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Next Level Dance Center Company

2023-2024

Contract of Commitment

# CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been accepted into the Company program at Next Level Dance Center (NLDC). The first step to becoming a successful dancer is making a solid commitment to your classes, rehearsals, and performances. Strong technique is a key ingredient and class is where you develop that technique. Come to each class prepared to learn and without personal distractions. Class time is your chance to focus on yourself, so try to leave your concerns or worries at the studio door. True progress is made when you look at each class, rehearsal, or performance as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do. Dance full out, stretch a little further, become more aware of your technique, and make the most of every class. Respect for the teachers and choreographers you work with is essential. Listen to each correction given, whether it's directed to you or another dancer. A correction is an honor; it shows you how much a teacher cares about your progress as a dancer. Always say thank you when a teacher or choreographer offers you constructive criticism. Nothing can stop those students who apply themselves in every class and appreciate their teachers' knowledge and experience.

**This is a competitive dance program designed for the serious dancer who is highly motivated in the performing arts. Those selected for a competitive level class will possess the following:**

- Must be physically fit with emphasis on healthy mind and body
- Must be self-motivated and able to self-evaluate
- Must have solid technical and performance skills
- Strong desire to grow and develop as a dancer
- Must have a sense of humor, bright smile, and positive attitude
- Have respect for the team and staff
- Show support for the studio, teachers and fellow dancers
- Must have a supportive family base that shows respect for the teachers and students at all times

## THE COMPETITION EXPERIENCE

It is important to understand that the “competition” aspect of being a member of NLDC should be considered a “performance” opportunity. Competition results are strictly a subjective opinion, and your child’s growth should not be completely gauged by their scores or achievements at competitions. It is important to keep your competition experience positive and most importantly, be proud of the growth and development that takes place within your child. We do not foster competition within our Company, and all we ask from our students is that each child works to their full capacity. We understand that each child is a gift to us, and each is uniquely different.

## THE COMPETITION COMMITMENT

Company participants are required to participate from September through to June (or until Nationals, if applicable). This is a serious commitment and will not be taken lightly. Participants are expected to fulfill this commitment. All students and their parents will be required to sign a parent/student agreement. The Next Level Dance Company attends 1-2 conventions, 2-3 regional competitions. All dancers are required to participate in all regional competitions per the direction of the studio owner. Failure to attend may result in their removal. Families are responsible for their transportation and hotel to all competitions (in and out of state). Conventions are optional but highly suggested for continued training.

Any violation of this contract of commitment may result in the dancer’s immediate removal from the NLDC. If a dancer quits Company mid-season, said dancer will not be allowed into Company again, unless special circumstance, which is approved beforehand by the director. For any reason, at any time the director has the right to dismiss a dancer/family from NLDC. If said dancer/family were to be dismissed and/or quits the company no refunds will be given, this includes and is not limited to costumes, costume deposits, tuition, privates, and competitions fees.

Every effort is made to select competitions that will provide our dancers and their families with the best experience possible. Any issue or disgruntlement with a competition or convention needs to be brought to the attention of the Studio Director. Dancers, parents, or family members are not allowed to contact or complain to the competition or convention staff or management.

**Performances and competitions are your opportunity to show the world the results of your dedication and hard work. To make the most of this opportunity:**

- Arrive at performances at least 2 hours prior to the scheduled time, unless otherwise advised by your studio director.
- Be sure you are properly warmed up. Sometimes the teacher/director won't have the time if they are tending to other group/individuals. Be proactive in doing what you need for your body!
- Present yourself in a professional manner, with costumes pressed/steamed, shoes cleaned, and all accessories accounted for.
- Go out there and show the audience how much you love to dance!

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance, as it should be assumed, is mandatory for all performing and technique classes for all Company dancers. If you miss 1 week of dance, you are now 1 week behind.. how many weeks are you willing to get behind on your training? But we understand sometimes life happens. Company dancers are allotted **Six (6) absences** per YEAR, PER CLASS. These include extracurricular activities such as sports, musicals, plays, vacations, as well as illness and school-related activities or family emergencies. Repeated absences in choreography and technique classes may result in the student being placed in understudy status or dismissal from the team at the discretion of the instructor and/or the studio director.

