be secured away from the face in all classes!
- Proper shoes must be worn to each class. If you forget one day, it is ok to go in bare feet (in dance room only), but should not be a habit.
- No gum or candy of any kind is allowed during class. No eating during class.
- ALL jewelry must be removed before any class. Stud earrings in your ears are acceptable.
- There must be no articles of clothing attire or bag that promotes any other dance program, team, class, etc.
- ABSOLUTELY NO: Jeans, jean shorts, dresses, bra tops, or bare midriffs.
- Water is allowed in the dance room (no other beverages)
  - In a bottle that can be sealed so we do not have spillage.

### **Class Attire Suggestions**

**Pre-Ballet – Level 3:** Leotard and tights. No elaborate skirts, tutus, or dance costumes. Simple skirts or shorts/pants over leotard are allowed. White, leather ballet shoes, no satin ballet slippers.

**Ballet Levels 4 and up:** Leotard and tights. No elaborate skirts, tutus, or dance costumes. Simple skirts or shorts over leotard are required. Pink Elastosplit X Canvas Split-sole Ballet Shoes.

**All Pointe:** Leotard and tights. No elaborate skirts, tutus, or dance costumes. Simple skirts or shorts over leotard are required. Must see instructor for pointe shoe fitting.

**Jazz Levels 1 - 3:** Form fitted clothing preferably HHPD dance shirt or any other non-dance (no competitors) program attire with shorts. Black E Series slip on jazz shoes.

**Jazz Levels 4 and up:** Form fitted clothing preferably HHPD dance shirt or any other non-dance (no competitors) program attire with shorts. Black E Series slip on jazz shoes.

**Tap Levels 1 – and up:** Form fitted clothing preferably HHPD dance shirt or any other non-dance (no competitors) program attire with shorts. Black slip-on tap shoes no ties.

**All Levels Hip-Hop:** Dancers should preferably wear HHPD dance shirt or any other non-dance (no competitors) program attire with long leggings or sweatpants. For practice they should wear gym shoes, preferably shoes not worn outside as daily shoes. Shoes for recital will be decided after classes begin.

**All Levels Lyrical:** Leotard and tights. No elaborate skirts, tutus, or dance costumes. Simple skirts or shorts/pants over leotard are allowed. Shoes should be Capezio Pirouette II Canvas Lyrical Shoes or FootUndeez



**All Levels Poms:** Form fitted clothing preferably HHPD dance shirt or any other non-dance (no competitors) program attire with shorts. Tights or leggings are highly recommended. Tan E Series slip on jazz shoes.

**All Levels Performance:** Leotard and tights. No elaborate skirts, tutus, or dance costumes. Simple skirts or shorts over leotard are required. Tan E Series slip on jazz shoes.

If your child is in multiple classes, they do not need to change anything but their shoes for each class. Students should arrive NO MORE than 10 minutes prior to the start of class. Our instructors have many duties to attend to prior to beginning a class or will be teaching another class; therefore, they will not be responsible for any child who is dropped off early. Children are not allowed to enter the dance room before their class time and cannot stay in the room during classes that they are not in. Any student who arrives more than 15 minutes late for a 30- or 45-minute class will not be allowed in class. It is stressful on the child when they arrive to a class late and their friends are already halfway through their class. It is also a distraction to have a student arrive late and have to catch up. Any student who arrives more than 30 minutes late for an hour class will also not be allowed in class (the only exception is if they are in multiple classes). If you intend to accompany your child into the building, please park in the designated areas. If you wish to simply drop off or pick up your child, please DO NOT PARK OR LEAVE YOUR CAR UNATTENDED IN THE DRIVE THRU AREA. Children under the age of 10 must be walked into the building and must be accompanied at all times in the lobby. Classroom doors will open promptly at the time class is scheduled to begin, and no earlier, and will reopen at dismissal. Please be on time for arrival and dismissal. If you will be extremely late, due to uncontrollable circumstances, please contact our office at 708-598-1233 ext 0. Again, please make every effort to be on time. The first occurrence will be considered a warning; every occurrence after this there will be a late charge of \$5 for every 10 minutes late at pick up. That fee must be paid prior to the participant being admitted to the next class. These times will be based on end of class time.

