

Tomah Dance Team Handbook



2024-2025

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Section 1: Purpose and Mission

Tomah Dance Team is a Varsity level, competitive dance team. We work hard to uphold the pride and tradition set forth by Tomah High School. As ambassadors to our school we provide a positive image and promote school spirit at most all athletic events. We dedicate ourselves to this program, work hard at practice, perform with heart and above all have fun. We represent THS to the highest degree. Set an example of good behavior at all times, whether in uniform or not, in class and at all school functions, if or if not performing.

This sport is committed to forming young athletes into individuals who understand this philosophy and take responsibility in that commitment to better each athlete individual skill level, along with the overall ability of the team in its entirety.

This program is intended to inspire each athlete through life lesson experiences that are applicable to both life as a part of the team as well as life outside of the team. Such lessons include: responsibility, dedication, desire, teamwork, hard work, time management, self-confidence, honesty and commitment.

Members of the Tomah Dance Team will strive to continuously improve not only themselves, but other members of the team and program. A Tomah dancer does not just care about their flexibility and how many turns they can do rather, they seek to be the best version of themselves, is focused, and embraces the core elements of what it means to be a member of the team: teamwork, commitment, positivity and discipline.

Tomah Dance Team dancers must recognize that participating in this sport is a privilege, and at all times, you are representing yourselves, the team, coaches, Athletic Department, High School and your Community. As long as you are members of the team, you must conduct yourselves in a manner that will bring credit, honor, and respect yourselves, the team, the school and our community.

Team members have personal goals of high academic achievement, increasing their dance ability, learning affective time management, and forming strong friendships. The success of this team is due to a strong commitment from the dancers. The dancer's exhibit good sportsmanship, positive attitudes toward team members, competitors, school, parents and coaches at all times. Promote friendships between the members of the squad. Promote friendships with schools with which we compete, perform and attend camp.

Section 2: Selection & Eligibility

The tryout process will take place either in the beginning of March or at the end of the school year of each year, whichever the schedule allows.

Any student coming into grade 9-12 may tryout. Dancers must meet the eligibility requirements established by the Student Activities Office.

All dancers must tryout every year-past members attitudes and performance will be considered year to year for tryouts. No special consideration will be given to team veterans.

Tryouts are closed to the public, including parents and friend of the participants.

A private tryout may be arranged for a student who is new to the District and was not attending the school at the time of the scheduled tryout.

A "cut" will be made where judges see a clear drop in scores. Scores will not be released or available in any way, only to the Athletic Director.

We are a two season sport. If you chose to do Show Choir you will have to decide by May 15th, of every year if you are doing their competition season or our competition season. Practices begin June and run through beginning of March. Being a part of the Tomah Dance Team is a full season commitment. Please ask coach(s) for more information if interested in only doing one season.

Our primary styles of dance are Pom, Jazz and Kick. Two of the three are chosen each year as our competition routines

All decisions made by coaches will be for the best interest of the team-not individuals.

All decisions are final. No exceptions. No scores or judges sheets will be distributed after the tryouts.

Section 3: Expectations/Requirements

Every member of the Tomah Dance Team will be held accountable for their actions at all times, including time inside and outside of practice. If a dancer's actions are not in the best interest of the team or will in anyway jeopardize the goals, expectations reputation or well-being of the team, they will suffer the consequences. Take a personal responsibility to be a strong, trustworthy, and valuable team member. Inappropriate behaviors not only reflect on the individual, but also affect the image of the entire team. The good of the team always comes before any one individual.

Dancing of any member at any performance is up to the discretion of the coach(s). Even if the member is not performing, she attends all practices and will wear warm-up at performance. Parents and girls are free to discuss with the coach(s) all decisions and questions about the performance, however all decisions are final.

Team members **MUST** attend **ALL** required activities, games, practices, performances, competitions, showcase and any other performances added, unless that dancer is ill, has a family emergency or gives 24 hour notice. Failure to attend a mandatory event will result in a benching. Three benching's will result in a dismissal. (nine unexcused all together-refer to under attendance). Unless otherwise noted, all events are considered mandatory.

For each semester, members must maintain appropriate grades as outlined in the athletic code. Any grade problems in the fall season you will be ineligible for the competition team.

Being on the dance team one year **IN NO WAY GUARANTEES PLACEMENT ON THE TEAM FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR!** All first year members must go through the same tryout selection process the next spring. In addition to ability, each dance team member's and past member's attitudes and performance will be considered year to year for tryouts.

