



Amazin' Grace Dance Studio COMPETITION TEAM



2017-2018 Team Handbook

About the AGDS Competition Team

The AGDS Competition Team, started in 2011, is a group of talented dancers who are dedicated and hardworking team-players. The AGDS Competition Team strives for a positive learning and working environment for all team members and coaches at all times. Overall attitude and dance technique are weighed equally in our book and team members are encouraged to create bonds with their coaches and fellow teammates that are positive, fun, and rewarding.

The 2016-2017 Competition Team competed at I LOVE DANCE in Buffalo, at which they achieved four 1st place trophies, four 2nd place trophies, and one 3rd place trophy. Miss Emily also received the "Teacher's Participation" award. The team also competed at Turn It Up Dance Challenge, at which they were awarded five High Gold awards and four Gold awards. Nova received the "Road to Success" award, and Shine received the "Character Commitment" award. Nova and Shine were both nominated for Turn It Up Dance Challenge's National competition!

The 2017-2018 year will be Miss Angelina Anzalone's fourth year as a Competition Team Coach and her first year as Head Coach. Miss Emily Darnell will continue coaching this year, which will be her fifth year as a Competition Team Coach. Miss Kelly will also be coaching for her third year! Miss Angelina, Miss Kelly, and Miss Emily are hard-working choreographers and teachers and love the art of dance. The coaches have many years of dance and dance competition experience and truly enjoy sharing their love of dance with their students.

*****For the 2017-2018 season, the AGDS Competition Team will be split up into 3 teams: "Nova Mini's," "Sparkle," and "Shine."**

Students who are 6-8 years old may sign up for the following team (NEW! No audition required!):

- **Nova Mini's:** This beginner level team is designed for 6-8 year olds who would like to begin their journey as competition dancers. Our Nova Mini's will learn a solid foundation in tap, jazz, and ballet which will act as a springboard for their future in competitive dance. Our Nova Mini's will have 2.5 hours of class 1 day a week in which they will learn tap, jazz, and ballet technique and prepare a tap and jazz dance to perform at 1-2 competitions throughout the dance season. Our Nova Mini's will also learn skills that are beneficial in many facets of life, including respect for fellow teammates, encouraging others, displaying professionalism, taking and applying constructive criticism, and the balance of "work" and "fun"!

Students are not required to audition for the Nova Mini's team, but there are behavioral guidelines that students must be able and willing to follow in order to participate:

Students must be mature enough to attend class for 2.5 hours (with a 10-15 minute break included), listen attentively, and follow directions without complaining or behaving defiantly.

Remember, the competition team is for dancers who love to dance, learn and have fun, and the only way the whole team can benefit is if every single team member is dedicated to learning and trying their best. (Any student who signs up for the Nova Mini's team but cannot follow the behavioral guidelines for any reason will be asked to switch to the 6-8 tap/jazz fusion class instead.)

Students who are 9 and up must audition for the following teams:

- **Sparkle:** Our intermediate level team, in which students will be challenged to build on their technical foundation as they learn new dance steps, more in-depth technical skills, and a greater dance vocabulary. Our Sparkle team will take 1 hour of technique and 1 hour of choreography classes each week in each style of dance: tap, jazz, ballet, and modern. Sparkle will also have ½ hour of acro class and ½ hour of conditioning each week. Sparkle will compete one dance routine in each: tap, jazz, and ballet and will attend 2-3 competitions per season. They will also learn a modern dance, which will be performed in the June recital.
- **Shine:** Our advanced level team, in which students will fine-tune their technical skills and build on their existing knowledge of dance steps, while being challenged with more difficult steps and choreography. Shine will take 1 hour of technique and 1 hour of choreography classes each week in each style of dance: tap, jazz, ballet, and modern. Shine will also have ½ hour of acro class and ½ hour of conditioning each week. Shine will compete one dance routine in each: tap, jazz, ballet, and modern. Shine will attend 2-3 competitions per season.

Please know that as our teams grow and change, our team structures must grow and change, too. It is important for us to modify the teams as we see fit in order to adapt to our current students and benefit them in the most ways possible.