### **Snow Day Policy/Cancellation of Classes**

The Hickory Hills Park District follows School District 117 in the event of weather cancellations. If District 117 schools are closed, due to weather, and the weather is still not clear after school hours, classes may still be held. You should watch your email on these days. If we do, we will notify you via email. You can always check the Park District website [www.hhparkdistrict.org](http://www.hhparkdistrict.org) or Facebook for up-to-date class cancellations. If classes are canceled, we will email the participants. Classes may at times be canceled due to teacher illnesses or conflicts and a substitute is not available. We will attempt to contact you by phone, but a mass email will be sent out and it will be posted on Facebook. Please make sure the Park District has your current contact information on file.

### **Illness**

If your child becomes ill while at dance class, they will be asked to sit out the duration of the class, or if they become severely ill, a phone call will be made to the home for the child to be picked up. Please make sure the office knows the best way to reach you in an emergency. We ask that if your child sustains an injury that they still come and observe class. Watching a dance class is very beneficial to becoming a better dancer. **Please note:** If they have any COVID symptom including fever or are contagious, we ask that they stay home from class so as not to infect other participants. In the case of severe illness please notify the office if other dancers may have been exposed. A doctor's note will be required to return to class after an extended illness. Please call the office at 708-598-1233 and leave a message for your child's instructor if they have to miss a class. You may also email [dance@hhparkdistrict.org](mailto:dance@hhparkdistrict.org). PLEASE NOTE: If a dancer sustains a long-term illness or injury, that prohibits them from participating in class full-out for multiple, consecutive weeks, they MUST be cleared from a doctor to dance full-out by the Friday before the recital. There are NO refunds if a dancer misses class for illness or any other reason. No refunds for COVID and quarantine time.

### **Student Injury/ Insurance**

It is the responsibility of the parent and dancer to inform the instructor before class if the dancer has an injury that will preclude the dancer from any part of class. If a dancer receives a mild injury during class, he or she will be offered appropriate first aid treatment as needed. For a more severe injury, the parent will be notified immediately. Accident reports will be filled out by staff and given to their supervisor.

The Park District is committed to conducting its Dance Program in the safest manner possible. The Park District continually strives to reduce risks and insists that all participants follow safety rules and instructions. Please recognize that the Park

District does not carry medical accident insurance for injuries sustained in its programs. The cost of this insurance would make program fees prohibitive. Please check your personal/family health insurance.

### **Bathroom Use/Leaving the Classroom**

All children must be fully toilet-trained and tend to their own bathroom needs. No pull-ups or diapers are allowed. Teachers or Instructors in Training will walk your child to the bathroom. Teachers and Instructors in Training are not allowed to change your child or assist them in the bathroom. If your child has a bathroom accident, you will be called to come and change him/her. Please be sure the people listed on your emergency phone list are aware of this policy. Please emphasize with your child the importance of telling their teacher when they need to use the bathroom and bring your dancer to the bathroom before class. It is very important that they do not leave the classroom to use the bathroom unless it is an absolute emergency. This is a distraction to other students, and once one child leaves, everyone suddenly needs to use the restroom. Also, please make sure your child brings a water bottle to class. Not only is it a distraction to the other students it is not safe for students to be constantly leaving the locked dance room. When your child is ready to return to the classroom, they must ask the office to be let into class. Students and instructors in the dance room **ARE NOT** allowed to open the door from the inside. We have this policy for safety reasons.

### **Classroom Etiquette For Dancers**

**\*\*All cell phones must be turned off. No texting, phone calls, or social media will be allowed during class time.\*\***