Captains/Leaders will be chosen by the coach(s) on a year to year basis. Conduct, attitude, leadership and student aptitude will be part of the criteria for choosing these candidates. Behavior from upcoming candidates will be monitored every year. It is the coach(s) decision to have a captain/leader or not.

Attending summer camp is requested (not required) activity as it helps to unite the team and prepare the members for the coming year. Fees are the responsibility of the individual. Those that do not attend, will still pay a portion for the material that they will need to learn. Competition Choreography material is required to be learned by all team members. Fees are the responsibility of the individual. Those that do not attend, will still pay for the material and has one week from the date the choreographer was here to have the material learned.

RESPECT

- 👉 All dancers must show respect to the coach(s), team members, administration, parents, outside guests and choreographers at all times.

COMMUNICATION

- ✚ To provide a comfortable and successful environment, all lines of communication must be open between the coach(s), captain(s)/leaders, team members, parents and the administration.
- ✚ Coach(s) will not discuss decisions made regarding choreography or routine placement.
- ✚ Coach(s) has authority in all matters regarding captains/leaders.

DEDICATION

- ✚ Each member is expected to be at all practices and performances. In addition, each dancer is expected to give 110% effort at all times and nothing less.

BEHAVIOR

- ✚ Dance team members serve as ambassadors for Tomah High School. Dancers are expected to be positive reflections of the team both in and outside of school functions. This includes but is not limited to: **overall attitude, school conduct and social media.**
- ✚ While social media is a place for you to express your thoughts and opinions any negative comments regarding the team or a specific member will result in removal from the team.
- ✚ You will give the coach access to all your social media, Facebook, snapchat, Instagram, etc.
- ✚ It is expected that all team members conduct themselves in a respectful manor at all times. Anything less will result in disciplinary action.

UNIFORMS

- ✚ Uniforms will be provided by the Tomah Dance Team and therefore belong to the team.
- ✚ Uniforms are to be kept clean, neat and in good repair at all times, and may only be used for performances (not practice or social events).
- ✚ Members must wear what coach(s)/captain designate to practice, school and performance, and uniform must be worn the entire time.
- ✚ Additional personal uniform pieces (i.e. shoes, leotards, makeup, tights etc.) are purchased by each team member.
- ✚ Members assume financial responsibility for all damaged, lost or stolen articles.
- ✚ Uniforms should be returned in the same condition as issued. If the member fails to do so they will be charged the replacement cost and fined \$350 if an item is lost or damaged. If the uniform was new as of this year you will be fined the full cost of the uniform. If a uniform is damaged and it was not the fault of the dancer, the member has 24 hours to report the damage to the coaches. The incident will be investigated and the findings will be reported to the dancer and parent. Each member will be required to have all uniforms cleaned and in good condition before the end of season.
- ✚ If a dance team member quits or is removed from the team, the member will be expected to return all uniform items within one week. If they are not, it will be turned over to the Athletic Office.
- ✚ **Keep your uniform pieces and warm-ups off the floor and away from smoke and pets!!**
- ✚ **Carry your garment bag to all competitions/games and ALL uniforms must be hung up!!**

↓ Section 4: Practice & Etiquette

All practices are MANDATORY! Be on time to ALL practices and performances.

Proper practice attire is required. Tennis shoes, jazz shoes, no jeans, no crop tops, no sweatshirts worn during practice, warm-up or stretching, etc. No jewelry, apple watches, or watches of any kind, nothing that represents jewelry period!! Hair must be pulled back off the face prior to the start of practice. No unusual hair colors or styles will be permitted for performance or competitions.

Start stretching immediately at 3:35.

If you miss a practice you will have 2 days from that practice to get the material you missed learned, it is your responsibility to know the material missed.

Mandatory after-school practices will be held for Competition and the Showcase.

Additional practices may be scheduled as needed. This will be done with as much notice as possible.

Missing a scheduled practice the day before an event will result in the individual not performing for that event and the member will also receive a benching for the next scheduled performance, unless we feel they can get the material. The benching will NOT occur if the member was ill or had an emergency and called the coach within an appropriate manner of time. Missing a part of practice for a test or other approved academic reason will carry NO penalty, but the member must get a prior approval and make up what is missed and a pass from the teacher. Missing part of practice for another club or meeting will be allowed **IF PRIOR NOTICE IS GIVEN** at least **24 HOURS NOTICE**. It is irresponsible and discourteous to inconvenience the rest of the dance team.

Members must dress out for all practices unless otherwise notified. Clothing should be appropriate for the activity. Tennis shoes or dance shoes required. Socks are not appropriate. Whatever the coach decided.