Please also know that it is not unusual for a student to spend multiple years on the same team before moving up to the next level. This is because each year, the team dynamics change, as well as the level of difficulty within each team's curriculum. If a student is on "Sparkle" for three years in a row, for example, it does not necessarily mean that he or she is learning the same steps and technique each year. Each team level (beginner, intermediate, advanced) takes multiple years to get through its set curriculum in its entirety. The amount of time this takes depends on the overall level of the team and is at the discretion of the coaches.

Audition Information

When: Saturday, July 15th

10:00am to 1:30pm

Where: Amazin Grace Dance Studio

(6103 Robinson Road Lockport, NY)

Why should I audition?

If you love dance and thrive on hard work and accomplishment, you should audition for the AGDS Competition Team! Becoming a member of the competition team allows students to strive to meet many goals throughout the dance year while enhancing and expanding dance technique, as well as the aesthetic and performance qualities of dance. Members of the AGDS Competition Team will experience achievement both individually and as a team, which helps to build character and allows students to make relationships with the coaches and other team members that are positive and rewarding.

- Students must participate on July 15th for the full duration of the audition in order to be considered for the 2017-2018 Competition Team.
- Nobody will be allowed to view the auditions (including parents, other family members, friends, other dancers, etc.)
- The studio will open at 9:30am. Please arrive early to stretch, warm-up your body, and fill out paperwork.
- Closing and pick-up is scheduled for 1:30pm. Results will be posted on the door of the studio by or before Sunday, July 16th. Results will also be posted on the "Amazin Grace Dance Studio" Facebook page. (If a make-up audition date is scheduled, results will be posted after the make-up audition.)

Who can audition?

Any mature 9–18 years olds (may not turn 19 before May 2017). We encourage students to audition regardless of what they feel their abilities and strengths are; let us be the judges! No prior experience is necessary (This does not mean that all students who audition will make the team, but you won't know unless you try! ☺)

What should I wear?

Girls must wear a black leotard with tan tights. Ballet skirts or plain black dance shorts are optional. (Sports bra, if needed, should be neutral colored or black). Hair should be worn completely off the face in a tight bun. We will not allot time for students to fix their hair, headbands, etc. since we will have a lot of material to get through so please come well prepared. (Returning team members may wear their team leotard from the previous season if they prefer.)

Boys must wear a white t-shirt and black athletic shorts or sweatpants.

**Please come prepared to dance in tap, jazz, and ballet shoes. Students should also be prepared to dance barefoot. (If you do not own any of the shoes you may bring whatever shoes you have or go barefoot.) **

What styles will be auditioned?

All students will audition ballet, tap, and jazz technique. Short choreography phrases will be learned at auditions, as well.

Placement:

Accepted team members will be placed according to their ability in tap, jazz, and ballet, as well as their attitude and level of professionalism displayed throughout the audition. The placement of each dancer is based upon his or her abilities overall. If the coaches see weakness in technical abilities in one style of dance, private or additional lessons may be required. This is based on the coaches' discretion.

Competition Team Rehearsal Schedule

MONDAY	
4:30 – 7:00	Tap, Jazz, Ballet Technique & Choreography (Short snack break included)

WEDNESDAY	
5:30 – 6:30	Ballet Technique
6:30 – 8:00	Acro & Stretch/Modern
8:00 – 9:00	Ballet Technique

THURSDAY	
4:30 – 5:30	Tap Technique
5:30 – 6:30	Jazz Technique
6:30 – 7:30	Tap Technique
7:30 – 8:30	Jazz Technique

SATURDAY	CLASS 1	CLASS 2
9:00-10:00	Tap Choreography	Modern Choreography
10:00-11:00	Jazz Choreography	Ballet Choreography
11:00-12:00	Ballet Choreography	Jazz Choreography
12:00-12:30	Lunch	
12:30 -1:30	Modern Choreography	Tap Choreography
1:30 -2:00	Conditioning	

KEY	
Blue	Nova Mini's
Turquoise	Sparkle
Purple	Shine
Green	Sparkle & Shine combined

(Preliminary Fall schedule;
May be subject to change.)

