

Richardson ISD Country and Western Dance Team Guidelines

The Country and Western Performance Dance Team is a standalone extra-curricular activity. The team guidelines are unique to team members and provide a necessary framework to aid in developing and maintaining a successful dance team. The guidelines are intended to ensure consistent and appropriate application of team expectations and standards. Any interpretation of these guidelines that works to undermine or circumvent the purpose and intention of the guidelines will be rejected.

Philosophy

- The Country and Western Performance Dance Team is comprised of a group of high school students chosen through organized, competitive tryouts. The goal of instructional and performance activities is to enhance each individual member's skills and development, resulting in a highly skilled performance group. Emphasis on sound teaching and learning principles is comparable to that of any other instructional setting.
- Each team member must be aware of the time commitment and the individual dedication required of each member of the dance team. Dance team members will demonstrate good citizenship and high moral standards and assume responsibility for developing school spirit. Members shall set a positive example for other students through being responsible for their actions and demonstrating appropriate conduct.

Equal Opportunity

Richardson ISD will provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities. If a student requires a reasonable accommodation to try out or participate in the nonacademic or extracurricular services and activities, parents/guardians are asked to contact their campus administration to discuss the accommodation request as soon as possible and prior to tryouts. Accommodation requests will be reviewed by the appropriate staff to determine what accommodations may be made without fundamentally altering the program.

General Information

- Each school shall have their own rules specific to that campus. The campus rules and procedures shall not conflict with or contradict any portion of the district guidelines. In the event of a conflict, the district guidelines will be followed.
- At the beginning of the school year, dance team members must have earned the designated number of credits in state-approved courses towards graduation at the scheduled time: 10th grade – at least 5.0 credits; 11th grade – at least 10.0 credits; 12th grade – at least 15.0 credits.
- To ensure the district guidelines are review and updated as needed, the Executive Director of Fine Arts will arrange a required annual meeting with campus sponsors.

Eligibility - Tryouts

- To be eligible for tryouts, a dance team candidate must be enrolled as a student in the Richardson ISD. Any student who was not enrolled and actually in attendance at the

beginning of the school year at the RISD school where he or she desires to tryout must:

- otherwise meet the minimum eligibility criteria; and
- if a newly enrolled student, must be enrolled and in attendance in classes in the RISD school no fewer than fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the tryout.

PHYSICAL EXAMS & PERMISSION SLIPS: All candidates must complete and turn in required permission slips, including a medical release form, prior to participation in any tryout activities. In addition, all selected team members must pass a physical exam and the record must be on file with the director before the team member can participate in any team activities.

ORIENTATION MEETING: All candidates must attend a scheduled orientation meeting accompanied by a parent/guardian prior to the beginning of the tryout workshops. At the meeting, all candidates will be advised in writing of requirements, duties, responsibilities of dance team members, and consequences of rules violations prior to tryouts. All parents and students will have an opportunity to discuss concerns and ask questions with the director and/or principal prior to completing and signing the agreement form in which the parent and student confirm their understanding and willingness to comply with all applicable rules as a condition of participation in the dance team.

Tryout Process

- Clinics and audition dates will be scheduled by the school.
- The number of clinics will be at the director's discretion.
- Students who wish to audition for the team are required to attend all mandatory tryout clinic dates. Exceptions will be made for emergency situations at the director's discretion.
- Directors will evaluate students throughout the clinic week and will score them using the Directors Rubric that accounts for 20% of the final score.
 - Returning members will have been evaluated using data throughout the prior school year.
- Tryouts before the judges will be held on one day.
- Eligible candidates must tryout in person in front of the judges, unless an alternate tryout method or a reasonable accommodation for an otherwise qualified student with an injury is approved.
 - Students who have proof of medical restrictions that prohibit them from fully performing during tryouts may be allowed an accommodation to submit video evidence of skill performance taken in the current academic year that allows judges to consider and evaluate the performance skills in question. Note that though this may ultimately be considered a reasonable accommodation for a student who receives Section 504 and/or special education services, it is not meant to be a blanket statement in that regard.
 - Any accommodations required under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") must be formally considered and approved through the appropriate Section 504 or Admission, Review, and Dismissal ("ARD") committee process.
- A student may participate in the dance team tryout process at only one RISD school each school year.
- All returning members must be in good standing to audition. This includes meeting

financial commitments and program expectations.