During competition practices, members must dress in black.

Chewing gum is not allowed during practices, performances or competitions.

In order for practices to start promptly, tardiness will not be accepted without a note from parent, teacher or administrator. Plan ahead and allow enough time to arrive prepared to work.

In an attempt to maintain a minimum number of practices throughout the season, each dancer should make every effort to correct mistakes, which are identified by the coach and/or teammates.

Members must not use foul language at practices, in school, at games, camp, competitions, etc.

Absolutely **NO** cell phone use during practices and performances including taking phone calls, texting, snap chat or being on social media.

- If there is an emergency the coach(s) can be contacted to relay messages.
- If sitting for injury-**NO** cell phone

Dancers are expected to be attentive and cooperative when learning routines.

Understand that each practice should be looked at as a tryout or performance.

- You will be judged accordingly at each practice
- Your efforts and level of respect will be part of what dictates if you perform at the next event or not. (this respect refers to coach(s), others)

Repeated disruptions, especially during the same practices, will result in warnings, and possible removal from that performance and practice. Continued problems will result in calls to parents, additional game suspensions and possible removal from the team.

Constructive criticism/suggestions given in a polite manner welcomed. Complaining and/or rudeness to the coach(s)/teacher/teammates/dancer of the routine is a disruption that will carry consequences or removal from practice.

If dancers cannot take constructive criticism from coach(s)/teammates than this might not be the sport for them. There may be times where we are focused on one dancer more than others at times, it does not mean we are singling them out. We are here to help them improve and excel and if they cannot handle this they need to discuss this with the coach(s). This is our job to make the team better and to make the team better is making each individual better.

Section 5: Injury's

If a dancer is injured where they are unable to practice the only excused reason to sit out will be a doctor's note or a note from the Athletic Trainer.

If a dancer has a doctor's note to sit out for a certain amount of time that dancer will be responsible for all material and must be at all practices.

If a dancer is sitting out on doctors' orders the dancer will be required to demonstrate that she is capable to perform the routine or will not be allowed to perform.

If a dancer feels she needs to ice her injury, she will be asked to "mark material we are going through" and ice the last 15 minutes of practice. They must communicate with the coach(s) if they are sitting out and why, before they sit out or why they are marking

material. If they/coach(s) feel they cannot do the material full-out with music they need to do stretches, light arm weights and mark it in the back/side to keep up with the team.

Section 6: Attendance

All practices, competitions and team events are mandatory.

Schedule all work, appointments, vacations, etc. around practice.

Please let the head coach know two weeks prior to a planned absence if possible otherwise coach needs to be notified 24 hours prior-less than that it will be unexcused. Three unexcused it out a performance 9th dismissal from team.

The coach(s) will determine if an absence is considered excused (i.e. funeral, illness w/doctors note.

An Excused absence will not be approved for a date one day before a game or five days before a competition. Varsity Letters will be determined by attendance and participation in all events.

Involvement in any outside activity of dance team must not conflict with scheduled team events.

Tardiness is unacceptable. If there is a problem with tardiness, coach(s) may pull a team member from a performance, or dismiss the member from the team.

When a team member is absent, they are required to learn any material covered in the missed practice. Coach(s) will determine when the dancer is ready to perform.

Any absence with the exception of illness, family emergency or doctor's appointment, will be considered unexcused.

Jobs and other extra-curricular activities (with the exception of dance related activities/unless pre-approved arrangements have been made w/coach(s)) which is not school related do not supersede dance team activities will be considered unexcused, after every 3 you will sit out of a performance after 9 you will be dismissed from the team.

If you do not call, text or email the head coach your absence 24hrs prior to practice it will be an unexcused absence and after every 3 you will sit out of a performance. It is your responsibility to let the head coach know where you are!!!! It is not your teammate's responsibility to let the coach know if you will be late or absent.

You need to give **24 Hour Notice** of any absence from practice whether you need to leave early or going to be absent. Any dancer absent from practice is expected to learn

any new material 2 days after the absence. This is to be done outside of regular practice time. Failure to take responsibility for this will result in sitting out at the next performance.

Members must **NOT LEAVE PRACTICE EARLY** unless given **24 HOUR NOTICE**: except for family emergencies. **Don't schedule work too early! Work is not excused, homework is not excused.** *** If it is not Dance or Academic related you need to give a 24 Hour Notice or it will be unexcused. After every 3 unexcused you will be out a performance 9 unexcused dismissal from team. ***

Dancers must not leave practice early unless given 24 Hour Notice otherwise unexcused. It is the parent or dancers responsibility to let the coach know they will be late or not at practice-DO NOT relay the message to anyone else-it will be an unexcused absence. Make no excuses for leaving practice early for work, appointments or other commitments.

