



Competition Expectations

First and foremost...all students try out EVERY year (injury/exceptions approved by Ms. Kim). Because they were on it last year does not mean they will be on the competition team this next season...especially if there were issues with involvement, attitude, practicing, etc.

Purpose:

Competitive classes are designed to help take a dancer's skill level, technique and showmanship to the next level and give an opportunity to show that progress in a competitive environment.

Time Commitment:

***All students on the competition team must be enrolled in a minimum of 4 hours of dance per week (not including their practices for comp dances) and for the 2017-2018 season must include a form of ballet and one must include stretching and flexibility (girls) or boys technique (boys) (if they are in 2 or more comp numbers, flex/stretch or tech for boys tuition is waived). The other should be in the genre in which the student will be competing in. (This will be adapted for the boys or youngest students who may not have 3 other classes outside of their competition hour). **You need to expect that these students will be at the studio 3-4 nights per week** because these won't all be aligned in one evening. There may also be additional practices, specifically around the first competition to ensure the dancers are adequately prepared.

***Competitions are NOT OPTIONAL. If you are on the team, you are required to be at all competitions that season. Ms. Kim will release the dates at the very beginning of the season. Competition days are LONG days. On competition weekends you need to be prepared for at least one parent to dedicate their weekend to this event. We normally get there around 8-9 am and will be there until 6-10 pm at night and most all of our comps this last year were Friday-Sunday. There are breaks you can take for lunch/dinner or if we have big breaks where none of our dancers are competing. All exceptions to leaving early or coming late must be approved by Ms. Kim only. The point in this is that we need to be there to support each other...you as a parent want others there to cheer on your child and so does everyone else. The teachers almost always stay all day and they don't all have kids up there and have other responsibilities...other studios don't even require their teachers or studio directors to be there and make the parents be responsible for everything. I don't agree with this...our team will support the kids but we ask the parents to do so as well.

Costs:

***You are responsible for all costs associated with the competition. This includes their monthly tuition, costume(s), entry fees and any fees associated with viewing, attending, parking, etc. at the competition. Entry fees for each competition are normally... solos are typically \$85-115 per competition, duos/trios are normally \$45-60 per competition and most groups are \$35-45 per competition. We normally do 3 competitions per season plus Nationals.

***All dancers should have a dance jacket/warm up and should have a studio crew t shirt (We usually get a new one each season). During the season there may be minimal costs for goodie bags, snacks, water, etc.

***Fundraising: there are fundraising events through the year that can be done...the more you put in, the more you get out. We do fundraising splits by who is involved so if you do nothing, you will get nothing. Fundraising is all optional.

*****Responsibilities for dancer...**

*Must show work ethic by practicing every week and **make corrections** accordingly. If student is falling behind in a group and is not fulfilling their part on their team, **they can be removed at any time** at the coach's/Ms. Kim's discretion.

*Must have a positive attitude and be respectful and well behaved at competition and all classes. You are a representative of a leadership group within the studio in your classes, and of the studio when we are out in public.

*Must be in attendance at all competition practices pending illness or emergency. All practices/dress rehearsals the week of competition are MANDATORY. There may be additional practices scheduled the week or two prior to competitions to ensure the dancers are ready.

*****Parent Responsibilities...**

*Must help support the dancer by insisting they are practicing at home.

*The parents should not be in the practices unless invited by the teachers. The teachers will ask you to come in to video tape so that they can practice at home. While in practice, parents should NOT coach from the sidelines. Parents should NEVER give feedback to dancers that are not their own children.

*Make sure dancer is at all practices or competition days on time and have needed costumes, shoes, hair and make-up done, etc. Please ensure they have rides if you cannot get them there.

*Parents will be supportive of each other and other dancers. We compete against other studios and against ourselves to do our best....we do not compete against each other, even if our child is "against" them in the age/division. We are a team and anyone who behaves in a way to cause discourse in a team will be removed from the team. This includes parents. I will remove a child from the competition team if there are constant issues with a parent. I don't do drama or gossip. If any parent has an issue, Ms. Kim is normally the only one that can fix it so talk to her about it. I wouldn't write this in the expectations if it hasn't been an issue ☺. We are not "Dance Moms" and we will not behave how they do on the show.