**Dancers may not miss any choreography classes 1 week prior to a competition/performance.** Failure to attend rehearsal during this time will result in the removal of the dancer from ALL dances. We understand things can happen; if something comes up that cannot be avoided, we ask that you discuss this with the studio director ASAP.

If there is an extenuating circumstance and you must miss a mandatory activity, it must be in writing and submitted to the studio director. **Please do not rely on other students to pass along your student's absence or notes.**

**DANCERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE A COMPETITION "EARLY" UNLESS THEY ARE GIVEN EXPLICIT PERMISSION FROM THE STUDIO DIRECTOR.** All company dancers MUST BE present for the award ceremonies that pertain to their dances. Supporting our teammates should be one of our top priorities!! Dancers may leave if there is an extended break but must

return for their awards ceremony. Dancers that leave without permission and do not return for their awards ceremony maybe removed from the Company.

## COMPETITION FEES

Fees associated with each competition are based upon prices set by the competition itself. These generally run around \$65-\$95 per person, per group routine. Duet/Trios/Solos can run \$80-\$150 per competition routine. Fees for competitions are due at least 45-60 days prior to/in advance of each competition. **NO STUDENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO COMPETE IF FEES ARE NOT PAID AND IF YOU ARE NOT UP TO DATE ON TUITION.**

**We will send out a Fee Collection Schedule no later than November 2023.**

## COSTUME FEES

**COSTUME DEPOSITS WILL BE DUE NOVEMBER 2023. \$45 per dance.**

Costume prices can range from \$75-\$150. Costume prices, along with everything else, have gone up. We will do our best to try to keep costs at a minimum.

FINAL costume charges will be charged prior to the first competition.

Your CC on file will be charged. We will not send you an invoice but we will send you a receipt.

**PLEASE NOTE** that these are costume deposits. The additional cost per costume will be billed later in the spring. If a Company member violates this handbook commitment contract and quits or is dismissed, there will be NO refunds on any costume deposits and/or costume amounts paid. NLDC owns the costumes and maintains the right to keep any partial or completed costumes.

Every dancer is required to have each piece of their costume when attending competitions. If your dancer does not have a piece to their costume, it is at the discretion of the Studio Director if they will be allowed to perform.

## PROP FEES

If your dancer is in a routine with a prop, you will be billed a prop fee. This fee will be in the range of \$10-\$75.

## COSTUMES. MAKEUP. JEWELRY

All Company members are required to purchase Company jewelry. Cost is usually between \$5 to \$10. Specific make-up is required for Company dancers, and will also need to be purchased by you. Dancers will not receive a costume until it is paid full.

If a costume needs alterations or repairs after they've been passed out, parents are responsible for those alterations.

- Tights: Brand new tights will be included with all costumes.
- Company Warm-Ups: All Company members are required to purchase a warm-up jacket/sweater. Company members must have it on at all time during competition award ceremonies.

## COMPETITION SCHOLARSHIPS/CASH PRIZES

Any cash prize awarded at a competition will go to the studio, with the exception of a cash prize for a solo, which will be given to a dancer via a credit to the dancer's DanceStudio-Pro account after said cash prize for a solo is received by the studio from said competition.

If a dancer receives a cash award and/or gift certificate at a competition for a solo or a scholarship at a convention, the parent/dancer are responsible for notifying NLDC. Parents must notify the studio via email and/or submit all information and documents needed to the office within 2 weeks after said cash award and/or gift certificate at a competition for a solo or a scholarship at a convention was received. You will not receive a credit towards your account for the cash award and/or gift certificate from a competition or convention for a solo or scholarship until the said competition and/or convention has approved and applied your cash award and/or gift certificate.

## NLDC approaches competition with a few things in mind:

- Educational Opportunity- competition against the finest teams allows our teachers and students the opportunity to “see what is out there” and grow from there.
- Pre-professional Opportunity- students who wish to pursue the professional world of dance have an opportunity to grow and develop their performance skills through competition.
- Fun Family Activity- NLDC wants to attend competitions that are fun for the whole family. Students learn team-building skills, performing arts skills, and develop self-confidence that will last a lifetime. Having fun is the number one priority!
- Please note that permission must be obtained from the studio director if your child enters any NLDC Company routines or solos at an additional competition not scheduled through NLDC.

