



RECITAL HANDBOOK

Philosophy, Policies, and Procedures

Dear Parents and Students,

For the past 10 years, Dawn's Dance Connection Jackson has provided students with an exciting performance experience through its April recital. The recital—that annual staple of the dance school—conjures images of childhood and Americana for many. It's a rite of passage for hundreds of youngsters, a chance to shine in front of family and friends that they anticipate with nervous excitement.

The recital offers our students a professionally directed performance that allows them to present to their families and friends the results of a year's hard work, dedication, and progress.

A big part of dance training is learning through performance. Although performance opportunities can help prepare some students for a possible career in dance, they also contribute to children's success in non-dance activities. The performing experience helps build self-esteem and self-confidence and can result in better in-school presentations, improved social skills, and strong interview skills for future college or job opportunities.

The rehearsal process is a tremendous learning experience as well. It helps the children develop retention skills, and by working with their classmates on a group performance, they learn the positive aspects of working as a team to create the best end result.

Dedication to recital commitments is the responsibility of both students and their parents. We've created this handbook in an effort to clarify what we expect from you in terms of commitments and responsibility to the annual recital, the school, and other students and parents.

Key contact information for Dawn's Dance Connection:

Address: 515 2nd Street, Downtown Jackson, MN

Phone: 712-339-1152 (Maddie)

Email: dawnsdanceconnection@gmail.com

Website: www.dawnsdanceconnection.net

Owner: Maddie Nabuco

2026 Recital Info:

Jackson Picture Day: Sunday, March 22nd (JCC HS Main Gym)

Jackson Spacing Day: Sunday, April 12th (JCC Auditorium)

Jackson Dress Rehearsal: Wednesday, April 15th 5:00pm

Jackson Performances: Thursday, April 16th 7:00pm; Friday, April 17th 7:00pm; Saturday, April 18th 1:30pm

STAYING INFORMED

We work hard to make the dance experience organized and fun. Keeping you informed is one of our primary goals. Please read all newsletters and other school information.

Newsletters and important updates are emailed to you and posted on the Dawn's Dance Connection website.

If you have any questions regarding the information, we encourage you to email us at dawnsdanceconnection@gmail.com, Maddie will respond to your inquiry within 48 hours or call us at 712-339-1152.

Website: www.dawnsdanceconnection.net

We are constantly updating our website. News, important parent and student information, contact information, and more are available online 24 hours a day.

Facebook Page [www.facebook.com/Dawn's Dance Connection]

"Like" the Dawn's Dance Connection page on Facebook to receive updates on school events. Please invite your family and friends to "like" the school.

Please do not post questions on the school's Facebook page. Instead, please email them directly to dawnsdanceconnection@gmail.com.

Updates

As the season progresses, additional recital information or updates will be posted on the Dawn's Dance Connection website, www.dawnsdanceconnection.net, and in newsletters. Make it your responsibility to keep abreast of this important information. Our goal is to make the recital an organized, exciting experience for everyone involved. It's a team effort: students, their parents, and the instructors are key players in the show's success.

Home Study

To ensure that the students feel confident about their performance, we ask parents and guardians to encourage them to rehearse their recital choreography on a regular basis. Routine videos and your child's dance music will be posted on our website.

Costumes

We spend many hours selecting the costumes for each class. They are always age-appropriate and of the highest quality possible. Preschool students will need one costume; all other students will need one costume for each subject they train in. Costumes include all accessories (hats, gloves, etc.), but not tights or shoes.

NOTE: No jewelry or underwear is to be worn with costumes. This includes during dress rehearsals and performances and when class pictures are taken.

***Spacing Day, April 12th is not a dress rehearsal and therefore it is not necessary to wear costumes that day.**

Costume care

We ask that you label all costumes, shoes, accessories, and tights with your child's name. Place the costumes in a garment bag with your child's name on the outside. A large clothes basket works well for transporting all costumes and accessories to scheduled events. Pack accessories in a clear plastic bag (labeled with your child's name). Hats should be stored in a hatbox or similar container to prevent damage. Press all costumes prior to the dress rehearsal and the performance. Please do not wash costumes in your washing machine; dry clean them only (after the recital).

Remove any tags that could hang out of the costume.

If costume straps do not have snaps or are not attached, please sew them prior to picture day. Never cross the straps unless specified by the teacher.

Many costumes come with headpieces or hats. Please review the "Recital Checklist" to see if we will be using the headpieces or not.

NOTE: To ensure that there are no costume problems, students should not wear their costumes, accessories, or tights prior to the photo session, dress rehearsal, or performance.

Ironing

We do not recommend using a traditional iron when pressing costumes. Silks can burn, sequins can melt, and fabric colors may change. Please use only a steam iron. Iron costumes with caution because of glues that may have been used to attach appliqués and/or trim.

