

**LAKE TRAVIS ISD  
DANCE TEAM  
HANDBOOK  
2026 - 2027**



**3324 Ranch Road 620 S  
Austin, Texas 78734**

# INTRODUCTION

The Lake Travis Independent School District (LTISD) Dance Team Program is an integral part of the high school experience. Membership on the LTISD Dance Team is a privilege, not a right, and carries responsibilities that extend beyond the classroom and performance floor.

This handbook is designed to communicate the expectations, policies, procedures, and standards governing participation in the LTISD Dance Team Program. It serves as a resource for students and parents, establishes clear expectations for conduct and participation, and outlines the accountability measures that support the integrity of the program.

Each member is responsible for knowing and complying with all policies contained in this handbook, as well as any revisions or additions approved by LTISD and communicated by the Director(s). Failure to read or understand the handbook does not exempt a member from complying with its policies or the consequences of violating them.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the LTISD Dance Team Program is to serve as a positive ambassador for Lake Travis High School, Lake Travis ISD, and the community while representing the program with integrity, professionalism, and pride.

The LTISD Dance Team Program is designed to:

- Develop and maintain a high standard of technical dance performance appropriate for both junior varsity and varsity team members.
- Foster teamwork, cooperation, leadership, sportsmanship, and respectful relationships among teammates and competitors.
- Promote character, responsibility, scholarship, accountability, and personal growth.
- Represent Lake Travis High School at designated athletic events, school and district activities, community events, and approved competitions with professionalism and excellence.

Membership on the LTISD Dance Team requires members to uphold these expectations at all times while representing the program, both on and off campus.

***In addition to the expectations outlined in this handbook, all members are subject to the LTISD Student Code of Conduct and the LTISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct. Violations of either code may also result in disciplinary action under the LTISD Dance Team Handbook.***

## TERM OF SERVICE

Membership on the LTISD Dance Team begins on the day of selection and continues through the last day of the following school year, provided the member remains academically eligible and in good standing with LTISD, complies with all district, campus, and dance team policies, and fulfills the expectations outlined in this handbook.

Dance team expectations are in effect year-round, including during the summer, holidays, weekends, school breaks, travel, social media activity, and any event in which a member is representing or is reasonably identifiable as an LTISD Dance Team member. Members are expected to uphold these standards both on and off campus throughout their term of service. **Members remain subject to the policies and expectations of the LTISD Dance Team until their term of service officially ends, regardless of whether rehearsals or performances are currently scheduled.**

# MEMBERSHIP

The LTISD Dance Team Program consists of students who successfully audition for and earn membership on the Cavalettes Varsity Dance Team, the Red Ruby Junior Varsity Dance Team, and the managers selected by the Director(s).

Members of the LTISD Dance Team are expected to:

- Enroll in and successfully complete the required Dance Team class period(s). Varsity members must be enrolled in both Dance Team class periods, while junior varsity members must be enrolled in the designated class period. Course credit will be awarded in accordance with LTISD guidelines.
- Meet all academic eligibility requirements established by UIL, LTISD, and Lake Travis High School, including the “No Pass, No Play” rule under Texas Education Code 33.081.
- Attend all required practices, rehearsals, summer camps, performances, games, competitions, Spring Show, and other activities designated by the Director(s). Failure to meet attendance expectations may result in loss of performance opportunities, suspension of privileges, probation, or dismissal from the program.
- Fulfill all financial obligations associated with team membership. Need-based scholarship opportunities may be available when funding permits.
- Demonstrate the technical ability, physical readiness, and conditioning necessary to safely perform assigned choreography. Members may be required to complete conditioning, workouts, or dance hour requirements throughout the year.
- Demonstrate a willingness to learn and perform a variety of dance styles and choreography assigned by the Director(s).
- Accept constructive feedback, apply corrections, and demonstrate continuous effort toward individual and team improvement.
- Follow all directions and expectations established by the Director(s) and authorized supervisors.
- Demonstrate responsibility, integrity, respect, teamwork, and a positive attitude while representing the LTISD Dance Team.
- Recognize that successful team performance requires commitment, cooperation, accountability, and the ability to perform as a unified team.
- Understand that decisions regarding performances, choreography, leadership, travel, discipline, and team operations are made by the Director(s) in the best interests of the program and are final.

Failure to meet the expectations of membership may result in disciplinary action, including loss of performance opportunities, probation, removal from leadership positions, dismissal from the team, or other consequences outlined in this handbook.

# AUDITIONS

Participation in the audition process does not guarantee selection. Membership in the Varsity or Junior Varsity Dance Team at LTISD is based solely on the audition process and the candidate's final audition score.

- The candidate must be enrolled at the respective school in LTISD and have a current physical on file.
- The candidate and parents must attend a meeting, sign an acknowledgement agreeing to the audition process and return all required forms on time.
- Attendance at all required audition clinics and rehearsals is mandatory unless excused in advance by the Director(s) and the appropriate campus administrator.
- All auditions, workshops and clinics are closed to the public.
- All dance team members must audition every year.

- There will be no set numbers for the LTISD Dance Teams. Membership depends on the number of candidates who audition and their audition score.
- An LTHS administrator will be present during the audition.
- The results of the audition process, as determined by the official judging panel and verified by the Director(s) and Director of Fine Arts, are final.
  - As such, the Director(s) will not re-score or re-rank an audition based on any disagreement with the judges' evaluation. This provision is not meant to limit a candidate's or parent's right to raise a concern that the process itself was not properly followed or was affected by unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.
- Candidates and their parent/guardian may request to review the candidate's individual audition scores by the deadline established by the Director(s). Scores and ranking of other candidates will remain confidential.
- Once selected, all members will need to complete the LTISD required participation forms.

### **Alternative Auditions**

An alternative audition may be requested when a candidate has sustained a comprehensive dance injury or other illness, or a transfer student is moving into the district from another geographic region. The request for an alternative audition must be made in advance of auditions, and approved by the director as well as designated administrator.