Prior arrangements mean as soon as the conflict is known. Day of is not considered prior and will automatically be considered unexcused.

Parent/Dancer if you are absent/sick from school please text coach ASAP. They do not let us know.

**Although this is pretty clearly laid out, there will be some instances where the coach(s) discretion will become the final decision.

Section 7: Concerns/Conflicts

All problems, questions or concerns should be brought directly to the attention of the head coach, in order to bring quick resolution. Challenges will be dealt with in a professional, confidential manner.

Every attempt will be made to "punish" fairly and equally, and to make consequences of actions known ahead of time. Parents will be kept informed of problem situations that are not minor that we feel as a coach cannot be handled at practice.

Because all situations may not be foreseen and thus outlined here, each will be dealt with in a manner decided upon by the coach, with assistance from the administration, if deemed necessary. Each case will be judged individually, but may also serve as a basis on which to judge future cases.

Poor conduct/behavior under any of the above circumstances could result in warnings, suspension/removal from the team. Inappropriate behaviors not only reflect on the individual, but also affect the image of the entire team. The good of the squad always comes before any one individual. No one is irreplaceable or indispensable. If it is in the

best interest of the squad that an individual or individuals be removed from a performance or from the team, this action will be taken by a decision of the coach(s). All rules and regulations imposed on any THS student will be imposed on dance team members. Members are responsible for knowing all the rules.

Section 8: Parent Expectations

To make an optimal environment for our athletes, there are things parents can do to foster success:

Teach the value of hard work, discipline, respect and honesty.

Hold your child responsible for going to practice and encourage them to do things that will help them to improve.

Be supportive of your child's commitment to the dance team. Do not overly criticize, keep things in the proper perspective.

I understand the practice schedule has to be adhered to in order for my dancer to be eligible to perform.

I understand the costs associated with my daughter being a part of the team.

I acknowledge that the cost given to me at the meeting verbally and in the audition packet are only a best estimate and cost can fluctuate depending on the need each year. Costs may come up depending on what we may do for routines-but we will try to offset them.

Be respectful of the role the coach(s) plays in your child's life. Coaches never intentionally make bad decisions, they do what they feel is best for the team or individual.

If you have a concern, take it up directly with the head coach. You will **NOT** send a text or call. You will send an email and set up a time to meet to resolve the issue no matter how small you might think it is. You will hear both sides of the issue as a parent you are only hearing one side of the story. We understand these are your children and you want to protect them, but there is a lot of things that happen at practice that parents don't even know. Ex. Attitudes, talking back and whispering. When we address it then it turns on the coach(s). We will not have it. If the dancers want to give attitude, then they need to be able to handle the consequences for their actions and parents you need to stand behind us coach(s) and know we are doing our best and not being disrespectful.

We will no longer meet about an issue with a dancer alone unless the parent or Athletic Director is present. So if an issue arises we will call a meeting with the parent no matter

how small it is. The only meeting we will have with a dancer is if we are giving them any type of critiques.

Help provide the athletes with the things they will need throughout the season: rides to events, fundraising, snacks, etc.

Section 9: Fundraising

Each dancer is expected to take an active role in all team fundraisers. We will also participate in a few individual fundraisers that can assist in defraying the cost of the season.

All parents are expected to take an active role in supporting the team. This will make your dancer's experience and your experience as part of the dance team even better.

We do remember that fundraisers help pay for uniforms, competitions, extras for your dancers.

One very important fundraiser we do is Cranfest, please make yourself available dancer & parent. Also, we do sign up for a few concessions. Please remember that we can go to the Sports Booster and ask for items and they will purchase them for us. So in turn it is important that we give back in return to help them with concessions. Plus we do get money for helping.

Section 10: Substance Abuse Policy

Team members must refrain from inappropriate, indiscriminate, improper, or illegal use of alcohol, drugs and narcotics. Failure to uphold these guidelines will result in being benched for a percentage of the season as determined by the athletic director. When faced with tough choices such as partaking in drugs and alcohol, please remember that your team is depending on you and a violation of these guidelines will disappoint not only your coach but your entire team.

Please understand that if any of these rules are not adhered to, consequences could be up to, but not limited to, competition suspension or team dismissal as determined by the coach and/or athletic director.