



2023-2024 Student & Parent Handbook

Fall Classes will begin the week of August 28th!

Stairway to the Stars
202 South Iowa Avenue
Washington, IA 52353
office@stairwaytothestarz.com
319.653.5648 Office
319.461.2390 Cell



Absence Form

If your child is going to be absent from class, please use our absence form. The link is available on the Home Page of our website. It can also be copied and pasted into your web browser:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1lt6NGjLUPoDdhQPMNjRDHtwMuSgM7EBQeetZP0dNQMY>



Arriving Late to Class

It is sometimes necessary for students to arrive late to class from a sport or activity. This is perfectly acceptable as we know how busy our students are. We do ask that they finish eating before entering their class and that they enter the studio quickly and quietly so as not to disturb the rest of the students. They should put on the appropriate shoes and join the class.



Attendance

Attendance is very important in dance and tumbling as they are progressive in nature – each dance step or tumbling move leads to the next. Please make every effort to be at class each week. If you must miss class, please complete the attendance form.



Attire for Class

While we do not have a specific dress code for dance (i.e. Black leotard and Pink tights), we do have an expectation for our student's attire and hair for class. For our younger students we prefer any style of leotard and tights. If they are in tumbling and dance the same evening, they will want to wear footless tights and bring socks for dance. Older students are expected to wear a leotard or tight-fitting tank top with shorts and tights. All students should have their hair up and away from their face. It is best to leave necklaces, bracelets, and other jewelry at home. All students will also need a dance bag with their name in it to keep their shoes and socks together in the studio. Outside shoes/boots should be placed on the shoe racks in the lobby. Jackets/Coats should be hung on a hook. Students will bring their dance bag into the studio with them.



Cancellations

We will not be following the school districts for winter weather cancellations. We will make our own determination about inclement weather and notify you via email. Cancellation announcements will also be on the studio website and the studio Facebook page.



Cell Phone Rules for Students

Students with cell phones are asked to set them to silent and place them in the hanging pouches at the front of each studio. The same applies to smart watches. Students will not be allowed to text or take calls on their cell phones during class. Parents needing to contact a student during class time should call the studio office.



Competition

Competition Dance requires much more of a commitment of time than regular classes. It is also more of a financial commitment. We learn our competition routines over the summer - starting in June - with hopes that most of them are complete before school begins. Rehearsals for these during the school year are weekly or bi-weekly depending on schedules. We have a separate recital for our competition routines which is held in late January/early February. We then attend two or three competitions that will fall during the months of February/March/April. We generally attend competitions in Davenport and Cedar Rapids. A registration link for Competition Dance will be made available in the spring.



Contact Us

If you have questions about anything studio related it is best to email us at:

office@stairwaytothestarz.com. We prefer the studio Facebook page not be used for questions – it is intended to keep everyone updated on events and things to celebrate at Stairway to the Stars. The same applies to Facebook Messenger – please do not send questions via Facebook Messenger.



Costumes

We measure for and order the costumes for our spring recital in September. Costumes have an average price of \$70-\$90 each. We plan to distribute costumes in early January. Your dancer or tumbler will bring home a large shopping bag with their costumes in it. Instructions for costumes can be found on the Parent Portal under Shared Files after costumes are sent home. Please try-on costumes ***immediately***. It is a lot easier to deal with sizing issues or missing accessories right away. Please reference the instruction sheets as these should answer a lot of questions.



Dance Bag

We encourage all of our students to have a dance bag dedicated to just the items that they need for dance class. It should be large enough to hold all of their dance shoes, socks, water bottle etc. Carrying dance shoes in school bags does not work well as they are often not added to the bag on dance day and don't make it to the studio. Having a bag just for dance helps to keep students organized and prepared.



Drop off / Pick up

We ask parents not to wait in the building. Students should be dropped off and picked up at the door. Our lobby is crowded, and this helps the flow of traffic. Our office, dance shop and stairways are also not to be used as waiting areas.



Facebook

We do have a studio Facebook page and we encourage you to “like” it as we do post pictures and announcements during the year. You are welcome to tag yourself in any photos. We prefer that our Facebook page be used to celebrate the accomplishments of our students and not for questions. Questions should always be directed to the studio email: office@stairwaytothestarz.com.