#### **Requirements:**

- An ill or injured student must:
  - Provide the required documentation from the treating physician or appropriate medical provider regarding diagnosis, treatment plan, and anticipated return to activity.
- A transfer student must:
  - Provide a letter of reference from their previous director stating that they are a member in good standing.
  - Provide proof of residency prior to the alternative audition.

#### **Alternative Audition Process**

- The alternate audition will occur prior to the end of the current school year, when possible. The date will be set by the Director(s).
  - Video submission of tryout material is preferred for all candidates.
  - In the event of medical related injury, a candidate may submit additional video performance materials to include a current year solo performance, a current year studio and/or dance team performance. Video submissions will be finalized with the directors as per the individual student.
- A panel of judges will make the final decision regarding the acceptance of membership which will include a skills based assessment of the candidate. The scoresheet for the general audition will be used to score the candidate.
- Once selected, all members will need to complete the LTISD required participation forms.

### **Leadership Auditions:**

The Varsity Level high school dance teams in Lake Travis ISD provide many opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills with a variety of offerings. In this manner, students can not only serve their dance team but also refine skills that they will be able to use in other school organizations, as well as in their future careers.

Dance Team Student Leaders are held to the highest standards of performance, academics, and conduct. Failure to meet these expectations may result in disciplinary action, including demerits, probation, or dismissal.

Any student leader who accumulates five (5) or more demerits or is placed on probation during the membership year will immediately forfeit their leadership position for the remainder of that school year and will be ineligible to audition for a leadership position the following year.

Leadership auditions for positions of officers will take place after team auditions. The number of leadership positions, officer titles, responsibilities, and organizational structure may be modified annually at the discretion of the Director(s). Any member, in good standing, who has served or is currently serving at least one year on the team is eligible to audition for an officer position provided they meet the necessary requirements.

An officer candidate must maintain a passing average in each course prior to trying out, including the ten points added to Pre-AP/AP courses. Any officer candidate who accumulates five (5) demerits or has been placed on probation during the current membership year will be ineligible to audition for a leadership position for the next membership year.

All leadership team members **must** enroll in the leadership class period for the following school year.

Leadership positions are privileges rather than rights and may be modified or eliminated by the Director(s) based on the needs of the program.

### **Managers**

Managers support the operation of the dance team program and may be required to attend practices, rehearsals, performances, competitions and other activities designated by the Director(s).

Managers will apply and are selected by the Director(s).

- Each Manager must uphold high academic standards and meet the eligibility each grading period as outlined through the UIL No Pass, No Play requirement.
- Candidates may not have more than one failed course during the nine weeks prior to applying for the position.

Application Requirements for Manager:

- Application Form
- Interview
- Letters of Recommendation

The Director(s) reserve the right to cancel, postpone, modify, or adjust audition procedures due to unforeseen circumstances, safety concerns, district requirements, or other conditions beyond their control. Any modifications will be communicated to candidates in a timely manner.

## **ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS**

Consistent attendance is essential to the success, safety, and integrity of the LTISD Dance Team Program. Failure to comply with these attendance expectations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the LTISD Dance Team accountability system.

### **General Guidelines:**

- Members are expected to attend all scheduled practices, rehearsals, performances, competitions, camps, meetings, and other required Dance Team activities unless excused or otherwise approved by the Director(s).
- Dancers must arrive on time to rehearsals and stay until dismissed by the Director(s).
- Excused absences include verified illness or injury, school-sponsored activities, approved college visits, family emergencies, and other circumstances approved in advance by the Director(s), when practicable. All other absences are considered unexcused unless otherwise approved.

- The Director(s) reserve the right to request reasonable documentation to verify any absence when necessary.
- An excused absence excuses the student's accountability for attendance but does not guarantee participation in performances, evaluations, formations, travel, leadership opportunities, competitive routines, or any other dance team activity requiring demonstrated preparedness or participation. Final participation decisions remain at the discretion of the Director(s) based on choreography readiness, technical proficiency, safety, and the overall needs of the team.
- Personal appointments should not be scheduled during rehearsal times, performances, contests, competitions or team events except in cases of emergency or when approved by the Director(s).
- Work is not an excused absence from rehearsals, performances or team events, nor is it an excuse for leaving a rehearsal early or for being late to a rehearsal or a performance.
- Outside dance activities, including but not limited to studio classes, conventions, competitions, rehearsals, performances, auditions, intensives, or similar events do not constitute excused absences..
- Members are responsible for learning all material missed during an absence. Failure to demonstrate mastery of choreography may affect placement regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused.
- Members who miss any portion of required summer camp may forfeit one or more performances or performance opportunities, as determined by the Director(s), based on the amount of instruction missed and the member's preparedness.
- Members who are absent from school for reasons other than approved school-sponsored activities on the day of a performance may be removed from that particular performance at the discretion of the Director(s).
- Members who miss two or more required rehearsals during the designated preparation period for a performance may be removed from that performance.
- Repeated absences, whether excused or unexcused, may affect a member's ability to safely participate, maintain choreography, fulfill team responsibilities, or remain eligible for performances.

#### **ACT/SAT Exemption:**

- Dance team members may be dismissed by the Director(s) after halftime if they are taking an ACT/SAT the following day with documentation of test admission.
  - Dancers need to give Director(s) at least 7 days' notice if they are requesting to leave a football game after halftime due to taking the SAT or ACT the following morning.
  - Dancers must submit documentation of test admission to the director(s) no later than 7 days prior to the test date.
  - The Director(s) will provide written confirmation to the parent/guardian granting permission for the member to leave after halftime and confirming the member's authorized method of transportation from the game.

#### **Notification Procedures:**

- Notify the Director(s) via the absence form prior to the absence occurring.
  - At least 24 hours in advance for tutorial reasons
  - At least 2 weeks in advance if unable to attend a practice
  - At least 6 weeks in advance if unable to attend a performance
- Varsity team members are required to contact their officer via the band app regarding their absence **before** dance team rehearsal/class. This notification does not eliminate the need for a written doctor's note if a medical appointment transpired. *Failure to provide notification will result in enforcement of the demerit system.*

**Required Documentation:**

- Provide a copy of the return to school note from the attending physician when practice/rehearsal is missed for a medical appointment.
- Members who miss a required performance due to illness must submit written documentation from the attending physician verifying the medical absence. This requirement does not apply to absences for approved school-sponsored activities.
- Failure to provide required notification or documentation may result in enforcement of the accountability system.