**National Competition:** Nationals always take place out of state and are mandatory for all Company dancers if we decided to attend. Families are responsible for their transportation and hotel. The studio will try to give recommendations and guidance regarding lodging if needed. Nationals are typically 4 to 7 days (depending on the nationals we are attending) and you need to be able to stay all those days. Dancers need to arrive sometime the day before they begin and leave the day after the final day. Some families choose to room and/or carpool together to save money. Nationals is a fun activity for the whole family and a great way to conclude a fabulous season! It is a great opportunity to meet and watch dancers from throughout the United States.

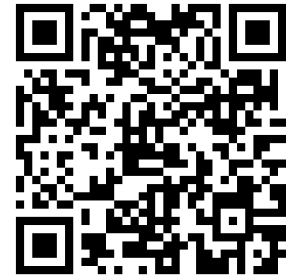
## CLASS & CHOREOGRAPHY PLACEMENT

The NLDC faculty meets regularly to discuss the students' progress and/or placement. It is our policy to offer appropriate opportunities to every child. Placement decisions are derived from many years of teaching experience. Often a child is placed in a particular group or class where he or she will feel confident, in order to promote the development of self-esteem. Some dancers who are placed in a higher level become discouraged, only to lose their passion for dance. Others respond to the challenge of being in a class with dancers who are more proficient by pushing themselves to work harder. Placement is highly individual and the factors

that go into the decision are complex. Please see the school's director if you have questions or concerns about your child's placement. While information regarding student and family preferences for groups and solos/duos/trios is collected at the time of competition auditions, all decisions regarding the pairings and groupings are made by the faculty in communication with the studio director. Not all family requests may be approved, and the decision of the studio is final. Any concerns or questions about this process should go through the NLDC Office. It is not appropriate for parents or students to message the teachers with requests, as the director will make the final decisions. All students who qualify to participate in a line are expected to do so before they are allowed to accept large groups or small groups which are offered. Should a family desire to reduce the number of dances, the smallest groups will be eliminated first. Any student selected to compete with a solo/duo or trio must compete in a line or large group in that same dance subject (ie: a student with a tap solo must compete in a tap group). All choreography for solos, duos, trios and groups will be completed by members of the NLDC teaching faculty, or by a qualified choreographer contracted by NLDC with the consent of the studio director.

## SOLO/DUO/TRIO

If a dancer is interested in having a solo/duo/trio, they must fill out the request form (scan QR code). Requests are addressed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Dancers are allowed to request specific teachers, but based on teacher availability we may not always be able to accommodate.



Dancers taking any specific style for their solo/duo/trio must also be enrolled in a similar or complimentary group/technique class.

Dancers must be enrolled in classes in order to be scheduled for a private.

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

**Tap:** Must be enrolled in a tap class.

**Jazz/Musical Theatre:** Must enroll in a Jazz and/or Leaps & Turns class

**Lyrical/Contemporary/acro:** Must enroll in a Ballet and/or Leaps & turns class



## COMMUNICATION

**Email/BAND APP is a major form of communication.** *Please use this QR code to access the NLDC Competition Parents BAND group chat.* We will use this more often than email. However, it is imperative that we have your current email address and any changes to your email address that occur during the year. If you are allowed to accept email at your work email address, include that as well. We will sometimes utilize text messaging from our software system, please ensure you have your mobile phone number updated in your DSP profile.



**No one will take it upon himself or herself to contact a competition or convention directly.** It is against the competition company's policies to do so. If you have a question concerning a competition/convention that can't be answered by visiting the company's website, you must go through the NLDC office.

**Please attend all meetings and read all newsletters & postings to keep updated about any additional commitments**

## IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT COMPETITION

**Since it is our goal to instill a passion for performing rather than merely the desire to win awards,** Company dancers will have performance opportunities other than competitions. We believe the lessons learned through community performances are just as valuable as the competition experience! Our solid reputation for quality reflects our attitude toward competition and our goal to develop in each student a genuine respect for dance as an art form. We consider participation in competitions not simply part of our students' training as dancers; it's also an important part of how we influence them as people. With the right focus, the experience gained in competition can be an excellent source of self-confidence. If the dancers feel good about a performance and understand that they become better each time they go onstage, they are truly growing through the competition experience. Hitting that stage and doing the best they can is what it's all about; whether they win--or which award they win--is secondary. Through participation in competitions, we hope to instill in our students an

appreciation for other dancers and schools. We are not out to beat anyone; instead, we hope to motivate both students and faculty by exposing them to the highest caliber of talent available. Only then can we produce the best dancers and teachers possible. For us, competition is an education!