Jewelry

All students must have our standard rhinestone jewelry for pictures and the recital. This consists of a necklace and earrings (pierced, clip-on, and stick-on available). These pieces will be issued to new students with their costumes. Replacements may be purchased at any time in the office. The necklace is \$15 and the earrings are \$5.



Make-Up & Hair for the Recital and Pictures

Hair should be in a bun at the back of the head for all classes. No one should have bangs on their forehead – they should be swept off to the side. Hair should be SMOOTH and SECURE. Use gel and hairspray! We want a uniform appearance onstage and in our photos. The focus of our performance is the dancing and having one or two students with intricate up-dos or other hair styles is distracting to the look of the performance. All performers must wear make-up which should include foundation, powder, eye liner, eye shadow, mascara, blush and lipstick. The strength of the lights washes out most features, so we want to be sure we can see everyone. We may be offering a hair and make-up session in the spring for those that are interested. An informational sheet about Hair and Make-Up can be found at the back of this Handbook. It can also be printed from the Handbook tab on our website.



Newsletters

A newsletter will be emailed to you at the beginning of each month to keep you informed of important information, upcoming events and deadlines. Please be sure we have your current email address and that you are receiving the Newsletters. They will also be posted on our website under the “Newsletters” tab.



No School Days

We still have dance and tumbling when there is no school for in-services, conferences, the Monday after Easter etc. The only times that we do not have class are listed in the Calendar of Events that is on the website under the Handbook tab and was also emailed to you.

We will not be following the school districts for winter weather cancellations. We will make our own determination about inclement weather and notify you via email. Cancellation announcements will also be on the studio website and the studio Facebook page.



Payments

Invoices will be emailed around the first of each month and weekly during the month to accounts with balances due. We have several payment options available for your tuition and other charges. Our tuition is a yearly charge that you pay in 9 monthly payments (September-May). All accounts are set-up for monthly payments in our Parent Portal

Payment Options:

- The easiest way to pay your tuition and other charges is to use our Parent Portal. You should have received a login and password for this when you registered. If you need this information re-sent to you, please email us at: office@stairwaytothestarz.com
- Monthly Auto Payment: if you would like your tuition and other charges to be automatically charged to your debit or credit card, please complete the Auto Payment section on your account on the Parent Portal. We will then follow up with an email asking whether you would like just tuition auto paid on the 1st of each month or if you would like your current balance each month auto paid on the 1st.
- Monthly by Check or Cash: you can put your payment thru the mail slot in the front door during the day, leave in the office during class time, or send with your student.
- Venmo: @StairwayToTheStarz. We will email you a receipt.
- PayPal: stairwaytothestars@hotmail.com. We will email you a receipt.
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*Please note: although we will accept payments via Venmo and PayPal, payment on the Parent Portal is preferred. Payments received via Venmo and PayPal have to be manually entered by our staff and Parent Portal payments are automatically posted when you make them. If possible, please set up your Parent Portal account with a credit or debit card to make payments easy.



Pictures

Each year we offer the opportunity for your dancer or tumbler to have his/her photo taken in each of their recital costumes. Individual and Group photos are taken at Stairway to the Stars in March. These provide a wonderful memento of the dance year and offer the opportunity to see everyone together in the costumes and to make alterations or changes to them as needed prior to the recital. We are also able to ensure that everyone has all the correct pieces to each costume. Be sure that you have gone thru all your costumes and that you have followed the instructions that can be found on the Parent Portal under Shared Files. Envelopes from the photographer will be sent home with your child 1 -2 weeks before pictures. You will need to complete an envelope for each costume that you intend to order an individual and/or group photo in. You will need additional envelopes for photos with siblings, etc. Payment should be placed in EACH envelope. There is a \$2 charge per envelope for combining them all into one payment. We would like everyone to have their envelopes filled out prior to arriving at the dance studio. Everyone should be in the group photo, even if you do not plan to purchase it. The schedule that we provide is APPROXIMATE. You should arrive at the studio, ready for your picture, about 30 minutes before the time listed on the schedule.