- Please label shoes and other personal items.
- Do not bring valuables to dance class. Anything left will be placed in the Lost and Found box in the office.
- Do not leave any backpacks or any items in the lobby unattended. The public uses the washrooms frequently.
- Never say anything negative about another dancer or teacher in person or post negative comments to social media outlets. See Ms. Tammy if you have comments or improvements.
- No sitting in dance class unless you are instructed to by your teacher. Always stay focused in the classroom and practice as many times as you can! Parents are not allowed in the dance room.
- Let your teacher know if you feel ill or have an injury. Keep your instructor informed.
- Please visit the restroom before class; bathroom breaks during class are a distraction to the teacher and other students.
- Arrive at least 10 minutes early to prepare yourself appropriately for class. You will be let into the classroom at your schedule time.
- Please be on time for class! Arriving late can be disruptive to the teacher and other students. If a student is more than 15 minutes late to a 30 – 45-minute class, they will not be allowed in and 30 minutes late to a one hour class. A dancer's body must be properly warmed-up to avoid injury. This policy is strictly enforced and counts as an absence.
- No running in the building or hanging on the dance barres at any time.
- No wet shoes on the dance floor or gum chewing. Eating or drinking (water is ok) is NOT allowed in the dance room. If you are here all day you can take a break and eat in the lobby. Be courteous of everyone, clean up after yourself and beware of food allergies.
- In order to maximize your child's learning experience, we ask that parents refrain from addressing issues with the instructors before, during or after class. Please call 708-598-1233 to discuss it with Ms. Tammy and leave a message or email [dance@hhparkdistrict.org](mailto:dance@hhparkdistrict.org), and the instructor will get back to you in a timely fashion. It is very difficult for the teachers to maintain their tight class schedules if they are answering parents' questions in between classes. We appreciate your understanding of this matter.
- Please inform the instructor if you have to leave the building during your child's class and how they can reach you in an emergency. We prefer that parents of pre-ballet students, or a one 30 minute class, stay in the hallway or lobby during class.
- Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle into the classroom to avoid multiple trips to the water fountain, as this takes away from class time.

### **How to Succeed in Dance**

Here are some helpful ideas and thoughts to guide your child to be the best dancer they can be!

- Be Ready – on time and prepared for class.
- Be Responsible – for yourself and your belongings.
- Be Smart – don't chew gum, run in class or hang on the barres.
- Be Attentive – listen quietly when the instructor is speaking.
- Be a Pro – work hard and always give 100%.
- Be Positive – never judge yourself or others.
- Be Safe – take care of your body in all that you do during the day.
- Be Brave – take risks so you can learn new skills.
- Be Respectful – of yourself, your fellow classmates and your instructor.
- Believe – in yourself!

### **Parent Behavior**

We ask the same of the parents as we do of our dancers. As a parent we ask you to lead by example. Please treat all instructors, dancers, staff, volunteers, opposing teams, opposing fans and judges with dignity and respect. Please refrain from making negative comments, using profanity, intimidation tactics, and/or inappropriate remarks. Voicing negative comments can impact your child, and possibly someone else's child's motivation and overall experience. By not following the appropriate behavior, we may have to remove you or your dancer from HHPD.

### **District Behavior Policy**

Appropriate behavior is expected from all patrons, participants and observers of programs and in the facilities, to protect the enjoyment and safety of all patrons. Behaviors that will not be accepted include, but are not limited to, the following

- Endangering the health and safety of other participants, patrons, observers, staff, or volunteer.
- Disrupting a program or creating a disturbance at a facility.
- Continuous refusal to follow program and/or facility rules and guidelines.
- Use of verbal harassment, profanity, vulgarity, obscenity or racial slurs.
- Blatant disrespect of staff, volunteers and program or facility rules and guidelines.
- Damage, vandalism, or theft of private or park district facilities, equipment or supplies.
- Respectful to HHPD by not promoting another dance studio and a teacher who does not teach at HHPD.
- Respectful to peers by attending classes, arriving on time and remaining for the duration of the class.
- Be supportive and give encouragement to other dancers, as well as attending performances when scheduled.
- We expect everyone to be a good role model to students by conducting themselves accordingly.

### **Parent's View Day**

Currently there will not be any view days. **View Days will be December 13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> and March 17<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

### **Communication**

We encourage parents to maintain open communication with our dedicated dance staff, in order to avoid any misunderstandings. Please check in with your child's instructor or the office on a semi-regular basis, for any announcements and information about the program. All concerns will be addressed in a manner that is fair to all participants. In order for the office to maintain proper communication and notification with its participants, all registrants will need to have an email address on file. Most notices will be sent electronically and will be posted on the wall. Make sure your email address is current and checked periodically, especially in the months leading up to the recital. If you are not receiving emails, please check your junk or spam box.