**Illness and Injury:**

- Any member who is ill will be excused from practice/rehearsal only by a written communication from the parent/guardian. A parent/guardian note may excuse one consecutive rehearsal or school day. Continued absence requires documentation from a licensed healthcare provider. *The demerit policy will be strictly enforced for absences more than one day without a note from a licensed healthcare provider.*
- Any member who misses a performance due to illness will be excused only by a written note from a licensed healthcare provider.
- Members who are unable to participate due to illness or injury may be required to attend rehearsals as an observer, provided they are not exhibiting symptoms of a contagious illness and attendance has been approved by the Director(s).
- Members with an injury must provide written documentation from a licensed healthcare provider describing any activity restrictions and the anticipated duration of those restrictions. Members are expected to participate to the fullest extent permitted by their medical restrictions.
- In order to return to full participation, the member must have a medical release from the physician on file.
- The Director(s) may require a member to demonstrate full physical readiness before returning to rehearsals or performances, regardless of medical clearance. Medical clearance authorizes a return to activity but does not guarantee immediate reinstatement to performances or competitive routines. Final participation decisions will be based on the member's ability to safely perform required skills, maintain performance standards, and meet the demands of choreography.
- Any Dance Team member who is unable to rehearse or perform for two consecutive weeks due to an illness, physical injury, or restrictions of physical activity may be assigned alternative team responsibilities to help fulfill their duties as a Dance Team member.
- Unless otherwise directed by the Director(s), injured members are expected to attend all required team activities.

**College/University Visits:**

- A junior or senior team member is allowed up to two days per year to visit a college or university. The absence will be considered excused provided the team member follows the LTHS campus procedures to verify a college/university visit.
- Team members must notify the director(s) at least two weeks in advance if a college visit will cause them to miss a practice, and six weeks in advance if it will cause them to miss a performance. Dancers are responsible for learning any material missed during their absence.
- LTHS policy states that college days may not be taken during semester exams, or in conjunction with Thanksgiving, Winter Break, Spring Break, or Easter Holidays.
- Written documentation from the college or university admissions office must be submitted to the director(s) upon the dancer's return to practice.
- Approval of an excused college visit does not guarantee participation in any performance missed as a result of the absence.
- *Failure to follow these procedures will result in the demerit policy being applied.*

## **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

Academic eligibility is governed by the University Interscholastic League (UIL), the Texas Education Code, and applicable LTISD Board Policy. Should these regulations change, the most current UIL and district policies will supersede this handbook. It is the responsibility of each member to seek academic assistance, communicate with teachers, and maintain satisfactory academic progress throughout the school year.

- A member who earns a grade below the minimum passing standard established by UIL and LTISD at the end of a grading period will become academically ineligible according to UIL regulations. Loss of eligibility and reinstatement will occur in accordance with current UIL timelines.
- Ineligible members may attend and participate during the dance team class period and during before or after school practices/rehearsals.
- Ineligible members may not wear a uniform and participate in extracurricular performances nor activities during their ineligible period.
- Ineligible members may not travel with the team on school-provided transportation to extracurricular activities.
- Students may regain eligibility in accordance with current UIL rules and LTISD policy.

A member who is academically ineligible at the end of any two grading periods during the same school year will be dismissed from the LTISD Dance Team Program and removed from the Dance Team class, subject to applicable LTISD procedures.

## **ROUTINE EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE**

Performance placement is determined by the Director(s) based on multiple factors, including but not limited to attendance and rehearsal participation, technical ability, mastery and retention of choreography, consistency of execution, performance quality, showmanship, spacing and formation requirements, safety considerations, and the overall needs of the team.

The Director(s) may conduct evaluations throughout the year to determine performance placement, assess technical proficiency and choreography retention, and determine the number of performers needed for each routine.

Call-backs may be conducted at the discretion of the Director(s). Members who are absent from an evaluation are not guaranteed an alternate evaluation. A pre- or post-evaluation may be offered at the discretion of the Director(s).

Members who are not selected for a routine will be assigned alternate status.

- Alternates are expected to attend all required practices, rehearsals, and performances and must continue to meet all team expectations.
- Alternates are expected to remain performance-ready and be prepared to assume any assigned role at any time.
- Alternates may be placed into a routine at the discretion of the Director(s) based on performance needs, choreography requirements, attendance, safety considerations, or other factors affecting the team's performance.
- Alternate status does not guarantee future placement in any performance.

Performance assignments, formations, featured roles, choreography, and routine placements may change at any time at the discretion of the Director(s) based on the needs of the team.

Attendance at rehearsals, practices, performances, or other required events does not guarantee placement or participation in any performance. Members must demonstrate adequate preparation, choreography retention, technical proficiency, performance quality, and readiness to safely perform the required choreography, as determined by the Director(s).

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The Dance Teams will frequently travel on both school and commercial buses.

- Members are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the LTISD Dance Team while traveling. All school rules, district policies, and handbook expectations remain in effect from the time members depart until they return to the designated drop-off location. Team members are required to travel to and from all events using school-provided transportation unless prior written approval is granted by the Director(s).
- Any member requesting to arrive or leave with their parent/guardian must send a parent release note and turn it into the director no later than seven days prior to the event. Requests are not automatically approved and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Approval is at the sole discretion of the Director(s). Emergency requests submitted after the deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Once a student has been released to a parent/guardian, the parent/guardian assumes full responsibility for the student's transportation and supervision.
- Members are expected to arrive at the designated meeting location by the time established by the Director(s).
- Dance Team members will adhere to all LTISD travel guidelines pertaining to overnight and out of state travel.
- Members are responsible for all assigned hotel rooms, buses, facilities, and equipment. Any damage caused by a member may result in disciplinary action and financial responsibility for repair or replacement.