Recital

Each year our students perform in our Spring Recital. Recital participation is mandatory for our school year students. Our recital is held at the Riverside Casino in May. The weekend varies based on the schedule of the Casino, but it is typically the first or second weekend in May. It is booked 2 years in advance - you can see the dates in our calendar on the Handbook page of our website. Dress rehearsal is always held the night before at the Casino.

Our 2024 Recital will be held at the Riverside Casino & Golf Resort. We will be having two performances on Saturday, May 4th at 1:00PM and 6:00PM (the times are subject to change still). Dress Rehearsal will be at the Casino on Friday, May 3rd at 5:30PM. Please be sure to enter the Event Center on the East side of the building – do not use the Casino entrance.

We have a block of rooms for Friday and Saturday night under Stairway to the Stars. To make a reservation in our block please call Group Reservations at (877).677.3456 and indicate that you are with Stairway to the Stars. Please make reservations prior to April 5th as that is the day the rooms will be released to the public. It is not mandatory to the stay at the hotel, but it makes a fun recital weekend!

To make things go smoothly we will need a big group of parents to help out! If you are interested in being a part of our volunteer team, please use the link on the Recital Tab on the website.



Recital Week

We will not be having regular classes during the week of the recital. Please arrive at the Casino at 5:00PM for Dress Rehearsal on Friday of Recital Week.



Shoes

All students must order their shoes thru the studio. This is to provide consistency in style, color and fit. Most orders arrive within a few days. New shoes should be ordered via the Parent Portal. Simply log-in to your account and choose Online Store. You will select the shoes that you need and enter your street shoe size - we will do the size conversions for you. We do have a used shoe program, but we receive a limited number of quality pairs for resale each year. If you are waiting for used shoes and do not receive any within the first two weeks of class, you will need to purchase new ones. Tumbling classes will not wear shoes, they will be barefoot.

Link to our Used Shoe Waiting List:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1u1PP2oAJeMNL8BUVlj1GyCGs7DTRKpOvmSjpnZC0n5M>

- Creative Dance: pink ballet shoes (boys wear black jazz shoes)
- All Ballet Classes: pink ballet shoes (boys wear black jazz shoes)
- All Jazz Classes: tan jazz shoes (boys wear black jazz shoes)
- All Clog Classes: black slip-on clog shoes
- All Tap Classes: tan baby doll tap shoes (except Mon 6:30, Wed 6:30, & all boys need black slip-on)
- All Hip Hop Classes: black hip hop shoes



Text Messages

Text message is not the best way for parents to communicate with the studio. If your question requires a simple "Yes or No" answer a text message is fine. If you are asking a question which requires us to be able to look at your account, you should email us. Keeping track of text messages which require attention can become overwhelming – email is much easier in that regard.



Tights

Recital tights will be ordered for all students in December. Returning students that have tights from a previous recital may bring them in for approval in the office to be worn again. Tights are \$8 per pair (stirrup tights are \$12 per pair).

- Creative Dance: pink tights with feet
- All Tumbling Classes: tan stirrup tights
- All Tap & Clog Classes: tan tights with feet
- All Ballet Classes: pink tights with feet
- All Jazz Classes: tan tights with feet (some older classes may wear tan stirrup)



Tuition

1 hour class \$45.00
½ hour class \$35.00

Unlimited Student \$135.00 (register for unlimited classes for a price of \$135/month)

We have several payment options available for your tuition and other charges! Our tuition is a yearly charge that has been divided into 9 monthly payments. It is not a monthly charge. Tuition payments are due September thru May.

Payment Options:

- The easiest way to pay your tuition and other charges is to use our Parent Portal. You should have received a login and password for this when you registered. If you need this information re-sent to you, please email us at: office@stairwaytothestarz.com
- Monthly Auto Payment: if you would like your tuition and other charges to be automatically charged to your debit or credit card, please complete the Auto Payment section on your account on the Parent Portal
- Monthly by Check or Cash: you can put your payment thru the mail slot in the front door during the day, leave in the office during class time, or send with your student.
- Venmo: @StairwayToTheStarz. We will email you a receipt.
- PayPal: stairwaytothestars@hotmail.com. We will email you a receipt.