Tutu maintenance

Grasp the waist and give it a gentle shake, then use your fingers to “comb” out any pieces of tulle that are wrinkled. To store a tutu, put it on a hanger upside down. To help remove persistent wrinkles, hang the tutu in the bathroom during a shower or use a handheld steamer.

TIPS: COSTUME COMMON SENSE

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

Tights, Shoes, Hair, and Makeup

Tights

To ensure that there are no discrepancies in color and style, students are required to have the following for their classes.

Pre-Classes: BALLET PINK tights

Tap/Jazz Classes: TAN tights

Ballet/Pointe Classes: BALLET PINK tights

Lyrical Classes: TAN tights

Hair and makeup

We encourage all Pre-7th grade girls to wear some make-up. Slightly darker than usual foundation, neutral eyeshadow/eyeliner(no blue), and plenty of mascara, blush, and lipgloss. Absolutely no jewelry, nail polish, or extra hair accessories.

All 8th grade-12th grade girls are expected to have **FULL STAGE MAKE-UP**.

Uniform hairstyles are required for recital, NOT picture day. Hair styles are typically dependent on recital order, so we will send out those closer to our recital date! Pre-dance, Tap and Jazz, and modern students should have their hair up or at least the sides pulled back from their faces. We will update the Recital Checklist with specific hairstyles once we have confirmed the recital order.

Sometimes certain routines require a certain “look”. If the instructor wants “crazy big hair”, pigtails, or anything different from the norm, they’ll let you know. No extra hair accessories should be used unless part of the costume, so be sure any barrettes, bobby pins, or ponytail holders match their HAIR COLOR.

Be Prepared

Planning

The recital isn’t a one-day activity. Gather all costumes, accessories, shoes, and makeup several days in advance so you’ll know if something is missing or isn’t right. Make a checklist of your child’s routines, listing the costume, tights, shoes, and any accessories, and refer to it to make sure you have all your supplies before going to the auditorium.

Bring at least one extra pair of tights of each color. Also bring extra hair gel, hairnets, bobby pins, and hairspray.

TIPS: OTHER HANDY EXTRAS

- ✓ Baby wipes/Shout wipes (to fix makeup mistakes or wash hands)
- ✓ Baby powder (for itchy costumes)
- ✓ Safety pins (for emergency costume repairs)
- ✓ Clear nail polish (to repair minor holes or runs in tights when there isn’t time to change them)
- ✓ Your pain reliever of choice
- ✓ Band-Aids (the “invisible” kind)

Snacks

Please do not send your child to the dress rehearsal or recital with snacks or beverages that could stain their costumes. Crackers, energy bars, apples, carrot sticks, and string cheese are good choices. Water is the best beverage; please do not send juice boxes or other sticky beverages.

Auditorium Spacing Day

Auditorium Spacing day will be April 12th. On this date each class will be given a specific time (will be emailed separately) to walk through the backstage area AND practice their routine onstage. It is EXTREMELY important for all the kids to be at the auditorium so they are confident about where they enter, where they change and wait to perform, how they get onstage, how the stage size affects their routine, etc!! The students should gather in the FRONT LOBBY of the auditorium promptly at your designated time. Please keep in mind this is NOT a dress rehearsal so the kids just wear their regular dance attire and shoes.

Dress Rehearsal

Participation in the dress rehearsal is *mandatory*. The dress rehearsal allows the students to become familiar with the auditorium surroundings and feel comfortable with their performance, costume(s), and being onstage. Lighting, music cues, set changes, and all other logistics for an organized and professional performance are rehearsed so that the students make the best impression possible.

On dress rehearsal night, students are allowed to sit in the auditorium in costume to watch when not performing or in between numbers IF they have enough time. (They should already be ready for their next routine and remember that we line up 6 dances ahead). **NO students are allowed in the auditorium at recital in costumes. They MUST stay back stage in between routines!**

Why a dress rehearsal?

Often parents question the importance of the dress rehearsal for their child. In fact, the key to a successful performance for your child is the dress rehearsal. Here's why:

- The stage is much larger than the classroom and is often intimidating to the children.
- The stage lights can be frightening and disorienting to young children.
- Modifications to the choreography can be made at dress rehearsal. A student who misses the rehearsal will not have the chance to practice any of the changes onstage.
- Students often rely on the classroom mirrors to help them with spacing and formations. Having the chance to dance without the security of the mirror *before* the performance is very important for their confidence.
- Students have the chance to practice their stage entrances and exits and get used to being in such a large space.
- The dress rehearsal is the only time of the year when the finale, which involves hundreds of students, is rehearsed in its entirety. Those who miss the dress rehearsal will have a hard time keeping up with their classmates during the finale.
- Confidence is critical to a successful performance. The dress rehearsal offers your child the chance to feel ready for the show.
- The dress rehearsal is the only opportunity for parents to videotape or take pictures of the show.