*This is not the environment for testing kids to make responsible decisions. It should not be up to a teen dancer to go to a comp practice. If they commit they need to complete their season. Letting them make the choice to see friends versus going to comp practice is not an appropriate test as it impacts more than just them...it's a detriment to the team and a waste of time for their coach. Please have this conversation with your dancer up front...they will sometimes miss fun with their friends because of competition dance.

Tryouts:

There are two scheduled tryout dates in August. All students interested must be at one of these dates. They will be taken through several genres of dance including but not limited to ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, musical theater and contemporary. (They do not need shoes specific to these for tryouts if they don't have them). Sometimes students may have a favorite genre but from a competition perspective it is not what they are best at. We will be making decisions based on their strengths. At the conclusion of the two days of competition tryouts, the senior dance staff will meet for placements. Once this is done, Ms. Kim will meet/call the parents and explain whether the dancer made it or not. If they didn't, you will be given feedback on what the student needs to work on to improve. Sometimes this is dance or technique focused, sometimes its ability to focus or effort or confidence. If we hear dancers saying "I'm so tired...I don't want to do it again..." etc. during the 4 hour competition tryout, they are most likely not ready because they will never make it through the long

competition days. **Competition is not a way to “build confidence or become a better dancer” ...this will happen naturally but competition is for good dancers that want to be great.** Not making the team does not mean they are not a good dancer...it may just mean they are not ready. It may also mean we don't have a place to put them. For example, if we have a 4 year old try out who is fantastic but we have no one else their age and she is not ready to do a solo, there just may not be a place for her for this year. If we have someone who is amazing at acro but we don't believe a solo is best for her and we don't have a group, there just may not be something this year. We don't have a limited amount of spots, but we do have limited teachers and studio space/time. With that said, this year there will be very few solos and many more groups.

If the staff deems that they are ready and we have a place for the student, we will let the parents know what our plan for their dancer is....for example we would like Mary to be in a tap group. The parents then choose yes or no. There is no negotiation on “I'm okay with her doing a group but I want her to do hip hop instead of tap...” etc. There may be some students that we come back and say we would like her to do a musical theater solo, a tap trio and a hip hop group. In this case, you can choose which you want her to be involved in for cost reasons. Once the parents have made the decisions on what they want them to do and all of the decisions have been handed in, we will work on the schedule and will work on dropping off signs to congratulate the dancers (this is how the students will find out they made it this year will be their yard signs).

Please respect any decisions the competition staff makes. We will not put a child who is not emotionally or developmentally ready to perform in a competitive environment. Please trust that if we deem your dancer is not ready, it does not mean they will never be, but we want to keep dance a healthy and happy place for them. If they are constantly frustrated because they are behind, they will learn to resent dance. Please also understand that all students are not meant to be competition dancers. Ms. Kim herself didn't do competition until she was in high school because I wasn't READY until then...it didn't mean I didn't have a future in dance if I chose that 😊

Please feel free to email Ms. Kim with any questions you have. Please do not ask “Is it worth it for my student to try out? If you don't think he/she would make it, I don't want him/her to go through that.”. If this is the case, they aren't ready for tryouts. We look at students from a completely different perspective for competition than we do for class so for many I couldn't even answer that accurately. I also believe if you have a student who says that if they don't make competition team, they are quitting dance...these kids are not the right kids for competition either. They should want to do competition because they are passionate about their sport and for the art of dance and if they are willing to quit that sport for not making it then that passion isn't really there.

I know this overview is more direct than most of the documents you will get from the studio but we “keep it real” during competition. Competition team is **NOT EASY**.....but if they work hard it can totally be worth it. The fun doesn't happen at practices, they are hard...the fun happens when they rock their competitions...when they win scholarships and titles...when they score higher than they did at the last one and showed improvement. I would rather be realistic and scare kids away from this than they think it's easy and we have to make the very uncomfortable decision to remove them later in the season because they aren't willing to put the work in.

I hope this helps put competition team into context. If they can work hard and meet these expectations and make the team...they will make friends and memories for a lifetime! Again, Let me know if you have questions!
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