### **Student / Teacher Relationships**

The Park District is committed to the principle of protecting the integrity and objectivity of its staff members in the performance of their duties and to maintaining a fun, safe and educational environment. It is fundamental to the overall mission of the Park District that the professional responsibilities of its staff be carried out in an atmosphere that is free of conflicts of interest and favoritism that compromise these principles.

- The Park District has a policy regarding on-line social networking. The staff, if asked, cannot “Friend” any of their students or parents on Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Staff members, if asked, will not give out any personal contact information for any employee, supervisor, or participant i.e., cell phones and email addresses. Contact can be made with the Dance Staff by calling the office at 708-598-1233 or via email at [dance@hnparkdistrict.org](mailto:dance@hnparkdistrict.org). If you already have a staff member’s information, please refrain from using it (Exception is for Miss Liz’s email address [lizdyn15@gmail.com](mailto:lizdyn15@gmail.com))

### **Recital Costumes (Tentative in October)**

Spring recital costumes average between \$60.00 and \$80.00 per class. Nude leotards are required for all children who have costume changes. The cost of the leotard is approximately \$18.00. Tan tights are also required, and the cost is approximately \$10.00 - \$20.00. Costume fees will be due in November. Any costume order turned in after December 2 will be charged a late fee per costume.

All measuring for costumes will take place during the costume day in November. It is important that you work closely with the instructor to determine what size costume you want to order for your child. Each parent or participant must initial the costume measuring sheet to make sure we order the correct costume size. It is the responsibility of the parent to bring your child to the costume day in November to be sized and approve the costume size that will be ordered. If a parent does not stop in and check with the instructor to approve the size of the costume, the instructor will use their own discretion to determine what size to order. Sizing is determined by using the dancer’s measurements and cross-referencing them with the costume company’s sizing leotard. Please note that costume sizing is generic and alterations may be required in order to fit the costume appropriately to your dancer’s body. The Park District is **NOT** financially responsible if you need to make alterations.

### **Spirit Wear**

The Park District will be selling t-shirts, long sleeve t-shirts, hoodies, and wind breakers with the dance/pom logo on it. We usually do this in the beginning of the dance season.

### **Fundraising**

The Park District is offering Taffy Apples, and Christmas wreaths in the fall to help offset the cost of your costumes. Information will be sent home when available.

### **Volunteer Parents**

Calling all Volunteer Parents! We are always looking for volunteers to help out at the recital as designated “Backstage Mommies” and room supervisors during the performance. Every class will need to have 1-3 dedicated adults, per show, depending on the age and size of the class. The duties of the stage parents will include helping dancers, from your child’s class (usually only your child’s class), on and off stage and planning quiet activities in the backstage areas. Every volunteer will receive a volunteer t-shirt. Volunteer Parents are critical to helping our dance recital run smoothly otherwise we have to pay staff and increase the cost of the recital tickets! There is a required Volunteer Stage Parent meeting on dress rehearsal to discuss/review expectations.

### **Dress Rehearsal Information (Tentatively in May)**

All students should arrive at the **Performing Arts Center at Carl Sandburg High School, located at 131<sup>st</sup> and LaGrange Road**. You will enter off of LaGrange on to Circle Drive and proceed to the parking lot. Once you enter the building you will go into the Performing Arts Center and will sit in the Center and wait for your child’s class to be called up. We will then call them up in the order of the show to have them perform on stage.

- Attendance at Dress Rehearsal is MANDATORY to all students participating in the recital. Any unavoidable conflicts should be addressed with the instructor prior to the rehearsal.

- The rehearsal will follow the order of the show. Drafts of the show order will be posted on the office windows in early March, with the final show order posted by April.
- Rehearsal date TBA.
- All dancers should NOT come in costume but bring props if any. This includes hats and hair pieces.
- For safety reasons, dancers will not be allowed to sit in the area in front of the stage, or side of stage or in the aisles.
- Everyone will need to be in chairs! NO RUNNING in the building.
- NO FOOD OR DRINKS are allowed in the theater!
- Parents, we ask that you DO NOT bring siblings with you.

