



Spring Musical Handbook

High expectations:

Our directing team sets the bar high. We know your kids are capable of greatness, and we will help them reach their full potential. Our team is also committed to making sure your time and your child's time is not wasted. If your child is already committed to multiple clubs and teams, the commitment of this show may be overwhelming. Rehearsals and performances include, after school, evenings, and Saturdays.

The Directing Team:

With the exception of contracted directors, all directors are either giving of their time for no payment or for a small stipend. We believe in this program and what it does for kids. We lose sleep over casting decisions. We take it personally when a kid has a failure. We camp out at school to make sure the set is perfect. Please keep this dedication in mind if casting doesn't go the way you'd hoped, or if you don't understand a directorial decision. We care about your kids and are going out of our way to give them our best!

Registration:

Registration for DCC Music activities can be completed online at our website www.dccfinearts.com. You are able to access these pages from a computer, tablet, or phone. If you don't have access to the internet, Ms. Ford is happy to register your child over the phone or in person.

Auditions:

We take our auditions very seriously. We have created a process that allows us to see the maximum from all children in a short amount of time and with minimal anxiety from the children. The process changes slightly from show to show.

Generally, we ask your child to learn a dance, speak some lines, and sing a well-known song. If a second day of auditions is planned, we will likely ask them to dance again in small groups so that we can see the growth your child has made from the first day to the second.

Please know that we are watching for behavior and attitude as well as talent. We want to find the kids with the best attitudes and work ethics. We have not cast some talented students in the past because they had poor behavior or attitudes in the auditions. It is a priority to find cast members who accept and benefit from and feedback from direction.

To bring to auditions:

You will be provided with a schedule to fill out prior to auditions. This schedule will tell the directing team which dates you expect to attend and which days you anticipate an absence. We use this schedule to insure that we assign roles that correspond to the child's ability to attend rehearsals. If additional absences are added after this schedule is turned in, it may impact the child's role or participation in the show. We cannot cast your child without this schedule.

Drop off and pick up:

We use the bus lot doors behind the elementary school for the entire audition, rehearsal and performance process. This ensures that we can keep all children within adult supervision.

Callbacks:

This is a time for the directors to look for specific things from your children. Not all children will be required at call backs. In fact, some shows may not require callbacks at all. It is entirely

possible for a child to be cast or even to receive a large role without a callback.

Cast List posting:

The directing team will post the cast list on the elementary music website www.dccfinearts.com for your child to view at home. Please note that we've actually crashed the server before by having too many kids checking the website at one time. That said, please do not let your child get too click-happy. If your child is not cast, please remind them that competition is generally stiff for our shows. The directors have all been passed over for shows and know how much it can sting. Please use this as an opportunity to talk about how to deal with disappointment. It is also important to know that we've had many kids not get into the show one year, and receive a leading role the next.

Read through:

The read through is traditionally the first rehearsal. We go through as much of the script as time allows so that kids become familiar with the story and with their characters. It is also their opportunity to meet the people they will be interacting with on stage. This is an important rehearsal because we generally measure kids for their costumes and dance shoes at this rehearsal.

Parent Meeting:

We cannot stress the importance of the parent meeting enough! The directing team works hard to make sure you leave that meeting knowing everything you'll need to know. We personalize the paperwork so that you will have a comprehensive page to hang on your refrigerator for the entire

process. If you are not able to make that meeting, it is imperative that you schedule a time to meet with Ms. Ford individually. Failure to meet with the directing team might result a child's removal from the cast.

SCTC:

DCC hires Steel City Theatre Company to choreograph and block our show as well as to provide our rental costumes. Ms. Ford has done theatre with this company for over a decade and is always thrilled with their quality and dedication. If you are looking for an evening out, check out their theatre in Pueblo! They offer food and beverages and always provide a great night out! www.sctcpueblo.org

Our mission:

All our directors either receive a small stipend or are volunteers for this production. We do these shows because we have seen how wonderful the experience is for the children. Participation in a musical builds self-esteem, builds responsibility, gives students an outlet to express themselves, creates bonds and friendships, develops musical, theatrical, and dance abilities and is generally a highlight of a school experience. If you get an opportunity to thank one of our volunteers, please do!

