



**Thank you for your interest in the  
2023-2024 SSHS Sailors Dance Team!**

Please read through the following information to understand the commitment required as a member and parent of the Sailors Dance Team.

## What is the SSHS Sailors Dance Team?

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The Steamboat Springs High School Sailors Dance Team is a CHSSA-sanctioned “Spirit” program through Steamboat Springs High School athletics. The team’s mission is to promote school spirit and perform for our community while excelling in proper dance training and sportsmanship.

The team will perform at all home varsity football games and numerous home basketball games, and there will be the opportunity to perform at a few additional Steamboat Springs athletic events. Other opportunities will be presented to our Pre-Professional Dance Team members.

The Sailors Dance Team is coached by Alexa Struss. Coach Alexa takes pride in her strong dance training, art advocacy, and positive student relationships. Alexa was a competitive dancer since age 5, and it was history from there! She has trained and competed with the pre-professional company at Expressenz Dance Center in Indianapolis, Indiana, and was a member of the Purdue University Dance Team. While training in college, Alexa was a competition team instructor and choreographer for four years at Studio b in Lafayette, Indiana. She was then asked to become the Head Coach of the William Henry Harrison High School Dance Team, where she led the team for 2.5 years bringing home their first-ever state Championship title. Now she is an active member and choreographer for Steamboat Dance Theater, a choreographer for CASA’s Dancing with the Stars, and frequently trains with Steamboat’s Forty106 Dance Project. Alexa’s dance styles include but are not limited to Jazz, Contemporary, Lyrical, Ballet, Pointe, Hip Hop, Pom, and Tap.

## What can you expect?

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### 1. Frequent and informative communication

- a. It is of the utmost importance that dancers and families stay informed on upcoming practices and events.
- b. Coach Alexa will send out the following items to keep families informed throughout the season:
  - i. Monthly email newsletter
  - ii. Frequent social media posts
  - iii. Updates to the sailorsdance.com website
  - iv. Post to the BAND app
  - v. Frequent email reminders, info summaries, and checklists

### 2. Dedicated to helping dancers get the most out of the team

- a. Each practice will be structured, hands-on, and motivational.
- b. Practices will include team building and leadership opportunities.
- c. Additional opportunities and training will always be available.
- d. Dancers will receive support and encouragement in and outside of practice.
- e. We understand that Steamboat High School students participate in multiple sports/activities. Therefore, while abiding by the Sailors Dance Team contract, we will do our best to help students navigate schedule conflicts throughout the season.

### 3. Dancers will be held accountable for in-practice and academic performance

- a. Students and parents must sign an annual contract promising that they will commit to being a team member for the **entire** year, understand the team's expectations, and remain in good standing.
- b. Students will be given 4 unexcused absences each semester.
  - i. Examples of **excused** absences include anything presented to Coach Alexa with a month's notice (30 days,) illness, serious injuries, or family emergencies. Everything else is **unexcused**.
  - ii. Once a student has surpassed four unexcused absences, a meeting will be scheduled with Coach Alexa to discuss their team standing and next steps.
- c. Students are required to be at all practices the week of a game or performance in order to perform with the team.
  - i. If a student is absent the week of the game, they have the option to learn the gameday routine in full before the second practice of the week and turn in a physical or video proof that they are "performance-ready." If Coach Alexa approves the submission, they will be granted the

- opportunity to perform.
- ii. If a student misses practice the week of performance and does not submit an **approved** video, they will be asked to sit out that game or perform pre-game only.
- c. Students are required to be at school for a minimum of half the day on a performance day in order to perform with the team.
- c. Students must be academically eligible **the week prior** to a game in order to perform.
  - i. Students will receive an email from Ann Brenner and a reminder from Coach Alexa when they are on the academic eligibility list.
- d. Students have the ability to letter at the end of each year based on strong participation, good standing, and the ability to execute required team skills. Requirements are listed in the Lettering Contract.

#### **4. Progression and goal-setting**

- a. The team is accepting of a variety of skill levels and dance backgrounds with the intent to help grow and strengthen required skills throughout the 2023-24 season.
- b. All dancers will be required to set goals and reflect on those goals frequently over the course of the year.
- c. Dancers can expect to be challenged, driven out of their comfort zones, and open to trying new things.

#### **5. Most of all, you can count on this to be a FUN & POSITIVE DANCE PROGRAM!**

- a. Creating a positive, energetic, and supportive team environment starts with YOU.
  - i. Students will be expected to be leaders to their peers.
  - ii. Parents will be expected to support and lead by example for their dancers.
- b. Because that's what's all about :)

## Season Overview

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### **2023-2024 Season Team Tryouts**

All dancers must attend the 2023-24 Tryout to be considered for the team.

Tryout date: **May 16th, 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm**

Location - Steamboat Springs High School (Meek Gym)

Can't make it to tryouts on 5/16? Contact Coach Alexa ASAP if you need an alternative tryout date. Arrangements will not be made following the 5/16 date.