### **Picture Day (Tentatively in May)**

A schedule of picture times will be included in the recital handouts. Dancers will be asked to be in the Dance Room in full costume, until their class is called. Pictures will be taken at the Cynthia Neal Center, and the Dance Room will be available as a dressing room, for dancers with multiple costumes, so please make sure students who need to change are wearing a nude leotard under their costumes. We would like only dancers and dance moms in the Dance Room. The group will be called into the preschool room to take their pictures; only photographers, dance staff, and dancers will be allowed into the preschool room. No parents will be allowed in the preschool room. Please make sure you go over your child's hair, makeup, pose, etc before they go into preschool room.

### **Recital Information (Tentatively in May)**

- To avoid lengthy recitals, classes are divided into 3 shows (1, 2 & 3). Each class is assigned to one of these shows.
- Families with two or more dances should expect to participate in multiple shows.
- All dancers must arrive at Carl Sandburg High School a ½ hour before their show begins and go directly to their assigned dressing area. There will be signs posted directing students to the correct areas.
- Please pack all belongings the night before and double check to make sure that you did not forget any part of your costume! Make sure to LABEL each item of the costume, including headpieces, shoes and any other belongings. The Park District is not responsible for lost or stolen property.
- Food **is not** allowed in the dressing rooms/backstage areas. This is for the safety of the children. We have children with severe food allergies. Water bottles with the sports top lid are allowed in the dressing rooms. For dancers in multiple shows, we will have a designated eating area.
- Dancers are expected to stay backstage during the whole show. Dancers will not be allowed to leave after their dance to watch the show in the theatre.
- Videotaping and flash photography are not allowed at the performances! Professional videos will be available for purchase.
- Parents, please wait at least 10 minutes after the show before picking up your child. This gives the dancers time to get back to their dressing rooms and makes it less crowded in the hallways. We ask that family and friends wait in the lobby area.
- Please be advised that you will not be permitted to re-enter the theatre if you leave during the show. This rule is in place in order to secure the safety of our participants and audience.
- We need mommies/aunties to be helpers backstage taking children to the washroom, helping with costume/shoe changes, escorting children to/from stage, and entertaining the children between dances. Dads/uncles are also welcome to help collect tickets, hand out programs, and help seat audience members.
- Doors to the auditorium open approximately one half-hour prior to the start of the recital. DO NOT ENTER EARLY.
- Parents will only be allowed backstage if they are a backstage helper and have their name tag on.

### **Recital Tickets (Tentative in April)**

- There will be a limit of 5 tickets per child per show. (All tickets are reserved seating).
- If you have someone else purchasing your five tickets, you must send a note with them or email to us stating they have your permission to purchase your tickets. Please state that the ticket is being purchased for you or you are giving your tickets to them.
- Ticket price is \$10.00 each. All Sales are Final (**NO REFUNDS**). We can't resell your ticket prior to the show or at

the show.

- Show times are Show One 11:30 a.m. and Show Two 2:00 p.m. and Show Three 4:30 p.m.
- Show tickets will go on sale in April. More information will be sent out when available.
- Remaining tickets for shows go on sale three weeks after Show 1 tickets. Remaining tickets are first come first serve.
- Tickets will be randomly pulled out of a box as you purchase your tickets. **This is not first come, best seating. You can choose from balcony, floor right, floor center, or floor left.** This is the best method to avoid hiring extra staff which increases the cost of the tickets.
- Tickets will only be sold at the Cynthia Neal Recreation Center Monday – Friday 9 am – 5 pm unless otherwise stated. If you have an outstanding balance for dance classes, dance costumes, or any other program, you will not be able to purchase any tickets until those fees have been paid in full.
- Office staff will be staying until 6:00 p.m. on various days to sell tickets, dates will be posted sometime in April. If you are unable to purchase your tickets with the stated times, please call Tammy at 708-598-1233 or email us at [dance@hhparkdistrict.org](mailto:dance@hhparkdistrict.org). We will pull your tickets and leave them at the front desk for later purchase and pick up.
- **All people entering the auditorium must have a ticket and a separate seat – including infants (even if the child is on your lap).** As a courtesy to audience members and performers, please use discretion regarding a young child's ability to sit quietly and enjoy a performance.
- Wheelchair seating is available. You must mention a wheelchair seat is needed when purchasing tickets.
- Food and drink are not allowed in the auditorium.