### **Overnight Travel**

Members must:

- Follow all curfews.
- Remain in assigned hotel rooms.
- Travel with the team.
- Follow room assignments.
- Follow all LTISD policies.
- Members may not enter or remain in the hotel room assigned to members of another gender at any time unless specifically authorized by the Director(s) for an official team purpose.
- The Director(s) reserves the right to inspect luggage, bags, or personal belongings when there is reasonable suspicion of a violation of district policy, school rules, or this handbook, or as otherwise permitted by LTISD policy.
- Members may not possess, use, distribute, or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, inhalants, illegal drugs, or any prohibited substance while participating in any dance team activity.

## **DANCE TEAM CLASS GRADES**

Dance Team is an academic course, and grades are assigned in accordance with current LTISD and Lake Travis High School grading policies. Students are expected to meet all course requirements, including rehearsal etiquette, skill assessments, written assignments, rehearsals, performances, and other evaluations as determined by the Director(s).

Required performances and rehearsals may constitute graded course assignments when permitted by LTISD grading guidelines and communicated through the course syllabus.

If district or campus grading policies are revised, the most current LTISD grading procedures will supersede the information contained in this handbook.

Demerits and other accountability consequences under this handbook, including probation and loss of performance opportunities, are separate from the Dance Team course grade. The course grade is based on the criteria stated in the course syllabus and LTISD grading policy. As required, alternative tasks or assessments may be assigned in order to comply with LTISD course grading expectations.

## UNIFORMS AND ISSUED EQUIPMENT

All district issued apparel and equipment remain the property of Lake Travis ISD unless otherwise designated. Members are responsible for the proper care, security, and timely return of all issued items.

- Uniforms must be worn only as designated by the Director(s). Members may not wear partial uniforms or combine uniform pieces with non-team clothing while representing the LTISD Dance Team.
- Members may not alter, decorate, permanently modify, or repair issued uniform items without prior approval from the Director(s).
- Uniforms may only be worn for school-approved events or with prior approval from the Director(s).
- The Director(s) may inspect uniforms, costumes, and issued equipment at any time to verify cleanliness, condition, and compliance with team standards.
- Food and beverages are prohibited while wearing performance uniforms unless specifically approved by the Director(s). Water may be permitted at the Director(s)' discretion.
- Issued uniform items may not be loaned, transferred, or shared with any individual without prior approval from the Director(s).
- Members are responsible for ensuring that all uniform pieces, accessories, and footwear are properly fitted and secured before each performance.
- Members are responsible for safeguarding all uniforms, costumes, props, and issued equipment while at school, during travel, and at performances.
- Members must return all issued items by the deadlines established by the Director(s).
- Members may not create, post, share, or appear in photographs, videos, or other electronic media while wearing any portion of the LTISD Dance Team uniform that depicts illegal activity, inappropriate conduct, profanity, sexual content, harassment, discrimination, bullying, or any behavior that could reasonably damage the reputation of the member, the team, Lake Travis High School, or LTISD.
- Members are financially responsible for the repair or replacement of any issued item that is lost, stolen due to negligence, damaged beyond normal wear and tear, or not returned. Replacement costs will be determined by LTISD. Charges will reflect the actual documented cost of repair or replacement, and a family unable to pay may request a waiver as described under Finances, below.
- *Failure to comply with uniform expectations may result in disciplinary action, including demerits, financial responsibility, loss of performance privileges, or other consequences outlined in this handbook.*

## FINANCES

Prior to auditions, the Director(s) will provide candidates with an estimated schedule of anticipated expenses, which may include, but is not limited to, camp fees, rehearsal and performance attire, footwear, individual photographs, travel, competition fees, and Booster Club dues. All costs are estimates and may change based on vendor pricing, participation levels, travel requirements, or other unforeseen circumstances.

Membership in the Cavalette Booster Club and any contribution to it are voluntary and are not a condition of selection to, or continued participation on, the LTISD Dance Team. Consistent with LTISD Board Policy FJ, a member will not be required to contribute a set amount in place of participating in a fundraiser, and a member who does not participate in a fundraiser will not be excluded from the benefit that fundraiser supports.

- Members who qualify for the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program are eligible to apply for financial assistance. In addition, and as required by Texas Education Code Section 11.158, the District will waive a fee or deposit associated with membership when a student or the student's parent or guardian is unable to pay it. A request may be made to the Director(s), and a waiver is available to any family regardless of Free and Reduced-Price Meal eligibility.
- Payment deadlines will be established by the Director(s). Payment plans may be available upon request and approval.
- Failure to meet financial obligations or comply with an approved payment plan may result in delayed distribution of team items, loss of participation privileges, exclusion from performances or travel, or other consequences deemed appropriate by the Director(s), to the extent permitted by district policy.
- Members who resign or are dismissed from the program remain financially responsible for all non-refundable expenses, custom-ordered items, and any outstanding financial obligations incurred prior to the effective date of resignation or dismissal. **No refunds will be issued for payments made toward non-refundable deposits, custom-ordered items, or services already rendered.**
- Participation in special performances, travel, camps, or out-of-town competitions may require additional expenses beyond standard team fees. Members selected or required to participate are responsible for these expenses unless otherwise approved by the Director(s).
- The Director(s) reserve the right to substitute vendors, modify required purchases, or adjust team expenses as necessary to meet program needs, district requirements, or budgetary considerations. Members will be notified of significant changes as soon as reasonably possible.

## COMMUNICATION

Open, respectful, and timely communication between students, parents, and the Director(s) is essential to the success of the LTISD Dance Team Program. All communication should be conducted in a professional, respectful, and solution-oriented manner.

Whenever appropriate, students are expected to communicate directly with the Director(s) regarding questions, concerns, scheduling conflicts, or other routine matters. Parents are encouraged to support and reinforce this communication.

### Parent/Guardian Communication Expectations:

Parents and guardians are expected to model respectful, professional communication and to support constructive problem-solving between students and the Director(s). Our shared goal is to maintain a positive environment that supports the growth, safety, and success of all students.