Waiting Between Classes

- Students: Students who have a break between classes are to wait in the lounge area in the lower level, not in the office or on the stairs. There are tables and chairs for doing homework and activities. There is also a microwave and utensils so they may heat up food brought from home. Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves in this area.
- Parents: We encourage parents to use the drop-off/pick-up method for classes. We do not have room in our facility for large amounts of parents to wait during class. If you must remain at the studio while your child is in class, please use the lounge area in our lower level and not the office, lobby, or stairs.



Water & Snacks

We offer bottled water and a varying selection of snacks in our office. All items are 50 cents each. We also offer a punch card for \$10. We encourage students to eat a snack after school before coming to class. Please note that we do limit the amount of items that a student can purchase. For students that are here for less than two hours, you are limited to one snack and one water. For students here more than two hours, you are limited to two snacks. When given the freedom to purchase their own snacks, students will sometimes overdo it and end up with a tummy ache – we are just trying to prevent that!



Website

Our studio website is www.stairwaytothestarz.com. We have the calendar on our page, and we also post the newsletter each month. If classes are cancelled due to winter weather this will appear in red at the top of the Home page. Reference this site to answer lots of your questions 😊



Questions

If you ever have questions, please do not hesitate to call or email the office.

Phone: 319.653.5648

Missy's cell: 319.461.2390

Email: office@stairwaytothestarz.com



Suggestions for Hair & Make-Up For Pictures and the Recital

Hair

Our suggestion is that you put your hair in a bun and purchase a \$10 Curly Bun Hairpiece from Amazon. This is soooo easy and looks so great on stage!



PRETTYSHOP Scrunchie Scrunchy Bun Up Do Hair Piece - \$9.99

Available in 44 colors
(we have about 20 of them available in the office for color matching)

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00H006AXE/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o03__o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1
(Copy this link and paste into your browser)

Notes about buns:

- Use Gel and Hairspray to pull your hair back so you don't have tons of wispy hair sticking out. Be sure that bangs are back or that you use a side part and bangs are secured off to the side. No bangs on the forehead.
- Put the pony tail in securely with a pony tail holder at the back of the head, not a high bun on top of your head
- Make your bun (see YouTube video below, if needed). Use bobby pins around the perimeter in X's.
- Put the Pretty Shop hair scrunchie around the bun and secure with bobby pins in X's

Bun tutorial on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=882m4QKu0sg>

(Copy this link and paste in your browser)

Make-Up

While it is not required that you purchase these exact brands/colors of make-up, these are my suggestions and you should use something as close to these colors as possible. Obviously, you should use foundation and powder colors that compliment your skin tone. You should also use eye liner and mascara (false eye lashes are great for the middle school and high school girls).

Eye Shadow



Cover Girl 286 Smokey Nudes

https://www.amazon.com/CoverGirl-Eye-Enhancers-4-Kit-Shadow/dp/B00L5SXY4A/ref=sr_1_5_s_it?s=beauty&ie=UTF8&qid=1547946414&sr=1-5&keywords=covergirl+eyeshadow+286+smokey+nudes

Also available at Walmart and other stores

Blush



Cover Girl 510 Iced Plum

https://www.amazon.com/d/Blush-Makeup/COVERGIRL-Classic-Color-Blush-Packaging/B001MW6G0S/ref=sr_1_4_s_it?s=beauty&ie=UTF8&qid=1547946576&sr=1-4&keywords=covergirl%2Bblush%2B510%2Biced%2Bplum&th=1

Also available at Walmart and other stores

Lipstick



Cover Girl Outlast All-Day Lipstick 542 Brazen Raisin

https://www.amazon.com/CoverGirl-Outlast-Lipcolor-Brazen-Raisin/dp/B00J2APDA6/ref=sr_1_4_s_it?s=beauty&ie=UTF8&qid=1547946891&sr=1-4&keywords=covergirl%2Boutlast%2Blipstick%2B542%2Bbrazen%2Braisin&th=1

Also available at Walmart and other stores