



2021-2022 Student & Parent Handbook

Stairway to the Stars
202 South Iowa Avenue
Washington, IA 52353
319.653.5648
www.stairwaytothestarz.com



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

At Stairway to the Stars, we consider good attendance to be very important and something to be celebrated! During the final week of classes before our spring recital, we present awards to our students who have missed 4 or fewer classes during the year. All are welcome and encouraged to receive this award! Attending a portion of your class or classes in a day counts as attendance. For example: if you have a music program at 6:30 and come to part of your classes but leave early you are not counted absent. The only exception that we make is for extended illness or hospitalization. You are afforded 4 absences, which for a class that meets only once per week is like missing one month. Please call the office when your child will be absent. Many thanks to all of the parents for helping our students get to class each week!



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 their bag in the studio. 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. If cell phones become a problem during class, we will be using a basket to hold them during the hours of class.



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 or stairwaytothestars@hotmail.com. You may also call the studio at 319.653.5648. 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. Facebook inbox messages to the studio page or my personal page are fine, but may delay a response as I do not generally have time to check Facebook while at the studio.



Costumes

We measure for and order the costumes for our spring recital in September. Costumes have an average price of \$65-\$85 each. We plan to distribute costumes as soon as they arrive (usually mid-November). Your dancer or tumbler will bring home a large shopping bag with their costumes in it. Instructions for costumes will be emailed. 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.



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 phone or the studio email. I do not generally have time to check Facebook at the studio so you will get a quicker response if you call or email.



Jewelry

All students must have our standard rhinestone jewelry for pictures and the recital. This consists of a necklace and earrings (pierced and clip-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. 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. More information will be provided as the date gets closer.



Newsletters

A newsletter will be emailed to you at the beginning of each month to keep you informed on 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 at the front of the Handbook and on the website.

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. Invoices may be paid in one of several ways:

1. Check: make payable to "Stairway to the Stars". You can send it with your dancer or leave on the desk in the office.
2. Cash: please place it in an envelope with your child's name on it. You can send it with your dancer or leave on the desk in the office
3. Auto Pay: we can automatically bill your credit or debit card. The authorization form can be printed from our website or picked up in the office
4. PayPal: Just click "Send Money" and enter our email address: stairwaytothestars@hotmail.com.
5. Venmo: @StairwayToTheStarz. We will email you a receipt.



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. These provide a wonderful memento of the dance year, and also 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 of the correct pieces to each costume. Pictures will be taken at Stairway to the Stars in March. Be sure that you have gone thru all of your costumes and that you have followed the instructions that were emailed to you. 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. 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.



Recital

Our 2022 Recital will be held at the Riverside Casino & Golf Resort. We will be having two performances this year on Saturday, May 7th at 1:00PM and 6:00PM. Dress Rehearsal will be at the Casino on Friday, May 6th 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 12th as that is the day the rooms will be released to the public.

In order 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 email the office.



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. 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 class will not wear shoes, they will be barefoot.

- Creative Dance: pink ballet shoes
- All Ballet Classes: pink ballet shoes (some older classes may wear Foot Thongs for the recital)
- All Jazz Classes: tan jazz shoes (some older classes may wear Foot Thongs for the recital)
- All Clog Classes: black slip-on clog shoes
- All Tap Classes: tan baby doll tap shoes (except Mon 7:00 & Wed 5:30 need black slip-on)



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. Also, if your child will be absent from class a phone call or email to the studio is much better than a text message or Facebook message.



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

Tuition is a yearly charge, not a monthly charge. If you have chosen to make the 9 monthly payments, they are due September – May.

If you are paying your tuition in one payment, simply multiply your monthly amount by 9. It is due the first week of September.

If you are paying your tuition in two payments, simply multiply your monthly amount by 9 and divide by 2. The first payment is due the first week of September and the 2nd payment is due the first week of January.



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.
- 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.



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



August

9th – 12th

30th – Sept 2nd

4:00-8:00PM

Stop in to order or purchase shoes for dance!

Classes begin!

September

6th

Labor Day – No Dance & Tumbling Classes

October

15th

1st Costume Payment Due by the 15th

November

15th

22nd – 28th

2nd Costume Payment Due by the 15th

Fall Break – No Dance & Tumbling Classes - Happy Thanksgiving!

December

15th

20th - Jan 2nd

Final Costume Payment Due by the 15th

(3 payments only available if your costume total is more than \$200)

Christmas/New Years – No Dance & Tumbling Classes

January

3rd

15th

Classes Resume

Payments for tights & jewelry due by the 15th

February

March

15th

21st – 24th

Recital Fee (\$75 per family) due by the 15th

Dance & Tumbling Pictures at the Studio

April

4th – 7th

Registration Information for 2022-2023 will be emailed

May

6th

7th

Dress Rehearsal at The Riverside Casino

Recital at The Riverside Casino – 1:00 & 6:00PM