Attendance Policy

All students must attend all Competition Team classes, workshops, dress rehearsals, and Competitions. Team members are allowed **three excused absences** from Competition Team classes throughout the 2017-2018 season in which they may be excused from without recourse. Any additional absences may affect placement and call for possible termination from the competition team based on the coaches' and Miss Emily's discretion.

The Competition Team member or a parent/guardian is required to call the studio or inform a teacher in writing of the upcoming absence prior to the classes that will be missed. *Excusable absences include the following: injury or illness excused with a doctor's note; school activities that affect a student's GPA, excused with a note signed from a teacher or principal; a church event (confirmation, first communion, etc. for the team member), excused with a note signed from a parent or church member; family vacation or a family urgency with a note signed by a parent or guardian.

Being tardy or leaving class early will be counted as an absence unless the coaches are notified ahead of time by email, phone call, or hand-written note. All absences, tardiness, and early dismissals require a hand-written excuse signed by a parent or guardian. If the absence, tardy, or early dismissal is health or injury related, a doctor's note is also required.

Upon missing the three excused absences, students will have one month (4 weeks of classes) to make up any additional missed classes (including both excused and unexcused absences). Any student that has two absences in addition to their 3 excused absences will receive a verbal warning (4 total absences without being made-up). Students who miss two classes in addition to their 3 excused absences (5 total absences without being made-up) will receive a written warning, and those who miss one more class past the previous stated (6 total absences without being made-up) will be put on probation.

Students must attend all scheduled classes within the two weeks prior to any competition or team performance. If a student misses any of their classes within the two weeks prior competition they will not be allowed to compete. The only excusable absences include: extreme family emergencies and injury or illness with a doctor's note. If a student is not able to dance because of illness but is not contagious, they are expected to come in and watch the class.

*Please note that all activities, workshops, and dress rehearsals must be attended. If activities, workshops, or dress rehearsals cannot be attended in the case of an excused absence, coaches must be notified at least 2 weeks in advance. If a team member cannot attend an activity, workshop, or dress rehearsal due to a family emergency or a sudden case of illness, coaches must be notified as soon as possible.

* All competitions are mandatory and can only be excused in extreme cases such as a death in a team member's immediate family or extreme illness, which can only be excused with a doctor's note.

For Sparkle and Shine, weekday classes are “technique days” and Saturday classes are “choreography days”. For Nova, choreography & technique takes place on Mondays (all are subject to change based on the schedule for the 2017-2018 year). If a student misses a choreography class for any reason, **it is the student’s responsibility to catch up on the choreography he or she has missed prior to the next choreography class.** If a student has any questions concerning choreography, we welcome and encourage questions before or after classes on technique days.

If you're early, you're on time and if you're on time, you're late! If class starts at 5:30pm, please arrive in plenty of time to be fully dressed with dance shoes on and ready for class to begin right at 5:30. Recurring tardiness without acceptable written excuses will result in the team member being placed on probationary status. If there is an issue regarding parents' work schedules and/or carpool situations that results in frequent tardiness, please notify the coaches as soon as possible and we will work with you to the best of our ability. If we do not know there is an issue getting your child to class on time, we will assume they are tardy for no excusable reason. Please communicate with us so we can work with you!

Team Gear

Each team member will be required to purchase the basic uniform (warm-ups: team jacket and pants. Girls: leotard in designated team color, and black shorts. Boys: black shorts/pants and team shirt in designated team color). Any additional team-wear is available and optional based on the needs and wants of the students and parents. Order forms will be available in the fall/winter.

Team members must wear tan tights, black or team-colored leotard, and plain black dance shorts to each class (ballet skirts are acceptable and encouraged for ballet classes).

Nova Mini's:

Bloch "Tap Flex" tap shoes in tan 	Capezio slip-on jazz shoes in tan 	Ballet shoes in ballet pink (any brand- preferably split-sole)
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Sparkle and Shine:

Capezio Slip on Jazz Shoe in 	Bloch "Tap Flex" Tap Shoe in Black 
Split-sole Canvas Ballet Shoes 	Capezio skin-tone "Foot Undeez" 

Other Expenses and Supplies

There are registration fees for each competition we attend. Registration fees will be calculated and a due date for each fee will be set as each competition comes about. These fees are the responsibility of the parents.