## **Performance & Poms Classes**

### **Attendance Policy**

In order to maximize each student's experience, it is necessary to enforce the following attendance policy for all performance classes. If the need arises, a student may miss a total of 7 classes, with no penalty. Students and parents will be periodically notified by the instructor on the status of their attendance. After missing an 8<sup>th</sup> class, the parent will be notified, and the student will be placed on probation. At this point, participation in recital/competition is at the instructor's discretion. If a student reaches the maximum of 10 absences from September through May, participation in recital/competition is prohibited. **This policy will be strictly enforced!** Parents and students are reminded that frequent absences may slow down a dancer's progress, and lead to uncertainty with recital choreography. The dancer is prohibited from performing in the recital/competition due to repeated absences to be fair to dancers who attend class regularly and know the choreography. The only exception is where a dancer who has missed more than 10 classes and can participate again is if the student takes private classes with their instructor and or classmates at an additional fee. No refunds will be given if you miss 10 classes and do not take your private to get caught up on the choreography. This includes classes, costumes and any other fees that are due.

### **Solos/Duets/Trio (Tentative)**

Below are the procedures performing for solos, duets, and trios.

- The supervisor of dance (Ms. Tammy) is the one that approves solos, duets and trios. This is not Ms. Liz or any other dance instructor. Any and all questions should be directed to Ms. Tammy.
- In order to qualify for solos/duets/trio you must be registered in either Performance A, B, C, or Performance Jazz/Lyrical.
- A Separate form will be sent out after 10/17. We are allowed a number of students so first come first serve. Forms will be accepted until full or December 31 whatever comes first.
- All privates must be registered and scheduled in the office before taking a private lesson.
- Pay your competition fees by date required on form.
- Music should be no longer than 3 minutes.
- There will be a limited number of solos/duets/trio allowed.
- We will only be able to show three of the solos/duets/trios in the recital. That is one at each show. The way we will determine who gets to perform and choose which show, will depend on the score at a competition. If there is a tie, the name will be drawn out of a hat.
- If you register for 2 solos or 2 duets (same 2 people) only 1 can go to the recital if in the top 3.

# HHPD Dance Calendar

## 2024 - 2025

| September                  |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S                          | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
| 1                          | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 8                          | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15                         | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22                         | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29                         | 30 |    |    |    |    |    |
| Classes Begin: 9/12 - 9/18 |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| October             |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S                   | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|                     |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6                   | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13                  | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20                  | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27                  | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |
| Columbus Day: 10/14 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Halloween: 10/31    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| November                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S                                 | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|                                   |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3                                 | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10                                | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17                                | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24                                | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| Thanksgiving Break: 11/26 - 11/30 |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| December                  |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S                         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
| 1                         | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 8                         | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15                        | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22                        | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29                        | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| Winter Break: 12/20 - 1/5 |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| January                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S                         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|                           |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5                         | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12                        | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19                        | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26                        | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |
| Winter Break: 12/20 - 1/5 |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| February |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S        | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|          |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2        | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9        | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16       | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23       | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |    |

| March                     |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S                         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|                           |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2                         | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9                         | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16                        | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23                        | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30                        | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |
| Spring Break: 3/23 - 3/29 |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| April                     |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S                         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|                           |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6                         | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13                        | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20                        | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27                        | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |
| Spring Break: 4/18 - 4/24 |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| May                             |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S                               | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|                                 |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 4                               | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11                              | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18                              | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25                              | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| Last Day of Classes: 5/5 - 5/10 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Tentative Dress Rehearsal: 5/16 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Tentative Picture Day: 5/17     |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Tentative Recital Day: 5/18     |    |    |    |    |    |    |

### Key

- : Days Off
- : First/Last Day
- : Recital/Picture Day

Confirmation of Receipt of Parent & Student Handbook  
(Parent/Guardian & Student Signatures Required)

**Due: ASAP**

This handbook offers important information, procedures, and policies relating to the day-to-day activities for the Hickory Hills Park District Dance Program. Please read the entire handbook carefully and go over it with your child/children. Please keep it and use it for future reference. Sign below that you have received it.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student(s) Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dance Class(s) Enrolled In: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I acknowledge that all important information regarding the dance program will be sent out via email. Please write your email address below if we do not have one on file for you. (REQUIRED)

Parent's E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_