- Students who are not safely prepared for the audition may have their tryout modified by campus staff. This could include, but is not limited to modifying dances or stunts, eliminating portions of the audition, or not auditioning at all. Final discretion will be up to the campus administrator overseeing the auditions.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING:

- Tryouts for team membership will be closed to parents and the public. Only authorized persons are permitted in the tryout room. Candidates will try out in groups not to exceed six students.
- Each candidate will be scored independently by two judges.
 - Two judges will be assigned to each candidate, with a total of four judges evaluating two couples at a time.
- Callbacks, if any, will be at the judges' or campus administrator's discretion.
- The categories used in judging will be announced prior to tryouts and may include any of the following:
 - Technique (25 points)
 - Athleticism/Stunt ability (25 points)
 - Showmanship (15 points)
 - Memory (15 points)
 - Director Evaluation (20 points)
 - Returning members will be evaluated throughout the entire year, per rubric.

JUDGES AND SCORING:

- A panel of four qualified judges will evaluate candidates for the Country and Western dance team.
- Reasonable efforts will be made to secure impartial judges who are not acquainted with any candidate. An individual who has attended any RISD high school during the four years prior to the school year in which tryouts take place shall not serve as a judge.
- The judges' score sheets will be collected by a school administrator immediately after the candidate is scored. They will maintain the score sheets in accordance with the state's applicable records retention requirements (1 year).
- A candidate's scores and score sheets constitute confidential student information. To ensure all scoring is properly verified, score sheets will not be available for review by the candidate's parent or legal guardian until the week following the tryout announcements. A parent/guardian may request to view only the scores for his or her student.
- The list of candidates selected as dance team members will customarily be posted within twenty-four hours after tryouts.

MEMBERSHIP:

- RISD District Guidelines do not specify a certain number of members for any school; however, the number should not exceed 46 members. The district strives to have a minimum of twenty-four members on each school's team. The principal will determine the final number of members. To maintain membership in the Country and Western Dance Team after selection, a student must meet the requirements as outlined in these guidelines.
- Each campus may have up to one alternate boy and one alternate girl to serve the team as needed throughout the year. This will be at the discretion of the principal and directors.

- Selection of officers and partners will be at the sole discretion of the director. Any members auditioning for an officer position must have successfully completed at least one year of membership in the program and be in good standing.
- Students will be selected based on their scores beginning with the highest score for each gender until the requisite number of candidates is selected.
- In the event of an illness or an injury that prevents a member from participating on the team, the next available student from the try-outs may be selected for the team at the discretion of the director.
- Directors may add team members from the audition process up until November 1st of that school year as team needs dictate. The campus principal shall approve the addition of team members after the initial list is published after tryouts.

APPOINTMENT PERIOD AND PERPETUATION: Selection for membership on the dance team is for one school year only, which runs from the date of selection through the date on which the next team is selected. All interested candidates (returning and new) must audition each school year.

Safety & Conditioning Standards

- Safe practices and adequate conditioning are of paramount importance for each dance team and are vital to efficient athletic performance. A warm up period with stretching and flexibility exercises is required before any practice or performance, which is vital in reducing injuries. Students who sustain injuries are encouraged to seek proper medical attention. The district is not responsible for providing medical treatments, other than addressing immediate needs (either by the school nurse or calling paramedics).
- No student will knowingly be subjected to any unsafe situation. Students will learn and demonstrate mastery of stunt ability in a controlled environment prior to all performances. Students will be assessed for safety and performance abilities. Students may have modifications to their routine, may opt out with director discretion, or may not perform for a specific performance. Directors will work closely with all students to ensure they have mastered all performance aspects before participating in each event.

Summer Activities

- Official summer practice may begin no earlier than three weeks prior to the opening day of school. The amount of time spent in summer practice shall not exceed a total of forty-five (45) hours in any one-week period (Monday through Saturday), and no more than six hours in any one-day. Sunday practices are prohibited.
- No required summer practices will be allowed for a minimum of six continuous weeks during the summer. Each school may designate the six-week period in which practice will not occur for that dance team. During that six-week period, the school, director, coach, or students cannot organize any practice, formal or informal
- A dance team director will supervise all required dance team practices from start to finish. At no time may dance team members be left unsupervised during practice.
- Unscheduled or informal practices of the team are not allowed.

Practices

- Fall practice and performance outside the school day may begin no sooner than three weeks before the first day of school and will end no later than the last day of the performance season.
- The principal must approve all practice dates and times.
- Members must attend practice sessions as instructed by the director.
- Practice time outside the regular school day will be limited to a total of eight hours per school week. The school week is defined as beginning at 12:01 a.m. on the first instructional day of the calendar week and ending at the close of instruction on the last instructional day of the calendar week, excluding holidays.
- Morning practice for Country Western Dance Team can start no earlier than two hours before the first bell of the school day and the time of morning practices is included in the eight-hour rule during the school week, regardless of start time.
- No practices may exceed a maximum of 2½ hours in length.
- No more than two practices per day, including class time, are permitted.
- **Sunday practices are prohibited.**
- All required practices will be supervised by a director from start to finish. At no time may team members be left unsupervised during practice.
- No informal team practices may be scheduled.