### Appropriate Topics for Discussion:

- Student health, well-being, or circumstances that may affect participation.
- Academic concerns that may affect eligibility.
- Questions or concerns regarding the student's behavior.
- Student safety concerns.
- Questions regarding handbook policies and expectations.
- Questions regarding the student's individual audition, performance placement, participation, or progress.

## **Matters That Cannot Be Addressed:**

Concerns, circumstances, or decisions involving other students or dance team members. Due to student privacy and confidentiality and compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Directors are unable to discuss another student's individual circumstances, performance, placement, behavior, or disciplinary matters.

- For the safety and supervision of students, Directors must remain focused on supervising team members during rehearsals, performances, competitions, games, and other team events. Accordingly, these events are not appropriate times to discuss individual student concerns. Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the Director(s) so concerns can be addressed thoroughly and appropriately. Parents/guardians may not initiate discussions regarding concerns immediately before, during, or immediately following rehearsals, performances, competitions, games, or other team events. These are not appropriate times for resolving concerns and may interfere with the supervision of students.
- Email and electronic communication should be used for routine questions and scheduling matters. Complex or sensitive issues may require an in-person or virtual meeting at the discretion of the Director(s).
- To protect the privacy of students and maintain a positive team environment, concerns regarding the Dance Program should be communicated directly through the established communication process outlined in this handbook rather than through social media or public forums.
- Meetings and conversations regarding concerns should remain respectful, solution-oriented, and focused on supporting student success. The Dance Program is committed to listening and working collaboratively with families; however, communication that is disrespectful, threatening, or inappropriate may result in the conversation being paused or concluded.

## **Expectations for Director to Parent Communication:**

- Directors will communicate information regarding schedules, practices, performances, travel, uniforms, fundraising, handbook expectations, student health or safety concerns and other information necessary for successful participation.
- The Director(s) reserve the right to determine the appropriate method of communication (email, telephone, virtual meeting, or in-person meeting) based on the nature of the concern.

**Director(s) decisions regarding auditions, performance placement, choreography, formations, leadership selections, and casting are made in the best interest of the program and are not subject to appeal.**

## **Conflict Resolution Process:**

If concerns remain after direct communication with the student (when appropriate), the following process should be followed:

1. Contact campus Director(s) to set up an appointment
2. Assistant Principal
3. Principal
4. Fine Arts Director

Parent and student concerns should be addressed using the communication process outlined above and, when applicable, in accordance with LTISD Board Policy FNG (Local), or any successor policy governing student and parent complaints.

# MERITS

The Merit Program recognizes members who demonstrate exceptional initiative, leadership, service, school involvement, and commitment beyond the minimum expectations of the LTISD Dance Team Program. Merits are intended to encourage meaningful participation in activities that positively represent the team, school, and community.

Merits are awarded, approved, and recorded solely by the Director(s). The number of merits awarded for certain activities will be determined and communicated by the Director(s) prior to the activity.

Members are responsible for submitting all required verification or documentation by the deadlines established by the Director(s). Merits submitted after the deadline may not be accepted.

Merits have no monetary value and may not be transferred, shared, or carried forward to future school years.

The following activities are pre-approved for merit consideration. Additional activities may be approved at the discretion of the Director(s).

- School & Team Service
  - Summer Community Dance Clinic
  - Huddles and Heels
  - Cavalette Booster Service Projects
  - Booster club babysitting
- Community Engagement
  - CC4C Events
- Sales & Fundraising
  - Poinsettia Sales over the quota
- School Spirit
  - Attending a non-required school activity in Dance Team/LT attire
- Recognition
  - Of the Week Award
- Dance Enrichment
  - Dance Convention/College Dance Team Intensive/Workshop
  - Extra Dance Hours
- Academic Achievement
  - All A's on a 9 weeks report card
  - All A's and B's on a 9 weeks report card
- Activities not eligible for Merits:
  - Activities done as part of a class for academic credit or a non-Cavalette unapproved extracurricular event i.e. as a Kardiva working with 7th and 8th graders.
  - Activity for a different school organization or teacher i.e. working a club fair or running an errand for a teacher.
  - Volunteer work for a political campaign.
  - Performing/playing/coaching with another school organization in any venue i.e. performing in the school musical.
  - Required community service due to disciplinary action..
  - Donations of money or items for service hours.
  - Volunteering for a nonprofit, 501(c) (3) organization or agency other than Cavalette Booster Club (Unless Approved by the Director(s)).
  - Service completed for another class, organization, scholarship requirement, disciplinary consequence, or extracurricular activity will not be eligible for duplicate merit credit unless approved in advance by the Director(s).

Volunteer activities not specifically listed above require prior approval from the Director(s) before the activity occurs to be eligible for merit consideration.

### **Merit Requirements:**

- In order to be eligible for a Senior Scholarship, members must complete 40 Merits by the published deadline. Failure to meet the required merit totals will result in ineligibility for the corresponding opportunity unless otherwise approved by the Director(s).
- In order to be eligible for Leadership Auditions, members must complete 50 Merits by the published leadership audition deadline.
- To remain eligible to participate in the Spring Show, Varsity members must complete 30 Merits and JV members must complete 20 Merits by the published performance deadline.

The Director(s) reserve the right to approve, deny, modify, or assign merit values for activities based on the educational value of the experience and the needs of the program. Director decisions regarding merits are final.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The LTISD Dance Team accountability system is designed to teach responsibility, encourage positive choices, and support personal growth. Expectations are clearly communicated so students understand how their actions impact themselves and the team. When expectations are not met, accountability measures help students reflect, learn, and make adjustments moving forward. Our goal is to build a team that values consistency, respect, and pride while providing structure and support that allow every member the opportunity to succeed.

### **Applicability**

The accountability system applies to all dance team members throughout the term of membership, including during the school day, after school, summer activities, weekends, school breaks, travel, social media activity, and any event in which a member is representing or is reasonably identifiable as an LTISD Dance Team member.