Costumes:

We rent our costumes from Steel City Theatre Company and our costumer, Rhonda, always does a superb job! Most of your costume will be provided. However, we'll ask you to provide some undergarments and common items. (I.e. Tights, socks, camisoles, etc.) Whenever possible, this information will be given to you at the parent meeting so that you have plenty of time to look. We are also happy to help, if we're given adequate

notice that you need help. Please make sure all items arrive for our first costume rehearsal so that we don't have costume mishaps. We are very serious about deadlines for costume pieces. Your cast member may be asked to sit out of rehearsal if deadlines are missed.

We have high expectations for the ways your child will take care of their costumes. We will expect all pieces to be checked out with the costume coordinator, treated with respect thorough the rehearsal, hung correctly, and returned to the costume coordinator at the end of the rehearsal. Cast members are not allowed to have food or drink in when they are in costume. Water is the only exception.

Your child will be changing into costume in a gender-specific dressing room. If they are extra modest and bothered by changing in a group, please talk to Ms. Ford. Often, nude leotards or camis can be worn under a costume so that the child is covered the whole time.

If your child has specific costume needs due to a religious belief, please notify Ms. Ford before the read-through.

Scholarships:

We never want a kid to miss out on this opportunity because of money difficulties. If your child needs a scholarship, or if you need to schedule a payment plan, please let Ms. Ford know with as much notice as possible. Thank you for supporting our music fundraisers so that we have money available to help families who need it!

Dance Shoes:

For most shows, we require your child to have jazz dance shoes. We will give you an opportunity to order shoes directly for most

shows. In addition, you can purchase shoes online. These shoes will be necessary for rehearsals. A due date will be publicized so that you know when your child will need them.

Performer/Parent Contract:

This paperwork will be given to you at the parent meeting. Please read over the contract with your child so that they know what will be expected of them. Failure to comply with the behavior contract will affect their participation in the show.

Medical Release:

Please fill out the medical form as thoroughly as you are able. We want to make sure your child is safe for our rehearsals. If the directing team doesn't know of a medical issue we cannot watch out for warning signs.

Restrooms:

Cast members will be given breaks during rehearsals for restrooms and water. Cast members are expected to utilize these breaks. We will make exceptions for emergencies. We do not have bathrooms in the dressing rooms and do not allow cast members to use the restroom during a dress rehearsal or performance. If your child has specific needs and will require an exception to this policy, you must notify us in advance.

Schedule:

Once the show is cast, please adhere to the rehearsal schedule. If your child must miss, please contact Ms. Ford via email with as much notice as possible. We understand that illness and family emergencies may arise. Please know, however, that these absences may still affect your child's role or participation. In the same way that an athletic team needs players to practice

together, our other cast members need your child. An absence doesn't just put one child behind, it impacts the entire cast and crew.

Making up for an Absence:

If your child is absent, it will be their responsibility to catch themselves up. The directing team recommends for your child to ask a friend who is in similar scenes and dances to help them out. Notes from blocking will be available for your child to copy into their scripts. We will not hunt your child down to catch them up.

Provided materials:

The directing team will give your child a copy of the songs to be downloaded as well as a script. Scripts are not replaceable.

Memorization:

If your child has lines to memorize, here are some tips to help. The directing team suggests using a free program called audacity to record the lines before each of my lines and then leaving a gap of silence. That way, your child can play the recording and practice filling in their lines. For some kids, walking through their blocking allows them to build some muscle memory and retain lines. Whispering lines helps train muscle memory as well. In any case, please plan to spend some time working with your child. Repetition is necessary. We will announce the memorization deadline at the parent meeting. We hold firm to our memorization deadline expectations. Failure to meet the memorization deadline is also a reason for re-casting.

Rehearsals:

Putting together a show is a lot of fun and a very rewarding experience, but it is also a lot of work. Please be prepared to provide extra encouragement for your child. At some point in the process, they will likely come home exhausted or frustrated. Please remind them that all their work will totally be worth it!