## PARENT ROLES

**NLDC is a drama free zone!** Parents are expected to be supportive, respectful, and courteous to all team members and their families at all times. This studio will not tolerate rudeness, jealousy, resentment, or disrespect to another team member, their family, a teacher, nor the director. It makes no difference to this studio how good your child is or who you are...you are not permitted to bring any negativity whatsoever into this facility, which is full of fabulous families and kids.

### **Your role is the following:**

- Lift up and support all of our children
- Teach your child that there is always going to be someone better than they are  
teach your child to be happy for others.
- Give a hand to those who may be behind or struggling.
- Stand firmly behind the teaching staff.
- Work with the teaching staff, showing your child that you are behind their instructors.

**I/Lianne (Owner/Director) have observed in my 15+ years of teaching and my 20 years of dancing that the most successful children are those whose parents support their teachers and coaches 100%.** These are the ones who do not bad-mouth or question a teacher or coach in front of their children, and they are certainly the ones who are realistic about their children and their place on my team. We all want the children to succeed, but success is not measured by the trophy a child brought home, by the row in which they stand on stage, or by how many pirouettes they can do. Instead, it is measured by the effort that they put forth. If they give all they've got to give, what more can anyone ever expect?

## STUDENT/PARENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Use of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogging, and other online social-media vehicles is commonplace. This policy is intended to provide Next Level Dance Center students and parents with guidelines to eliminate any confusion concerning the use of social media.

- You DO NOT have permission to reveal any information that compromises NLDC. By that, we mean you are forbidden to share personal information about the director, other students or their families, or anything that is proprietary and/or confidential to them or NLDC
- Students and parents should neither claim nor imply that they are speaking on behalf of NLDC
- Never post anything that could compromise the self-esteem of students who attend NLDC
- If you post videos of class or rehearsals, don't post any choreography in its entirety; NLDC owns the copyright to all choreography taught at the school.
- Respect the law, including those laws governing defamation, discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use. As stated in this handbook, parents and students should never post negative comments about other schools or teachers. Also, please do not post negative comments about school activities such as competitions, conventions, and performances, or about the directors of those events.
- Ensure that your social networking conduct is consistent with all of the policies contained in this handbook.
- Please limit interactions with NLDC teachers on social media/texting. We encourage a strong and respectful student/teacher relationship. Social media and texting can encourage inappropriate behavior and practices that may seem harmless at first but can snowball into issues down the road.

## EXTRA PRACTICES

On occasion, a teacher may find it important to add additional mandatory rehearsals before a competition. We make every effort to give enough notice so families are able to coordinate their schedules. These practices do not cost extra money. They usually take place on Saturday afternoons and/or on Sundays. Remember these are to benefit the dancers. We all want them to be comfortable and to dance their best. Sometimes due to weather cancellations or other issues a routine just needs some extra time.

## DRESS CODE

***Ballet Shoes*** Girls: (pink) Canvas Split-Sole  
Boys: (black) Split-Sole

*Ballet Attire* Black leotard, pink tights. Skirts are permitted. **NO SHORTS or TOPS!**

*Tap Shoes* Girls & Boys: (black) Bloch "Synce" or Bloch "Jason Samuels"

*Tap Attire* Any color leotard/tights. Athletic wear is OK.

*Jazz Shoes* Girls: (tan) Bloch Pulse Slip on Jazz  
Boys: (black) Bloch Pulse Slip on Jazz

*Jazz Attire* Any color leotard/tights. Athletic wear is OK.

*Contemp. Shoes* Bare feet

*Contemp. Attire* Any color leotard/tights. Athletic wear is OK.

*Lyrical Shoes* Jazz/pirouette (teacher will decide for performance)

*Lyrical Attire* Any color leotard, pink or tan convertible tights. Shorts/leggings OK.