### **Demerits**

The demerit system promotes accountability, reinforces expectations, and provides a consistent process for addressing conduct that does not meet program standards.

### **General Guidelines**

The examples contained in this section are intended to provide guidance and are not all-inclusive. Conduct not specifically listed may still result in disciplinary action if, in the judgment of the Director(s), it violates the expectations, standards, or objectives of the LTISD Dance Team Program.

- Demerits are assigned when communicated team policies or procedures are not followed.
- Demerits may be issued by the director(s) or assistant director.
- Demerit records are maintained by the director(s). Each demerit must be acknowledged by the student.
- Failure to acknowledge a demerit within 48 hours will result in an additional demerit.
- Students may view their demerit record at any time through their LTISD Google Drive.
- Parents will be notified by email when the student accumulates 4 demerits so a plan can be put in place to support the student before performance opportunities are affected.
- The Director(s) reserve the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline based on the severity, frequency, intent, and circumstances of the conduct.
- Repeated violations of the same or similar expectations may result in increased disciplinary consequences regardless of the demerit value assigned to the original offense.

- Each member may receive one Level 1 warning per semester (Fall and Spring). If the warning is not used in the fall semester, it will carry over to the spring semester.

The Director(s) retain the authority to interpret and apply this accountability system in a fair and consistent manner. While discipline will generally follow a progressive model, the Director(s) reserve the right to assign a higher level of consequence when warranted by the severity, frequency, intent, safety concerns, or overall circumstances of the conduct.

### **Consequences of Accumulated Demerits:**

- Performance Restrictions:
  - After 5 demerits, member will sit out of one performance
  - After 10 demerits, member will sit out of two performances
  - The Director(s) will determine which performances are forfeited based on the event schedule, educational value, safety considerations, and the needs of the team.
- Leadership Eligibility:
  - Any officer who receives five or more demerits and/or put on probation will forfeit their officer position permanently.
  - Any member who receives five or more demerits and/or is placed on probation at any time during the school year will be ineligible to audition for a leadership position.

### **Level 1 Infractions (1 - 3 Demerits)**

- Missing deadlines for uniforms, paperwork, payments, or other required items
- Improper uniform appearance including but not limited to unauthorized jewelry, hair, make up, nails, piercings (other than earlobes), or visible tattoos
- Failure to dress out properly for practice or rehearsal
- Chewing gum during a rehearsals or performances
- Failure to remain in assigned seating during games or events
- Eating or drinking while in uniform or costume outside of designated times
- Tardiness:
  - up to 5 minutes late - 1 demerit
  - 6-10 minutes late - 2 demerits
  - More than 10 minutes late - 3 demerits
- Leaving practice, rehearsal or an event early without permission
- Failure to demonstrate appropriate effort or participation during rehearsals including but not limited to, refusing to participate, marking choreography without permission, failing to attempt corrections, repeated off-task behavior, lack of preparation, or failing to actively engage in rehearsals
- Failing to contribute positively to the team environment, including but not limited to displaying a negative attitude, refusing to encourage teammates, being unwilling to accept constructive feedback, failing to cooperate with directors or officers, or otherwise detracting from the team's success
- Disruptive or off-task behaviors during rehearsals, performances, games or team events
- Unauthorized use of a cell phone or other electronic device during rehearsals, practices, class, games or performances (School day use is also subject to Texas Law and LTISD Policy)
- *Failure to properly communicate an absence to the director(s) and, for Varsity members, their officer, within the required timelines:*
  - At least 24 hours in advance for tutorial reasons
  - At least 2 weeks in advance if unable to attend a practice or rehearsal
  - At least 6 weeks in advance if unable to attend a performance

### **Level 2 Infractions (3 - 5 Demerits)**

- Removing team equipment, uniforms, costumes, props, or other items from storage without proper authorization or proper checkout
- Creating distractions or disrupting rehearsals, practices, performances, competitions or other team events
- Participating in unsportsmanlike conduct that includes but is not limited to taunting, disrespectful comments or gestures towards officials, opponents, spectators, teammates or coaches; refusing to follow event expectations, intentionally creating conflict; or engaging in behavior that reflects, negatively on the dance team, school, or district
- Visiting or socializing with individuals outside of the dance team during team events without permission from the director(s)
- Engaging in public displays of affection (PDA) while representing the LTISD dance team
- Violating the the Digital Citizenship Guidelines outlined in this handbook
- Incurring an unexcused absences:
  - Practice or rehearsal - 3 demerits
  - Performance, competition, or other required event - 5 demerits
- Leaving a rehearsal, performance, competition, game or other team event without permission from the Director(s)
- Failure to comply with a reasonable directive from a Director, coach, chaperone, or other supervising school employee.

### **Level 3 Infractions (6 - 8 Demerits)**

- Disrespect or insubordination towards director(s): includes but is not limited to, inappropriate language or tone, argumentative behavior, refusal to follow directions, eye rolling, mocking, sarcasm directed towards others, or conduct that demonstrates a lack of respect towards directors, staff, teammates, officials, volunteers, or community members.
- Disrespect toward a teachers, administrators or teammates
- Inappropriate language or behavior
- Receiving a discipline referral
- Missing an event due to detention or Saturday school

### **Level 4 Infractions (8-10 Demerits)**

- Academic dishonesty
- Assignment to ISS (students may not perform during ISS assignments but are expected to attend rehearsals that do not conflict)
- Unsafe or dangerous behavior
- Violation of the Digital Citizenship Policy
- Student Code of Conduct infractions\*

### **Immediate Probation or Removal (10-15 Demerits)**

- Any assignment to DAEP.
- Suspension from school (OSS).
- Engaging in gross misconduct that includes but is not limited to, conduct that seriously disrupts the safety, integrity, reputation, or operation of the dance team or school. Examples include theft, vandalism, hazing, bullying, harassment, physical altercations, dishonesty, or any behavior that significantly undermines the standards of the program.
- Engaging in conduct that violates federal, state, or local law.
- Failing two nine week grading periods during the same school year.
- Refusal to participate in scheduled activity.
- Repeated disrespect toward the director(s), staff, or school property.
- Violation of the Digital Citizenship Policy.
- Accumulation of demerits resulting in probation or dismissal.
- Student Code of Conduct infractions\*.