Also, your child will need to bring their script, a pencil, the required shoes, and a water bottle to each rehearsal. Even once they have memorized their lines, their script will still be necessary because we will be writing in blocking and other notes.

Saturday Rehearsals:

We pack a lot into our Super Saturday rehearsals! Often, this is the time that we use to teach choreography and blocking. Please make sure to pack a lunch for your children on these days unless you are told otherwise.

Website:

Throughout the rehearsal process, information will be posted on www.dccfinearts.com. Please bookmark this page and check it often. We utilize this website to avoid bombarding you with email.

Props:

Each show will require various props. The list of items we're looking for will be provided at the parent meeting. Please help us locate these items if at all possible. It is also our expectation that cast and crew members do not touch any props unless they are using that prop in the show or are given responsibility over it by a director.

Set Building:

Each show has different set requirements. When a set must be built, we rely on parent assistance. Generally, we build set after a Saturday rehearsal. Please let Ms. Ford know if a member of your family or our community would be willing to lend their abilities!

Volunteers:

We need parent volunteers to make the show happen. An online registration will be available. Please help if you can! In some instances, parent volunteers are given priority seating.

Tech Rehearsals:

One week before our show, we will begin “tech rehearsals.” These are the rehearsals in which set, microphones, lights, and the sound system are all added. They can be long rehearsals but they are also crucial us to complete our show. Emotions tend to run high, since everyone is feeling the impending deadline and is beginning to get tired by this point. Please make sure your child is getting extra sleep and be ready to help kiddos keep everything in perspective.

Photos/ Recordings:

For some shows, we may invite a photographer to film and photograph our show. If you choose to purchase individual photos of your child, please know that these photos will be scheduled outside of the scheduled rehearsal process. We put this show together in a minimal amount of time so our priority must be on the show first.

Preview show:

We will do a preview show for the elementary student body. This show will generally be held within the school week of our

performance week. It will last 30 minutes and highlight some of our favorite material. Generally, the selections to be performed will be announced a day or two before. You are welcome at this preview. Please RSVP with the office ahead of time and bring your ID.

Ticket Sales:

We always sell tickets at the door and begin seating at 5:30 on performance days. You will not be allowed to reserve seats before 5:30 PM. You will receive 2 free tickets as part of your registration fee.

The directing team is not personally given ANY money from ticket sales. 100% of the profits go into the music activity account to pay for the current show and provide the budget for next year's show.

Post Show Cleanup:

The directing team wants your cast members to experience the entire performing process. Part of that process involves cleaning and maintaining their rehearsal spaces. We expect the entire cast and crew to complete all assigned tasks and turn in their own costumes immediately following the final show. We aim to complete this process in 30 minutes. Cast members will need to check out with a director before leaving. If you are going to need to miss this expectation, please contact Ms. Ford in advance to schedule an alternate time for your child to do their part. This is a commitment in the contract and is mandatory in order to attend the cast party.

Cast Party:

We rely on parent volunteers for our cast party. Please help if you are able. It can be as simple as cupcakes in the Discoveries Plaza or as elaborate as a swim party.

Post Show Emotions:

It is normal for a kid to be pretty bummed once the show is over. We build a family during a show and it can be hard to end something you care so much about. To be honest, the directors are always pretty bummed too!

Summary:

Our directing team cares deeply about this program. We have seen the ways that children grow and come into their own when completing a show. It is not an exaggeration to say that an experience like this can change a kid's life! We set very high expectations and the kids always rise to those expectations. We are also happy to help along the way when needs and concerns are communicated to us. We are looking forward to a wonderful experience for everyone involved!

Glossary:

Blocking- the movements and actions your child will take on stage.

Cheating Out- facing in such a way that the audience understands you are talking to another character on stage without turning your body to face them and losing visibility of the actor's face.

Props- Items that are held during the show.

Strike- cleaning the stage and performance spaces after a show.

Cue Lines- the lines that precede your child's or signal for them to begin an action.

Downstage- the part of the stage that is closer to the audience

Stage Left- the left side of a stage from the point of view of a performer facing the audience.

Stage right- the right side of the stage from the point of view of a performer facing the audience.

Upstage- the part of the stage that is farther from the audience