What to expect at tryouts:

- Short warm-up and flexibility evaluation
- A few basic combinations across the floor
  - Including chaîné turns, battements (kicks), jazz walks, leaps, pirouettes, showcase of personality, and strong movement.
- Learn a short Pom/Hip Hop routine
- Dancers will be asked into the gym in small groups to perform both routines and showcase technical skills.

### **Summer Practices**

Summer practices will be used for conditioning, developing technique, team bonding, and learning performance routines.

Attendance to weekly practice is strongly encouraged throughout the summer.

Summer practice dates 2023: 6/6, 6/13, 6/20, 6/27, 7/11, 7/18, 7/25, 8/1, 8/8 (9 practices) Time: 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Location: Steamboat Spring High School Meek Gym and Field

### **Summer Camp**

Sailors Dance Team members are expected to be at the three-day camp over the summer. We will have guest instructors at the camp, learn gameday routines from Coach Alexa, work on technique, and of course, have some team bonding fun!

Summer camp dates 2023: July 13-15. Location: Steamboat Springs High School

### **Practices**

The team will begin two-day-a-week practices starting the first week of school. Dancers can

expect to practice two days a week, for 2 hours each day, in the evenings at the school.

Fall Practice Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm.

Winter/Spring Practice Schedule: TBD

Practices will be used for conditioning, developing technique, team bonding, and learning performance routines.

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### **NEW THIS YEAR: Performance and Pre-Professional Team**

It is important that dancers of all levels can get involved in the SSHS Dance Team. To make this possible, I am excited to announce that we will be splitting into a performance-only team and a pre-professional team.

#### Performance-only:

- These dancers will perform at all Steamboat Springs High School games and community performances.
- Performance-only dancers will attend all dance team practices year-round.
- This group is for students who would like to train and perform with the Sailors Dance Team without the commitment of overnight performances.
- This group is best for entry-level dancers or dancers that need extra help with more technical pom/jazz/hip hop skills.

#### Pre-professional:

- These dancers will perform at all Steamboat Springs High School games, 1-2 CHSAA competitions, and a performance at a Colorado University.
- There may be more opportunities that pop up throughout the year for this group.
- Pre-professional dancers will attend all dance team practices year-round, with the addition of (minimum) 5 extra rehearsals.
- The structure of this group is to prepare dancers interested in joining a dance team in college or pursuing a professional dance career.
- Dancers will be selected for the pre-professional team based on technical skill ability, level of dance training, and commitment level.
- Dancers selected for this team are held to the higher expectation that they will commit to ALL performances, show up consistently as role models, maintain satisfactory grades, and succeed in learning new and challenging skills.

#### **CHSAA Regional Competition**

The pre-professional team will attend the Western Colorado Spirit Regionals in Grand Junction.

There may be an opportunity for a 2nd competition this year.

Western Colorado Spirit Regionals

Date: Saturday, November 18th

Location: Grand Junction High School

1400 N 5th Street Grand Junction, CO 81501

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### **School & Community Performances**

The team will be performing at all home varsity football games and several basketball games. In addition, other performance opportunities will come up throughout the year. We will strive to give at least two weeks' notice, and participation is expected when requested. If dancers are not present at practice the week of a performance, are ineligible, or do not attend a half-day of school, they will sit out for the game performances.

### **Steamboat Springs High School Pep Assembly (during school hours)**

Students will dance at the school pep assemblies held during the school days before events such as Homecoming. Team leaders will be in charge of leading these performances.

### **College Halftime Performance**

The pre-professional team will perform at a college halftime performance.

Spring Date - TBD.

### **Dance Team Clinic**

To build strong relationships with the feeder schools and provide an opportunity for dancers interested in the program, we will hold an annual clinic. This clinic will be open to all grades and will be led by the Sailors Dance Team. Attendees will learn a short routine that they will then perform at an SSHA game (TBD).

### **Year-End Banquet**

To celebrate an awesome year, we will hold a year-end banquet. At the banquet, Coach Alexa will recognize dancers and hand out awards. Banquet date: Spring TBD

## **Financial Responsibility**

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## **Participation Fee \$175.00**

### **Other Expenses (Requested throughout the year)**

- Required Team warm-ups and apparel
- Spiritwear (optional)
- Team Bonding/Events (senior night dinners, banquet)
- Overnight costs for Pre-Pro dancers (Hotel costs, game tickets, food)

### **Fundraising**

Several fundraising opportunities are available through the Booster Club to help with Sailors Dance Team expenses. We will participate in fundraisers such as Sailors cards, Honey Stinger, concession stands, Ace food sale, and the annual Sailors Dance Team Dance Clinic.

A team parent volunteer will represent Sailors Dance Team at the Booster Club once a month. \*\*Looking for volunteers!



# Upcoming

## DANCE TEAM DATES

CALLOUT  
MEETING

MAY  
02

5:30-6:30 PM

PRE-TRYOUT  
PREP  
CLINIC

MAY  
09

5:30-7:00 PM

TRYOUT  
REGISTRATION  
OPENS

MAY  
02

2023-24  
SEASON  
TRYOUTS

MAY  
16

4:30-7:30 PM

*Sign Up Today!*

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