*Conditioning shoes* Barefeet

*Conditioning Attire* Any color leotard/tights. Athletic wear is OK.

## ONE FINAL NOTE

# WELCOME TO THE NLDC COMPANY!

We are looking forward to a wonderful year with wonderful students!

### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

**Classes begin – Monday September 11, 2023**

**FLANNEL GIRL FALL** – Company outing – October (TBA)

**CLOSED** Halloween – October 31, 2023

**CLOSED** Thanksgiving – November 22-25, 2023

**\*\*Parents Observation Week** – December 4-9, 2023

**COMPANY HOLIDAY PARTY** – December TBA

**CLOSED** Winter Holidays – December 25, 2023 – Jan 1, 2024

**CLOSED** February break – February 19-24, 2024

**MANDATORY** Company Stage Rehearsal – March (TBA)

**\*\*Parents Observation Week** – March 25-30, 2024

**CLOSED** Spring Break – April 1-6, 2024

**In-Class Picture Week** – May 20-25, 2024

**CLOSED** Memorial Day – May 27, 2024

**Stage Rehearsal** - June 14, 2024

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Recital** – June 16, 202

### **COMPETITION DATES 2024:**

**FlyDance** - April 12-14 (Rochester) *solo/duo/trio only* - **OPTIONAL**

**Sheer Elite** - April 26-28 (Rochester)

**Turn It Up Dance Challenge** - May 3-5 (Syracuse)

**Rising Star** - May 17-19 (Rochester)

**Nationals** – TBD **OPTIONAL** (solo/duotrio)

### **CONVENTION DATES (optional)**

**Titans of Dance** – October 8, 2023

**24 Seven** – Jan 6-8, 2024 (1 and 2 day options)

**Soul De Soul** – Jan 12-14, 2024

*This document was updated for the 2023-2024 Competition Season. All members of the competition team and their parents/guardians must sign and return the competition contract agreement which indicates acceptance of all policies outlined in this document.*

## Company Letter of Commitment

*This correspondence serves as an agreement between you and Next Level Dance Center, as produced and directed by Lianne Hart, Owner and Director of Next Level Dance Center. Your child has been selected to be a member of the 2023-2024 Next Level Dance Center Company, an honor as well as privilege. Your signature below indicates that you have read and fully understand all of the requirements associated with participating in the program, as outlined in your Next Level Dance Center Handbook. Furthermore, your signature and that of your child indicates your acceptance of those terms and conditions, and that you are well aware of the commitment involved in this program.*

***Dancer:*** *As a member of the Next Level Dance Center you will actively participate in all scheduled events from September 2023 through July 2024. Your commitment to this program means that you will be participating in all classes, rehearsals, performances, competitions/conventions, showcases and Nationals that are scheduled during this time period. Your commitment to this program means you will come to class each time dressed appropriately with proper shoes, attire, and ready to learn. Your commitment to this program means that you will honor attendance requirements for all classes, rehearsals, performances, and all competitions/conventions, showcases and Nationals. Your commitment to this program means you will be respectful to all teachers and teammates at all times.*

*In addition to the above, I understand a violation of my commitment to this program/contract has serious consequences that may result in my being permanently dismissed from the program.*

*Dancer (print):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Dancer (sign):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent:** Please be sure you feel comfortable with your ability to handle the fees incurred for this activity, as with most competitive activities, there are many uncontrollable circumstances and we don't want to catch anyone off guard.

Monthly tuition, convention/competition fees, costume deposits, costume fees, choreography fees etc., all have due dates. Monthly Tuition is due the 1st of each month, and is late after the 10th. All other fees are late after the posted due dates. A late fee of 10% will be added to any late payments. It is each parent's responsibility to be aware of fees due, schedule changes, etc. We suggest coming into the studio at least weekly to check for news, and to check emails for studio information and updates daily. Commitment to this program means that you will honor attendance requirements for all classes, all conventions/competitions, and Nationals.

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*I have read the above information and will be responsible for my child's account and activity requirements.*

Parent (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent (sign): \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this signed agreement to the front desk/teacher on the first day of classes for your dancer or email a scan to [info@nextleveldance.net](mailto:info@nextleveldance.net). Please complete one form for each of your children who have accepted placement in the Next Level Dance Center Company*