Team members (females) must purchase a makeup kit through Amazin Grace to use at all performances and competitions. (Returning members may not need to purchase the entire kit, but are required to purchase any newly required makeup for the kit). Information on the cost of the kit will be given in the fall/winter. Coaches will teach all team members how to apply their makeup and do their hair correctly, as well as how to prepare for all performances.

Team members (females) will be required to purchase a pair of pink tights to go with their ballet costume. *Pink tights are only required to be worn for competitions and performances.*

Approximated Costs for Supplies

***note: all prices are based off of last year & are subject to change**

Warm Up (jacket & pants): \$107.00

Pink Ballet Tights: \$14.00

Leotard and Shorts: \$38.00

Makeup Kit: \$60.00 (approximately)



Fundraising and Volunteer Work



Parents and students are responsible for all fees in relation to costumes and gear, classes, competitions, travel, and any other additional supplies. **Students and parents are strongly encouraged to play an active role in fundraising to help lower out-of-pocket costs.** It is VERY possible to fundraise a large portion of financial needs for the Competition Team; please don't let slight financial uncertainty hold you back!

We appreciate and encourage parent and family involvement in all and any fundraising opportunities since the coaches and Amazin Grace are not responsible for planning fundraisers. The coaches and Mrs. Kraft are willing to participate in parent-run fundraisers and we strongly encourage parents and students to take advantage of the many opportunities for fundraisers to be held at the studio as well as in the community.

Team members will have personal accounts in which their fundraiser money will be kept for individual-based fundraisers (example: candy sale). If it is a team fundraiser (example: car wash) the money will be evenly split between the students who participated and attended the fundraiser for the full duration.

The Amazin Grace Competition Team is about much, much more than just dance. In order to display the mission of the Amazin Grace Competition Team to the community, we will be participating in volunteer and work throughout the dance season. Please know that all volunteer work participation and attendance is just as important as all other team events. Attendance and excuse policy for all Competition Team classes and events applies to all team fundraisers and volunteer work.

Nationals

We will be making every effort to attend "Nationals" this upcoming season if the opportunity comes about! If we are invited to attend "Nationals" at any of our competitions this coming season, we will put it on our planning board provided team members and coaches are available to attend. The final decision of whether or not we will attend "Nationals" will be left up to Miss Emily.



Other Things to Consider

- ❖ Please know that any information we give out about competitions, performances, and other competition-related events is subject to change at all times. This is because the information we relay to the students and parents is directly from the source (ex: Information about an upcoming competition comes directly from the competition's main website). If the information from the original sources changes, which it sometimes does, we will notify students and parents as soon as possible.
- ❖ All Competition Team members must abide by all AGDS studio-wide policies, as well as all Competition Team policies regarding attendance and behavior.
- ❖ Dance doesn't have to be only a hobby. For some, dance is a lifelong investment. Being part of a competition team opens not only windows, but countless doors of opportunity. Many dancers go on to dance in college and beyond, even if they have other career goals in mind. There is a huge number of career paths that dance can be combined with that are very fulfilling and rewarding. There is so much more to the dance world than just being a professional dancer! We encourage all dancers interested in auditioning for the AGDS Competition Team and their parents to look into the many long-term benefits that the art of dance has to offer.
- ❖ Even if dance is more of a hobby for you, we would love for you to consider all of the wonderful skills and assets kids and teenagers can gain as a result of participating on a team such as this. The ability to accept failure, learning to move past temporary failure in a positive manner in order to reach greater levels of achievement, and to humbly and graciously celebrate success are skills that translate into many facets of life. We do not expect our dancers to be perfect (because who is?!). But we do expect that our dancers obtain the skills and discipline that will allow them to reach their full potential, both individually and as a team. Dance technique and personal character are held to the same standard in our book because it is very important for each team member to thrive and work in a positive, nurturing environment.

“Let them praise His Name with dancing!” - Psalm 149:3