Performances

- The dance team director, in cooperation with the principal, will determine the eligible number of team members for a performance.
- Dance team members may not perform at any activity unless the director or an appropriate school official is designated to oversee the activity and is present at all times during the performance.
- Attendance at all performances is required unless adequate approval from the director has been obtained in advance.
- Any member who is absent from a performance for any reason other than personal illness, religious holiday, or a death in the immediate family, without at least two weeks prior approval of the director, is subject to disciplinary consequences.

Transportation

- The district may provide transportation for dance team members for performances, practices, or special events.
- Teachers should never transport students in private automobiles except in emergencies or with prior written authorization from student's parent and the school principal.
- The District shall not be liable for any injuries that occur to students while traveling to or from a performance in private vehicles.

Attendance

- Prompt and regular attendance at all practices and team activities is essential to a high functioning organization and therefore required.
- Absences and tardiness will be handled consistently with school policy. However, subject to principal approval, the director reserves the right to remove a member from the program for excessive absences and tardiness.
- A member who has 2 unexcused absences from required performances will be placed on a three-week probation. Any additional unexcused absences may result in

removal from the team.

Maintaining Eligibility

CREDITS: At the beginning of the school year, dance team members must have earned the designated number of credits in state-approved courses towards graduation at the scheduled time: 10th grade – at least 5.0 credits; 11th grade – at least 10.0 credits; 12th grade – at least 15.0 credits. Failure to meet the required number of credits makes a team member ineligible and will result in automatic dismissal from the team.

GRADES: Dance team members must maintain a minimum grade average of 70* in all classes.

*EXCEPTION: This requirement does not apply to a grade below 70 in a course designated as exempt from the No-Pass, No-Play rule.

INDIVIDUAL & CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY: All students must maintain an Individual & Civic Responsibility grade average of 90 each nine-week grading period. Individual & Civic Responsibility grades in all courses, including exempt courses, will be averaged together (A = 95; B = 85; C = 75; F = 65).

- A member who fails to meet the eligibility criteria listed in this section may be subject to probation or other consequence.

FAILURE TO MAINTAIN ACADEMIC STANDARDS:

- **Eligibility:** All students will adhere to the UIL/RISD Eligibility Calendar.

CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY: When a Dance Team member becomes ineligible, he or she:

- Must attend class, work periods, and all practices as scheduled during the period of ineligibility unless specifically excused by the director.
- May not participate in any team performances.
- May not wear the team uniform to school the day of the performance/activity and may not wear the team uniform during the performance/activity.
- May not travel with the team and may not represent the team in any fashion.

CONTINUOUS MEMBERSHIP: Each dance team member is assured of a position during the year in which he or she is selected only if he/she maintains continuous enrollment **during** the school year involved. In the event that enrollment is not continuous, reinstatement and conditions of reinstatement are at the discretion of the director and principal.

REMOVAL:

- A dance team member who receives a second failing grade in any subsequent nine-week period will be removed from the team.
- Dance team members who are removed from the team may tryout the following year if they meet all eligibility requirements.

Conduct, Probationary Procedures, & Removal

- Participation in dance team and other extracurricular activities is a privilege. Certain standards are necessary to maintain the integrity and reputation of any leading organization. Dance team members represent the school and district at all times.

Each member must conduct him or herself in an exemplary manner at all times, whether during school, at a performance, or during leisure and social activities. The behavior, character, and personal appearance of each member should set a positive example for others at all times.

- All members must adhere to the RISD Student Code of Conduct and Drug and Alcohol Guidelines. Dance Team members should never be seen smoking, vaping, drinking alcohol, using any kind of illegal drug or other illegal substance, or engaging in any unlawful or activity prohibited by the district's Code of Conduct.
- Students who have reoccurring issues with accountability, maintaining academic eligibility, or conduct unbecoming of a member will be counseled by campus administration, directors, and parents. A second disciplinary meeting may result in removal from the team and the ability to audition for future teams.

PROBATION:

- Students who have received consequences due to violations in the Student Code of Conduct and/or Drug and Alcohol Guidelines will not receive additional consequences from the dance team except as provided herein.
- Members may be placed on probation for behavior that is considered "conduct unbecoming." The period of probation is at the discretion of the sponsor and campus administration, not to exceed two weeks.
- Prior to a dance team member being placed on probation or removed from the team, he/she will be notified in writing in a timely manner of the reasons for the proposed action. A conference with the principal and the director will be offered to the parent and the student. The student will be given the opportunity to present his/her version of the events. A student or parent who is not satisfied with the outcome of the conference may contact the Fine Arts office to obtain information about any applicable grievance procedure.
- A dance team member who is on probation for disciplinary reasons may not participate in any team performance during the probationary period.
- While on disciplinary probation, a dance team member is required to attend the performance and must sit with the director until the team is released.
- While on probation, a team member may not wear the team uniform to school the day of the activity.
- During probation, the dance team member must attend practice as scheduled.
- Students who receive a second probation of any kind may be subject to removal for the team and will not be allowed to audition for the following school year.

DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS AND REMOVAL:

- A dance team member may lose performance privileges, be placed on probation, or removed from the team for violations of school and/or dance team guidelines or policies and procedures, serious misconduct, or other conduct or actions that creates disruption or interference with team operations.
- Removal from the team must be approved in advance by the sponsor, principal, and Executive Director of Fine Arts except as provided below.
- Dance team members who engage in conduct that results in expulsion will be automatically removed from the squad.

COUNTRY AND WESTERN DISCIPLINARY POINT SYSTEM

Infraction	Points
Unexcused absence from a required performance or event	2.5 point
ISS- Single Day	2 points
ISS- Multiple Days	3 points
OSS	6 points
CLMC	8 points

- Upon accumulating a certain number of points, students may receive disciplinary probation or may be removed from the team.
 - 5 Points - 3 Weeks probation
 - 10 Points - Removal from the team
 - Students who receive a second probation of any kind may be subject to removal from the team.

Financial Commitment

All anticipated costs for dance team membership will be discussed at the student/parent orientation meetings prior to tryouts.

REQUIRED EXPENDITURES: Required expenditures for dance team shall not exceed \$800 per member per dance team school year.

OPTIONAL EXPENDITURES: Expenses for trips, pictures, summer camp, and social events are considered optional, as students are not required to participate. A student's decision not to participate will not result in any adverse consequences.

Fundraising

Country and Western Dance Team organizations and their parent booster groups may conduct fundraising events in accordance with the RISD and campus policies and guidelines. Funds may be used to pay for a recognition banquet for members, team uniform shirts, and to assist team members and/or the team to purchase additional items necessary for special events.

Awards And Gifts

- Team awards will be determined by the director and approved by the principal.
- If a student chooses to give gifts to other students or district employees, those gifts should only be an expression of appreciation, rather than a gift of significant monetary value. Expenditures by each student for gifts shall not exceed \$25 per year (all gifts).

Uniforms

- Country and Western Dance Team members must wear uniforms as designated by the director.
- The team will furnish uniform items used in public performances.
- The student will provide personal items such as socks, boots, hats, belts, jeans, etc.

- A record will be kept of all uniforms and equipment issued to members.
- All items issued by RISD must be returned in good condition with normal wear and tear excepted.
- A dance team member will be assessed the replacement cost of items not returned, items with excessive abuse, and/or items that might be unusable or destroyed due to improper use.

Trips

- Documentation: The RISD Fine Arts Overnight Trip Request form must be signed and on-file before securing plans or announcing the trip to students.
- Approval Process: Annual travel requires signatures for the Principal, the Area Superintendent, and the Executive Director of Fine Arts.
- Requirement: Every trip must feature an approved performance participation component
- **Out-of-State Limits**: Students may travel out-of-state only **once** during their high school tenure.
 - 4-year program: 3 in-state; 1 out-of-state
 - 3-year program: 2 in-state; 1 out-of-state
 - 2-year program: 1 in-state; 1 out-of-state
- Exceptions must be approved by the Executive Director of Fine Arts and the Assistant Superintendent.
- All trips will be completely voluntary for any member and the status of a member who chooses not to participate in a trip will not be negatively affected in any way.

Appropriate Song Selection for Dance Ensembles

- The RISD Athletic and Fine Arts Departments expect that all directors, sponsors and staff will be mindful of appropriate content when selecting music to perform at public events. All music selections shall be appropriate for a school-aged audience. Song lyrics that portray questionable content shall not be used without advance approval of the campus administration prior to performance at any district or public event. This expectation applies to campus and off-campus performances.
 - Directors must consider the following filters when selecting songs or choreographing a routine:
 - Any lyric or suggestive content referencing alcohol, drugs, or sexual content is strictly prohibited.
 - Profanity of any kind is strictly prohibited. Bleeping or using the clean versions is acceptable as long as the content and message is appropriate. Appropriateness will be determined by the campus principal.
 - Songs without lyrics may be used at each sponsors discretion.
 - Contact the campus principal and/or RISD Athletics or Fine Arts Department for guidance and approval if any question arises when selecting songs.
 - Campus administration will have the final say in appropriate content and song selection.