\*Student Code of Conduct violations may also be addressed by campus administration in conjunction with the LTISD Dance Team Discipline Process.

## **Privacy**

To protect student privacy, directors will not discuss individual discipline matters with the team. Parents and students should not ask about incidents or consequences that do not involve them directly.

## **PROBATION, ISS PLACEMENT & DISMISSAL**

### **Probation**

Probation is a disciplinary status assigned when a member's conduct, performance, or accumulation of demerits indicates that additional accountability is necessary.

- Probation may include, but is not limited to, loss of performance opportunities, removal from specific team activities, suspension from leadership responsibilities, or other conditions deemed appropriate by the Director(s).
- The length, conditions, and expectations of probation will be determined on an individual basis by the Director(s) based on the circumstances of the violation and the best interests of the team.
- Members who are ineligible to perform due to probation or demerit consequences are expected to attend, dress appropriately, and participate in all other required team activities unless otherwise directed by the Director(s).

### **ISS Placement**

Members assigned to ISS are not eligible to participate in extracurricular performances, competitions, or events until the ISS assignment has concluded. They are expected to attend all rehearsals that do not conflict with ISS requirements. Additional disciplinary consequences, including probation or dismissal, may be imposed based on the circumstances of the offense.

### **Dismissal**

A member may be dismissed from the program for violations of this handbook, the LTISD Student Code of Conduct or the Extra Curricular Code of Conduct. The Director(s), with concurrence of district administration which is required for dismissal under this paragraph, may dismiss a member for serious or repeated violations of this handbook, the LTISD Student Code of Conduct, or the Extracurricular Code of Conduct. In addition, members will be dismissed for the following:

- Accumulating 15 demerits
- Assignment to DAEP
- Members will be dismissed for the school year if they become ineligible two times at the nine week grading periods during the school year
- Use, possession, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of tobacco products (including electronic cigarettes or vaping devices), alcohol, or illegal or controlled substances in violation of the LTISD Student Code of Conduct or Extracurricular Code of Conduct.

**Dismissal Procedures:**

Upon dismissal the Director(s) will provide:

1. Reason for dismissal
2. Effective Date
3. Information regarding class schedule
4. Information regarding applicable appeal process
5. Dismissed or resigned members remain responsible for all outstanding financial obligations and must return all district-issued property in accordance with this handbook.

## **RESIGNATION**

Resignation from the LTISD Dance Team is voluntary but must follow the procedures outlined below. A resignation is not considered final until all required steps have been completed.

**Notice of Resignation:**

- Submit a written resignation to the Director(s).
- Complete and submit the official resignation form signed by both the student and a parent/guardian
- Participate in an exit meeting with the Director(s) before any request for a class schedule change is processed

**Financial and Property Obligations:**

- All outstanding financial obligations must be satisfied. Payments for custom-ordered items, non-refundable deposits, or previously incurred expenses remain the responsibility of the member. Refunds will not be issued except as required by district policy.
- All district-issued uniforms, equipment, costumes, and other property must be returned in good condition, reasonable wear accepted.
- Resignation does not relieve a member of any financial obligations incurred prior to the effective date of resignation.

**Effects of Resignation:**

- Upon resignation, the member is
  - No longer eligible to participate
  - May not wear the uniform
  - May not represent themselves as a current team member
  - May not audition for one calendar year
  - Forfeits team and senior recognition, including the end of the year banquet
- Members who resign before completing the membership term are not eligible for LTISD Dance Team alumni recognition or alumni privileges.
- Members who resign from the LTISD Dance Team forfeit all dance team senior recognition and graduation honors, including eligibility to receive or purchase graduation honor cords.
- A member who resigns forfeits all participation privileges effective on the date designated by the Director(s) and may not participate in rehearsals, performances, competitions, travel, or other team activities unless specifically authorized by the Director(s).

The Director(s) may delay completion of the resignation process until all district-issued property has been returned and all required administrative procedures have been completed.

# DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Members are expected to exercise sound judgment in all electronic communications. Electronic conduct that substantially disrupts the educational environment, materially damages the reputation of the LTISD Dance Team or LTISD, or negatively affects the safety or well-being of students or staff may be subject to disciplinary action, regardless of where or when the communication occurred, to the extent permitted by law.

## General Expectations:

- Online communications should be considered public and permanent.
- Deleted posts may remain discoverable through screenshots, recordings, or other electronic evidence.
- Private accounts do not exempt members from these expectations.
- Members are responsible for content they create, share, forward, repost, react to, endorse, or otherwise distribute electronically.
- Members are expected to report electronic conduct that may threaten the safety of students, staff, or the school community to the Director(s) or an appropriate school administrator.

## School Representation:

- Members may not create social media accounts, websites, groups, pages, or other digital platforms that imply official affiliation with the LTISD Dance Team without prior approval from the Director(s).

## Prohibited Conduct:

Members may not create, post, share, send, endorse, promote, or distribute electronic content that includes or promotes any of the following, including but not limited to:

- Bullying, harassment, hazing, intimidation, discrimination, or threats.
- Profanity, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, or otherwise inappropriate content.
- Illegal activity or the use, possession, promotion, or glorification of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, vaping products, or other prohibited substances.
- False, misleading, or defamatory statements about students, staff, coaches, officials, or the LTISD Dance Team.
- Academic dishonesty or other dishonest conduct.
- Conduct that materially reflects negatively on the LTISD Dance Team, Lake Travis ISD, or its students, staff, or community, or otherwise substantially interferes with the educational mission of the program.
- Poor sportsmanship, disrespectful behavior, or derogatory comments directed toward teammates, coaches, directors, officials, opponents, other schools, or school personnel.
- Content that targets or demeans an individual or group based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- Members may not knowingly **promote, encourage, endorse, or amplify** inappropriate content created by others through actions including, but not limited to, sharing, reposting, forwarding, commenting in support of, or otherwise increasing the visibility of such content.