And there's another big reason why the dress rehearsal is important. One of the main objectives of our curriculum is to teach the spirit of teamwork and commitment to classmates. When children miss the rehearsal, the result can be confusion for the remaining students (an absence affects spacing and timing).

Times to Arrive

All Dancers should arrive 30 minutes prior to showtime dressed and ready in their first costume. All persons must enter the main front lobby doors of the Auditorium. The doors will be open to the public 30 minutes before each performance. Students should go directly down the hallway to their assigned waiting area. (As shown on Spacing day). It's a good idea to bring games, books, etc to keep kids busy while they wait to perform. Kids should always wait WITH THEIR CLASS so they don't miss their line-up call. All students should warm-up and stretch while they wait as well. We will call the first few dance routines to line up 15 minutes prior to curtain. This includes our Pre-Class kids as well. All parents of our Pre students need to be in the hallway right outside the stage door so we can take the little ones onstage 15 minutes prior to show time.

Pre-Dance Students

Students ages 3-5 enrolled in a Pre-Dance class will perform within the first 7 routines. Parents will have their kids dressed and ready in the lobby 15 minutes prior to showtime when their instructor will lead them backstage PRIOR to the show. Immediately after performing, students will be brought back to the lobby to be picked up by parents. They are allowed to watch the remainder of the show on their parents lap OR in a seat (if you purchase a ticket for them!).

Finale

Students age 7 and older that are enrolled in a Tap & Jazz/combo class will perform in the finale. They are expected to remain backstage for the duration of the show in order to participate in the finale.

Students ages 3-6 or not enrolled in tap/jazz do NOT perform in the finale, but have the option to run on stage at the end. If they choose not to run on stage for the finale, they are able to leave once they are finished performing.

Dressing-room etiquette

Students must respect other students' space and property in the dressing rooms. The students will spend more time in the dressing rooms than onstage or in the auditorium, so please do your best to keep them organized and clean.

There will be no tolerance for any photos/videos taken of dancers in the dressing rooms. If you would like to take a photo, it should be done OUTSIDE of the changing rooms.

Dress-rehearsal guests

One parent or guardian may accompany each student to the dress rehearsal. Please, no siblings who do not dance! Additional attendees at the dress rehearsal must pay the full cost of a recital ticket.

Audience etiquette

Enthusiastic applause is encouraged; however, it is never appropriate to scream out a child's name or yell in any way.

Children should not bring handheld electronic games or other devices with sounds and/or lights that could be a distraction for other audience members.

Because we present a professional performance, we ask that everyone remain seated during the entire performance. If you do leave the auditorium during the show you will be allowed back into the auditorium only between dances. This rule is strictly enforced; please do not create a disturbance with the auditorium ushers in regard to this policy.

Children must remain seated for the entire performance. If you think they will have a hard time remaining seated during the performance, please do not bring them to the recital. Allowing children to run around or otherwise disrupt the performance is not fair to other audience members.

Parents who bring infants to the performance should quickly exit the auditorium if the infant begins to cry or create a distraction for the audience.

The use of video or flash photography is strictly prohibited during the recital. It is important that you pass this policy on to your recital guests. All dance families will receive a digital download of the performance as well as photos taken during dress rehearsal. These are incorporated in the one time \$35 recital fee/family.

Backstage Helpers

We will have a few Spirit Lake High School students backstage to assist the kids with changing in and out of costumes. However, many parents of the younger performers coordinate with another parent so they each take turns watching the show one night and helping their kids backstage the other night. We encourage parent to not enter and exit the auditorium repeatedly throughout the performance as it can be very distracting to the rest of the audience!

Recital T-Shirts

All students currently enrolled in a dance class will receive an Annual Recital T-shirt to be worn during the Finale. This fee is included in the one time \$35 recital fee/family pulled 4/15/26.

Recital Tickets

For your convenience, we will be selling tickets ONLINE starting March 27th.

To create an organized and professional atmosphere, all tickets are **reserved seating**. Each audience member must have a reserved seat. Children 2 years and younger may sit on laps if you wish, otherwise they need a ticket if they will be using a seat. If your 3-7 year old student wishes to watch the remainder of the show after they are finished performing they will also need a ticket.

PLEASE do not allow your kids or ANY kids viewing to sit anywhere other than IN THE SEATS. We've had to stop rehearsal before to move kids off the STAGE, the STEPS, the ASILES, etc. You never know where performers will be entering or exiting! Please help us avoid injury and keep the show running as smoothly as possible

Final Thoughts

When everyone puts the children first, the recital experience is one they'll never forget. We appreciate your compliance with the rules and guidelines in this handbook and hope that The Dance Connection annual recital will be as fun and exciting for you as it is for all of us! Thank you for working with us to create a memorable educational experience through performance for all of our students.