## Privacy and Accountability:

Private accounts and deleted posts do not eliminate accountability if screenshots, recordings, or other electronic evidence establish a violation.

## Consequences:

Violations of these Digital Citizenship expectations may result in disciplinary action under the LTISD Student Code of Conduct, Extracurricular Code of Conduct, and this handbook, including demerits, probation, suspension from performances, removal from leadership eligibility or leadership positions, or dismissal from the program, depending on the severity of the conduct.

The Director(s) and campus administration reserve the right to investigate and address all forms of inappropriate electronic conduct that are inconsistent with the expectations of the LTISD Dance Team Program.

## **HANDBOOK REVISIONS & ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY**

This handbook is intended to provide general expectations and procedures for participation in the LTISD Dance Team Program. Because every situation cannot be anticipated, this handbook should not be interpreted as containing every possible rule, policy, or consequence. The Director(s) retain the authority to address situations not specifically covered in this handbook in a manner consistent with the educational mission of the program, district policy, and the best interests of the team. To protect student privacy and comply with applicable law, disciplinary matters involving individual students may not be discussed with other members or parents. The Director(s), with approval from the Director of Fine Arts and/or district administration when required, reserve the right to revise, clarify, interpret, or amend this handbook as necessary to comply with changes in law, Board policy, UIL regulations, district procedures, or the operational needs of the program.

- Approved revisions to this handbook will be communicated to members and parents/guardians through official LTISD communication methods, which may include email, the BAND app, or other district-approved communication platforms.
- The most current version of this handbook will be maintained electronically through the official LTISD Dance Team BAND app and may also be available through Booster Club member resources for reference. In the event of any discrepancy, the most current version maintained by the Director(s) shall govern.
- Nothing in this handbook limits the authority of campus administration or the District to impose additional disciplinary action as authorized by district policy, the Student Code of Conduct, the Extracurricular Code of Conduct, UIL regulations, or applicable law.

## **STUDENT DRUG TESTING**

*LTISD Student Drug Testing Program is mandatory for students in grades 7-12 participating in school-sponsored competitive extracurricular activities, for high school students who obtain a parking pass, and voluntary enrollment for students in grades 7-12. Please refer to the District website for more information.*

## **COMPLIANCE WITH LAW AND DISTRICT POLICY**

This handbook operates within the requirements of federal and state law, LTISD Board Policy, the LTISD Student Code of Conduct, the LTISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct, and UIL rules. Where any provision of this handbook conflicts with those authorities, those authorities control, and nothing in this handbook limits a student's or parent's rights under them.

Lake Travis ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or age in any part of this program, including auditions, performance placement, leadership selection, travel, and discipline. Grooming and appearance standards are applied consistent with Texas Education Code Section 25.902 and will not operate to discriminate against a hair texture or protective hairstyle associated with race. Pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions are treated the same as any other temporary medical condition for attendance and participation purposes. A member who needs a reasonable modification to any requirement of this handbook because of a disability or a sincerely held religious observance, including an audition, attendance, or participation requirement, may request one through the Director(s) and the appropriate campus office.

Where this handbook provides that a decision of the Director(s) is final, that refers to the professional and coaching judgment reflected in the decision. It does not limit the right to raise a complaint that a decision was the result of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, or that a required procedure was not followed. Those complaints are handled under LTISD Board Policy FNG(LOCAL) and may be brought to the campus principal, the District Title IX Coordinator, or the District Section 504 Coordinator, as applicable.

Provisions of this handbook that protect the privacy of other students, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, do not prevent a student or parent from reporting bullying, harassment, hazing, discrimination, or a concern about student safety at any time. Hazing is prohibited and is a criminal offense under Texas Education Code Chapter 37, Subchapter F. A student's consent is not a defense to hazing, and a person who reports hazing in good faith is protected from retaliation.

## **DIRECTOR AUTHORITY AND INTERPRETATION**

Since every circumstance cannot reasonably be anticipated within one handbook, the Director(s), with administrative support, reserve the authority to interpret, apply, and enforce these policies in a manner consistent with the mission of the LTISD Dance Team Program. The absence of a specific rule shall not prevent the Director(s) from addressing conduct inconsistent with the expectations of the program. Decisions will be made in good faith, consistently and in the best interest of student safety, the educational environment, and the integrity of the program.

## LTISD Dance Team Handbook Acknowledgement

**Each team member and their parent or legal guardian must read and sign this acknowledgement before the student is eligible to participate as a member of the Lake Travis ISD Dance Team.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (Printed Student Name) acknowledge that I have read and understand the LTISD Dance Team Handbook. I understand that membership on the Lake Travis ISD Dance Team is a privilege, not a right and that I am expected to comply with all handbook policies, the LTISD Student Code of Conduct, the LTISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct and all applicable district policies.

I understand that participation in performances, competitions, leadership opportunities, travel and other team activities is not guaranteed and is determined by the Director(s) based on the policies outlined in this handbook.

I understand that failure to comply with handbook expectations may result in disciplinary action, including demerits, probation, removal from leadership positions, dismissal from the team, and/or removal from the dance team class, when applicable.

I understand that the handbook may be revised during the school year with approval from district administration and I am responsible for complying with the most current version.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (Printed Parent/Guardian Name) acknowledge that I have read and understand the LTISD Dance Team Handbook and have reviewed its contents with my student.

I understand the expectations, time commitment, attendance requirements, financial obligations, discipline procedures, performance policies and participation requirements associated with membership on the LTISD Dance Team.

I understand that dance team participation and performance opportunities are privileges and are determined according to the policies outlined in the handbook.

I understand that financial obligations for items ordered or expenses incurred on behalf of my student remain my responsibility as outlined in the handbook, including in the event of resignation or dismissal.

I understand that the handbook may be revised during the school year with approval from district administration and that families will be notified of any revisions.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Student: \_\_\_\_\_